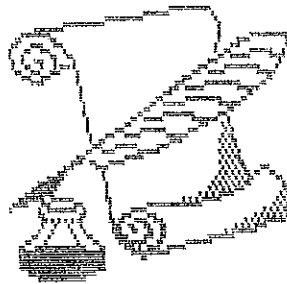


**AS
I
REMEMBER
IT**



**Edith
Gowin**

PREFACE

The idea for this project was born in the spring of 1990, when Edith was asked to be interviewed for an article in the monthly newsletter at Sycamore Glen Retirement Center. Before the interview, she wrote down some things she thought the reporter would like to know. It was decided to use Edith's words in the newsletter. That was when we discovered that, besides crocheting afghans and hooking rugs, she had a talent for writing.

In the summertime the project began. Edith typed her "story" on an electric typewriter which she received at 90 years of age. Then her daughter, Jacqueline, put it in the computer.

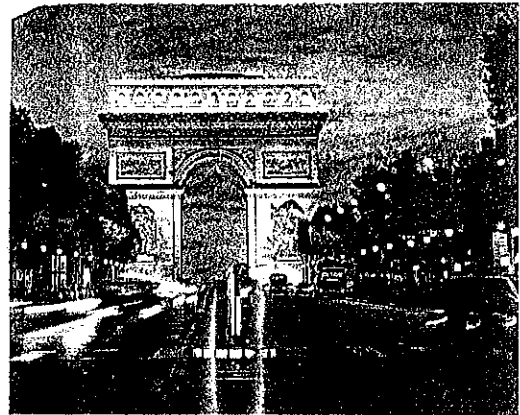
The beginning was France, of course. We were anxious to know all about her early years. Eventually we got her out of



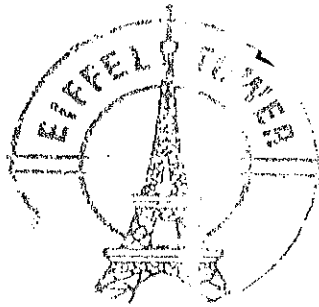
France and on to tell about her early experiences in her new country - AMERICA.

Finally in November most of the composition was done. Proofs were sent to Mary, her daughter-in-law, and after minor changes and a little editing, we went to press. The computer print-out was taken by Bill, Edith's son-in-law, and printed on a laser printer. Mary had copies made, added pictures and documents and a title page. She assembled each book and on December 28, 1990, Edith gave her book AS I REMEMBER IT to each of her children and grandchildren.

It is a treasure that we shall cherish always.



ARC DE TRIOMPHE, PARIS



| | |
|---------------------------|-------------|
| Writing | Edith Cowin |
| Word Processing | Jackie Mann |
| Commas | Mary Cowin |
| Technical | Bill Mann |
| Packaging | Mary Cowin |
| Resource | Family |

PART I: FRANCE

AS I REMEMBER IT !!!

August 29, 1990

I have been thinking about this resume of my life for several days and today is the day I finally sit down to take a stab at it.

To start with I must say that I had a very good childhood.

I was born in Bourges, France in the Cher department south of Paris in the center of France. It was November 29, 1897. My name at birth was Edith Marguerite Dubs.

We moved to Paris when I was six months old when my father was transferred in the army. My brother and I had all the advantages of growing up in that beautiful city. I have yet to see a city more beautiful. We lived in the 15th arrondissement (a municipal subdivision). I watched from the balcony of our apartment on the sixth floor and saw the early zeppelins circling the Eiffel Tower and later the planes as aviation developed.

My father was born in Mutsick, a suburb of Strassbourg, in Alsace. He was a Captain in the Administration Branch of the French Army. He was a very good man; always ready to do for others. When the Germans invaded Alsace, he and his brother left home carrying only one suitcase. They did not want to become German, or have to speak only German. After a stint in the artillery branch of the army, he was made a lieutenant and transferred to the administration branch. He rode a horse well, but did little of it after retiring from the active army. It was too expensive and too difficult to arrange. He rose to the rank of major. The pay was good and we had a comfortable life. Of course we did not waste anything!!!

Going to the horse races was quite a pastime, and my father would take us there. Not to bet, however, just to see the races. I guess if you love horses it drives you like any other love. My father loved horses and so did I. At the end of our avenue was a field (now an airfield). We would not leave for school until the cavalry had passed after exercising on that nearby field.

On the fourteenth of July there was always a very good horse show in the Bois de Boulogne, which would end by a charge by ever so many horses on the tribune. They would stop as one man in time. It was a sight to behold.

My mother was a beautiful woman with a good complexion, and of average height (for a French woman). She stood very erect. She was born in Besancon in the Doubs department. She was very exacting, not like I am. Everything had to be done to perfection, or she would scold and make us do it over and over and over.....for instance, every chair had to be lined up just so.

I remember once my mother told me I should meet her after school in one of the department stores in Paris to buy a new hat. Well, after school I was hungry and so I bought a little chocolate cake which I loved, thus spending all my money. I was not worried because I knew that once I met my mother I did not need to worry about money.



HENRI DUTH



BLANCHET DUTH
MARCEL & EDITH

I went to the hat department of one of the department stores but my mother was not there. I decided she had meant the store next door, so I trotted over there and again she was not there. I then decided she had meant for me to meet her at the dressmaker's. I was clear out of money and I asked the Sargent de Ville how to get there. He said "you take the subway to such and such station." "Oh," I said, "I don't have any money." I could see by the his expression that I was in trouble but go I must. He told me to take Boulevard Haussman and then this street and then that street and so forth. "Thank you", I said still thinking it could not be that far. I was wrong. I walked and walked and finally got there. My mother had just left wondering what was wrong. I borrowed enough money from the dressmaker to get home. The bus line stopped right in front of our apartment. I was so glad to have a chance to sit down that I almost went to sleep. When I got out of the bus I saw my father and mother watching the bus stop and hoping it would bring me back home as it did.

I remember that my mother spoiled me, for a fact, so did my father and my brother Marcel. For instance: if anything came in singly and we both wanted it, he (Marcel) would say, "let her have it"; and of course I would follow suit and run away with it. Marcel was eighteen months older than I. I suppose that was his way of showing his superiority.

Marcel was wonderful to me. Each summer we would be shipped out, for the duration of the "school out", by train to our maternal grandparents, who owned a large property south of Paris in Yonne, department. The property was situated on the river Yonne, (a small tributary) and full of fish, giving us plenty of opportunity to fish. So fish we did and quite successfully I must say.

As soon as school was out and there was no reason for dressing up, I would put on Marcel's discarded pants. That made climbing trees much easier and that was part of our pastime. It is a good thing that climbing trees was good for us because we sure did a lot of it!!

The farm was away from town and so we did not have many children to play with. Marcel and I spent many a summer vacation "keeping house". Our children were a dog called "Toutou" and a cat called "Mistigris". The cat let us treat him as another child. We had found a cherry tree where a couple of branches had been broken and smoothed out forming a plateau with suitable space for sitting and use our imagination!! We would sit in the tree and eat the raw vegetables we had pulled from the garden and washed in the river. We would also play house.

This place was quite large having 200 fruit trees, no two alike. There were apricot, several kinds of cherry and plum trees, as well as artichokes which we ate raw if they were young enough. They are better that way than the cooked ones. There were camomile stumps to make camomile tea, the sure cure-all for slight stomach discomfort! There was asparagus, the large white ones with purple heads that you see here only in California. They are delicious!!!



MARCEL DUBS 1905

There was a cordon apple tree. This means the base of the tree grows to about three feet high or so then it is trained to reach the next tree. The apples are delicious. This particular one followed the alley leading to the house on both sides. Really quite a sight, especially at blossom time. I fully remember riding my bicycle and missing the corner which ended up in a not too painful spill.

I recall very clearly that Mistigris was a very docile cat and would let us treat her as we wanted; kindly, of course, but one day I remember the cat running away from us with my doll's skirts flopping around her. We had tried to make the cat sleep on her back and she became tired of our antics. The dog Toutou was wonderful also. We tried to get him to walk on his hind legs but we were evidently poor teachers for he never did.

Another very vivid recollection is the time we decided to jump down to the river bed. The river ran on the side of the property. Marcel said "Let's jump down instead of going to the steps." The height of the wall which sustained the ground was probably seven feet. Of course, looking down from above, it looked much shorter. Marcel jumped successfully, but when I did it, I was not so lucky. I twisted my ankle and was laid-up for several weeks. My brother had to more or less carry me back to the house, a distance which all at once seemed to be way off.

The dog Toutou seemed to sense when it was time for us to return to Paris for he went around with a sad air for a couple of days before our departure back to Paris and back to school. (Neither my brother nor I was a first rate student but we maintained a fair average.)

I also remember my grandfather, August Martin, being a large man. He had worked his way up in the regular army to the rank of Lt. Colonel with, you might say, very little education. He was a very commanding man and really the type to handle soldiers. He often forgot that when he was with us he was talking to children. On the other hand he would take us down to the promenade and buy us waffles. My, but they were good!!!!

My grandmother was a very small woman, very devout and very kind. I remember one vacation when I spent some time with her and my grandfather. All went well as long as I was willing to be ready to go to Mass at six o'clock every morning. We would leave the house and start walking, walking, walking up a small mountain to the top. As I remember it was a very nice church but also very poor. My grandmother did a lot of volunteer work there keeping the garments in order.

I was always terribly scared because there were vipers on the ground where we walked, but she would tell me that they would not bother us if we didn't bother them. Never the less, I was scared that one would get under her long skirts, which were in style at that time, and bite her but that never happened.

I must tell what I know of vipers. They are a very small venomous snake about fifteen to twenty inches when full grown. They live mostly on sunny parts of stones. They are dark in

color and are easily recognized by the triangle of yellow marking on the head. They are at most five inches around unless pregnant. The litters are usually eight to ten. There was a viper catcher who would roam the hills and come back through town with ten to fifteen vipers, which he called a good day's work. Parts of the venom were used in the making of medicinal drugs. Of course, much progress has been made since that time.

We were always happy to know that a snake called couleuvre was present, because if they were around there would not be any vipers. They were harmless inoffensive snakes, larger than the vipers, that for some reason did not co-exist with vipers.

To repeat, my grandmother would let me do anything I wanted to as long as I got up and went to that early Mass with her.

Her name was Julie Martin and my grandfather treated her as though she was one of his soldiers.

Time passed and eventually we finished elementary school. Boys and girls went to separate schools from first grade on.

When I was in the last grade of elementary school I had an accident in sewing class. We had to place a white cloth on top of our regular desk for sewing. Well, we had had a test the day before and I was sure that I was going to get a good grade, but when the teacher announced the grades, I was at the bottom of the class. It made me mad and I blamed the teacher!!! The cloth in front of me had a needle (short as the French always use) in it, and in my anger I folded it up in a wad and ran the needle into my hand where it broke and one fourth inch of it disappeared. I was taken home and then my mother took me immediately to the doctor. He x-rayed it showing it had already traveled to the opposite side of my hand. The people who knew all the answers said "there is really nothing to do." I could feel it on occasion through the years sticking its point but it did no harm. So, I suppose, it is still in my body enjoying itself. After all Maurice Chevalier got a piece of shrapnel while in the service, during the war, and was never really bothered by it. So why should one fourth of an inch of a needle bother me?

I can recall the Paris flood of 1910. I have vivid memories of watching it from our balcony. We saw patients from a nearby hospital taken to safety in boats. The water reached the second floor. We (the children) thought that watching was great fun; it was better than going to school. Schools were closed for a week. We, still young, did not realize how terrible a flood can be until after the water subsided. We went to the basement and saw dead animals and other unsightly things still floating around. It was a terrible sight! I don't want to live through another flood. The banks of the Seine were raised, and there were no more floods.

After graduating from standard school, it was time to decide where I should go next. My mother was bound that somehow I would learn how to sew. Bless her!!! She was determined that I would go to advanced school. I did not want to go, but in those days you did what your mother said. She entered me in a professional

school within walking distance of our apartment. It was a three year course, with practical subjects like sewing and typing in the morning, and college level academic subjects in the afternoon.

What a blessing this training proved to be for me! It was the typing skill that got me the job with the American government that changed my life. The sewing made it possible for me to sew for my family during the Great Depression. The academic subjects gave me the desire to learn and that has never stopped.

We had classes six days a week. We had Sundays and holidays off. There I stayed and attended classes for almost three years. I had a good time.

We, the students, were devilish and played many pranks. Like placing a torn piece of black paper on a white dress that had been ordered by a customer. Sure enough it worked. The teacher thought someone had spilled something on that beautiful white dress. As expected she grabbed her head or rather the side of her forehead, and as we had planned, the false hair she was wearing flew to the floor. In those days additional hair was the fashionable thing to wear; however, her wig was because she was trying to cover up lost hair. Incidentally, skirts were very short then, about two inches above the knees.

When she discovered the prank she could have choked every one of us. Looking at it now, I think it was a dirty trick. I don't recall that we were punished.

Three months before I finished school my father transferred from Paris to Chatellerault (about four hours by train from Paris). I was seventeen and could not stay alone in Paris. Therefore, I did not finish the professional school. I was tutored privately to finish my education.

After elementary school my brother Marcel was sent to a military school for the sons of army personnel. It was called La Fleche after the town in which it existed. He did pretty well there. When he finished school the war of 1914 had begun and he enlisted. He did not suffer too much in that war. That came later in the second world war when he was made a prisoner and was put alone in a huge empty gas tank. Fortunately he had an English grammar book with him that he could study to pass the time as he was alone and could not talk to anyone. He already spoke German quite fluently as did my father. That helped him earn the confidence of his keepers who treated him better than expected.

Back to my life. For some unknown reason I wanted desperately to go to England. Maybe because a close friend had done it! Well that was impossible because of the submarine war. The English Channel was closed to traveling. My recollections about the war of 1914 are a little hazy. But I know that I made up my mind to learn how to speak English.

After we moved from Paris, my father and mother had adopted a niece, Jeanne Dubs, who was about six months older than I and had lost her mother and father.

She came to live with us accompanied by her piano. With two pianos in one room we practiced together, playing duets and even

doing our exercises at the same time. Taking a lesson once a week was a treat. After our lesson we would go on the promenade and look over the young men who were not in the service. We had a lot of fun!!!

I also had a younger brother, Pierre, born in 1913. We, my cousin and I, just adored him and took a lot of care of him. Sad to say that he died on the Maginot Line at the age of 21.

WARS, WARS, WHY DO WE HAVE THEM?

To get back to the story of World War 1 and how it touched me.

I went to the Ecole Pigier in Paris to further my English but I was not happy with the system. The teaching was done by records and we did not have any classroom teachers!! A friend of mine knew an English teacher in Paris and referred me to him. So I took lessons and found out what a task learning a foreign language is.

I would go by subway across Paris and take a one hour lesson in English, and a one hour lesson in English shorthand because my French shorthand did not work with the English language.

One of the directors of the school told me that the American Expeditionary Forces, located at 45 Avenue de Montaigne, was looking for English speaking girls to work in the office. I applied.

The story of my getting the job will explain how little English I knew. I was interviewed by a Captain who did not know a word of French. Sitting at a desk behind him but facing me was an English office girl. She immediately realized my plight at not understanding his English. She would shake her head "yes" or "no" and I would dutifully give the answers. Finally she motioned to me to leave. I made my good-byes the best I knew how and went into the hall and waited. Sure enough a little later she came out and said "Don't you know that he told you to come back on Monday?" So I had the job!!! I wrote my father immediately and told him proudly that I had a job-"Don't send me any more money." I think my luck was due to the fact that there were not many French people left in Paris. There were only Americans in the American office and all they spoke was English. It was very rare to find Americans who could speak French.

I remember that prices were high and shortage of goods was acute. The fashion of the day was to have leather shoes that reached the knees. What poor judgment when leather was so scarce.

The first thing they told me to do on Monday was to translate and order a long list of about one thousand spare parts to be sent to the front line. I, who knew so little about planes. Only that they were biplanes having two sets of wings and probably a motor. I had seen the Wright brothers and their plane at the Air Field of Issy les Moulineaux and that was the extent of my knowledge about airplanes.

I remember dutifully trying to find a technical dictionary to see if I could see through the maze. I could not find the right kind of dictionary and I was on the brink of despair. I

can't remember how I got out of that thorn but by quitting time I had guessed (right or wrong) at some answers when it dawned on me that I had made some mistakes. Getting an order filled was quite a task because of the shortage of workers, materials etc. I would have to contact five or six plants outside of Paris to try to fill the order.

I went to the captain and said "Sir, I made a mistake." "You did, well fix it." "Yes, sir." I had ordered the wrong thing and had to cancel it all and start all over. I worked way into the evening but I felt better for it. I was so tired and I remember missing my English lesson that night.

Well, with a lot of work I was on the right trolley after a couple of weeks. At night I would study until one or two o'clock and prayed there would not be any air raids during the night. We would wish for rainy nights or obscured skies; as in those days planes flew only in clear weather. I felt very lucky when the next morning would find me on my way to the Avenue Montaigne.

Nevertheless, my friends and I had a lot of fun. I recall stopping two American boys and asking them in French if they had cooties (biting bugs). They were trying to understand us and could not, but finally they said "Oh, yes". To which we told them how sorry we were and departed laughing!!

One day on my way to work, walking of course, I remember seeing a bomb from "Big Bertha" zooming across the sky. Soon it had met the end of its trip and an explosion followed by a conflagration. It was easy to figure out by its size that a gas conduit had been hit. And so it had been.

A few bombs penetrated the underground subway lines. That really was terrible! The passengers were caught away from a station, and did not know how to walk to safety or escape the power lines.

It was fairly easy to be safe in Paris in the day time bombings if you knew Paris as I did then. The guilty gun called the BIG BERTHA was a very big gun, very clumsy, and with little ability to change its target. All one needed to do was to stay behind the last bomb and you were fairly safe. Also, lots of bombs were duds.

I recall looking at an apartment house on the Avenue St. Louis Le Grand near Surbonne College. The bomb had entered the roof but did no personal damage. The property was damaged because it had entered the roof and landed under a chair---just a dud. Fortunately the renters had fled the city.

Another time as I was leaving my English lesson, I saw an apartment building (about five apartments down the street) had been slashed in two. I could see the leg of a bed ready to fall in space and all the other furniture exposed to view. This was the same on all the floors of the building.

During my lesson, the children and their mother had been hiding under the table scared to death. The children entertained themselves by tying and untying my shoes which went up to my knees!!!! All this while I was trying to learn a foreign lang-

uage! Oh my; but the poor children could find no other way to amuse themselves.

Another horrible sight, I remember, was close to an open market near the Alma Bridge where a horse was standing with one of his legs bleeding profusely. There was no one near, so I supposed that a bomb had fallen close enough to hurt lots of people. I never found out the true story because newspapers were scarce like all other commodities.

In spite of the bad times we, employed by the American Expeditionary Forces, managed to have fun. At the end of the day at five o'clock we would walk from work to a dance at the barracks which were not too far away. A sandwich supper was served and then we danced until 8:30p.m. We could not stay any longer because of a 9:00 p.m. curfew. The barracks were located farther down the Ave Montaigne where many apartment buildings had been evacuated. The Americans had taken over this beautiful hotel and evacuated it for the use of the American Expeditionary Forces spare parts subdivision. That is where I was working or I should say struggling. The fact is there was not anyone else to hire in this empty city, and I was glad to have a job.

Anyway, I learned a lot about the spoken American language. I had a friend who was working downstairs. She was French but could understand the battered down language, having spent some time in England. I recall, we went for lunch at the YMCA where some English volunteers would serve us cafeteria style. I could not understand them when they would say "what is it you want?". I would say this and that, and would end up with a strange assortment of food. My friend, Renee Le Retour from transportation, would help me all she could but time was precious and I needed to be on my own. We would take our food to a beautiful court garden and laugh at my combination of food. After lunch, if time allowed (we had two hours for lunch), we would walk on the Avenue Montaigne looking for trouble or something to break the monotony.

In the building there were two young men (Americans) and we got acquainted with them. Their names were Bob Campbell and Bill Cowin. The four of us had a great time but we did not have much money because prices were so high. We did manage to go to the suburbs of Paris by small boat on the river Seine on Sunday or a day off. We also went to the dances. As I said before, we had some good times. We had a good time with my friend Renee (called Jimmy), Bob Campbell, Bill and I.

Then the German armies got really close to Paris. They were only forty miles away. At the American Expeditionary Force, we were assigned to a truck to go to immediately if the order was given. Thank God it never came to that.

Bill and I got acquainted and he then asked me to marry him and I accepted. A big project in anybody's life but we had some severe questions. Anyway love has a way of conquering the bumps of life.

I took Bill to my parents' place of residence in Chatellerault. They met and all approved. We were married in the

ANNÉE 191

RÉPUBLIQUE FRANÇAISE

LIBERTÉ — ÉGALITÉ — FRATERNITÉ

Numéro

VILLE DE PARIS

7^e Arrondissement

Du 26 JUIL 1919

mil neuf cent

Mariage

ENTRE :

Né le

9 novembre 1894 à Borselt

Arrond^t d

(E. U. A.)

Profession :

employé de commerce

Domicilié à

Franklin Duffham (E. U. A.)

Fils de

Robert

et de

Harriett J. Cowin mariés.

~~Veuve de~~

Et

Née le

9 novembre 1897 à Bourges

Arrond^t d

d Cher

Profession :

interprète

Domiciliée à

Paris

Fille de

Henri François

et de

Blanche Marie Martin mariés.

~~Veuve de~~

Contrat de mariage

peut

SIGNATURE DE L'ÉPOUX,

SIGNATURE DE L'ÉPOUSE,

William Elston

Cowin

E Cowin



Délivré le 26 JUIL 1919 191

L'Officier de l'État civil,

Vaulg

Bill & Edith Cowin

1919



catholic church of St. Pierre du Gros Coillou in the 15th arrondissement of Paris. He left to return to the states three days later. The army would not postpone his return any longer.

The war was over and I transferred to the American Red Cross. I had gotten used to the work on the Ave Montaigne and had to learn a new way of working with new people. Of course I knew it would not last because the day for my trip to America was in sight.

Before leaving, I spent two weeks at home where I tried to be dutiful. However my mind was on my trip which looked like a big blob. The Red Cross paid for my fare maybe because they were glad to get rid of me!

The trip itself was arduous because of the shortages of everything due to the war. I boarded the Antigone, an old German boat, used for transportation. It was not a good trip. It lasted nearly seven days. The boat was quite small and, due to winter weather, the boat would pitch with every wave. The passengers managed to play shuffleboard and cards, and make believe we were having a good time. To crown the effort, the boat had to be sent to dry dock in Boston instead of New York (where it was scheduled to land.) The Authorities, hearing of my plight, got hold of Bill and told him to meet me in Boston. There he was waiting when we docked. So all was well!

We spent a couple of days in Boston, and then went to New York. In New York I recall having my eyes glued on a pair of shoes in the window of the Hannan shoe store. Bill said "You'd like to have those shoes?" "Oh sure," I said so we went into the store. I was fitted and we bought the shoes. The price for shoes in those days was terrible. I recall it was \$25.00, but at the time I did not comprehend the enormity of my error. (A good pair of shoes could be bought for \$5.00.)

The shoes were fine, but hurt my feet after wearing them a couple of hours. So after we got to what was this new home to me, I did not wear them very much. Then one day Bill asked me why I never wore the shoes we had bought in New York. He teased me saying "Maybe they were not expensive enough." By that time I was better acquainted with the American money system and I asked how much they had cost. He told me. I was horrified! From then on I wore them until they would hurt, and then I would go back to other shoes. I had them stretched and that helped, but they were good shoes and would not wear out! I recall wearing them to slide on the ice on the boat when I returned home for a visit to my parents in Paris five years later.

As glad as my parents were to see me on that first return trip they knew my visit of two weeks would end too soon.

I returned to New York where Bill met me again. We spent two days there and then returned home to Youngstown, Ohio. By that time we had an apartment on Falls Ave.- now the old part of the city.

Bill was then working for the Youngstown Sheet and Tube Company. He did not have any future with them and decided to sell insurance. He was lucky and sold a large policy on the second day. Then the depression hit in a big style.

When I first arrived I found Bill's mother and father so kind to me. That helped a lot. I stayed with them in Franklin, Pa. while Bill was working in Youngstown. He would come "home" by train on Saturdays.

Before I leave this part of my story I want to tell you about the Tour Eiffel and the Arc de Triomphe.

La Tour Eiffel was finished in 1890 in time for the first Mondial Exposition (world's fair) of 1890. It is a marvelous feat of engineering. It is situated on the left side of the Seine River. It was built by Count Eiffel as the outcome of a bet. His friends took his bet that he could build such a tower. They started to raise the money, and he preceded to build the tower. There is nothing like it anywhere else especially when it is lit up at night. It is built of lengths of steel, probably five feet long, and bolts. You can get a wonderful view of the lace-like steel work by standing under it and looking up. The gardens underneath are beautiful.

The tower rests on four stone houselike pillars. Two of these house the management of the tower. Strong, large cables operate the two elevators that take you to the second floor where there is a luxury restaurant. A place where you can often see many celebrities. The prices are sky high. Then a smaller elevator takes you to the third floor, where you can get a beautiful view of Paris and its many buildings. You can see the Seine River, which enters Paris on the South and follows its course in one of its many curves to the North Sea (known as La manche). One thing, that is unusual, is that the sway at the top of the tower is only three feet. The stability is due to some mercury placed under the feet. Before air travel had made so much progress, the airplanes would always circle the tower before landing; also the Zeppelins, probably anxious to show their might. I saw them time, and time again.

My reaction to the Tour Eiffel is "Bravo" to Count Eiffel. No tourist in Paris should miss visiting this wonderful piece of engineering.

My mother used to take me by subway to play in those beautiful gardens underneath the tower. She would bring along some cross stitch for me to do. Well! there were other children there and it was not long until I was one of them. It had more appeal than cross stitching.

While I saw the tower everyday as I grew up I did not go up in the tower until I realized I was leaving Paris to come to America.

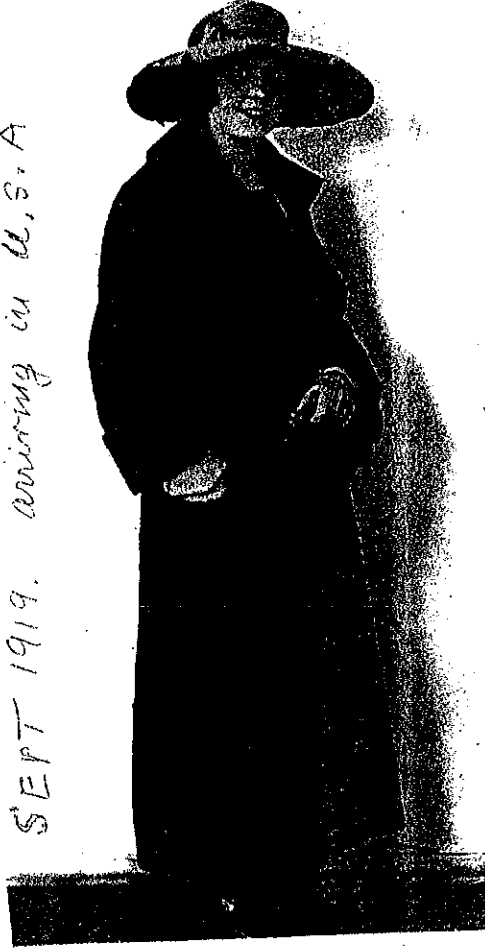
Now about the Arc De Triomphe. When Napolian came to France he fell in love with Paris. At that time what is now the place de l'Etoile and the Champs Elysees was a sea of muddy ground. He envisioned it as a beautiful large square and a main avenue leading from there to the Place de la Concorde. To-day there are twelve large avenues which cross it but the circle which makes the Place de l'Etoile is as it was born. The Arc itself is a masterpiece. It rests on four legs where are engraved the names

of many of Napoleon's soldiers who had died during the preceding battles. There is a large escalator which takes you to the top where once again you can see Paris in it's splendor.

The Champs Elysee starts there and takes you to the Place de la Concorde. There are now luxury shops underground. The traffic runs six abreast around the Arc. The tomb of the unknown soldier is under the Arc de Triumphe.

MORE ABOUT THE BUILDINGS OF PARIS THAT I LOVE IN PART III

SEPT 1919. arriving in U.S.A



Part 11-America

I remember when World War I began. It was a great shock to the French people. Of course they were all very certain it would not last more than a couple of months. AHAHA! It went on for about four years. Many able-bodied men lost their lives for what now seems a pass-time conjured up by the heads of states. While neither side had the engine of battle to win, they would have many brave men lose their lives. Many homes were torn apart. The little children missed their fathers. Life was really rough. The population of Paris was cut to practically nothing. Paris was dead. I speak of Paris because that is where it hit me. But all of France was sick!!!

I recall that after I moved into an apartment building, when we would have an air raid the superintendent would check all the rooms to make sure the students had gone underground. We didn't like to do that because it would take too long and too much sleep would be lost. I, and a few others, would hide under our beds until the check was over; and then we would go to the top floor to see if there would be a real air raid, or if it were only an alarm. As I stated before, planes at that time did not fly if the sky was bad, or if it rained. If we saw flashes of light under a plane, it would tell us another bomb had been released to fall on the city. There were too many of those to make life comfortable. (Of course, we were always sure that the French, English and Americans were chasing these planes!)

There is, however, a good side to everything and I, for one, had to be thankful that the war made it possible for me to meet Bill Cowin.

He and Bob Campbell were working in an office on a lower floor below my department. It is amazing how many trips had to be made to that office!!! Also Bill Cowin and Bob Campbell would always find excuses to show up in our office. War is a terrible thing, but I would never have met the young man who became my husband if it had not occurred.

That was in 1919 and I came to the states in January, 1920. We went to Franklin, Pa. to Bill's father and mother's house after spending a few days in Boston and New York. They were wonderful people. They were so kind to me; helping me through what could have been a bad time.

Once again I was glad I had learned to sew, for I was able to repair clothes for both of them. They both appreciated it.

I remember when I first met Nanny, Bill's mother. She was telling me how she had wanted to get the clean curtains up before I arrived. I had no idea what "clean curtains" were, or what she was talking about. That is just one of many, many times that I had no idea of what was going on!



Harriet & Robert J. Cowin

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THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

PASSPORT

AMERICAN CONSULATE

JAN 26 1924

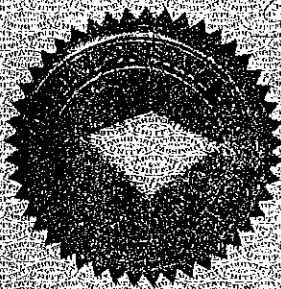
CHEBBONG, FRANCE

DEPARTMENT OF STATE

To all to whom these presents shall come, Greeting,
I, the undersigned Secretary of State of the United States of
America, hereby request all whom it may concern to permit
the bearer of these presents to pass in
any part of the United States safely and freely to pass and in case
of need to give it all lawful aid and protection.
This passport is valid for use only in the following countries
and for objects specified unless amended.

Edith Marguerite Cowin
for travel

The bearer is accompanied by



Given under my hand and the seal of the Department of State at the
City of Washington this 26th day of January 1924
in the year of the independence of the United States the
one hundred and forty eighth.

Charles E. Hughes

PERSONAL DESCRIPTION

Age 25 years. Height 5 ft 10 in. Weight 125 lbs. Eyes Blue. Hair Brown. Complexion Fair. No scars or marks. Date of birth Nov 27, 1897. Occupation



Edith Marguerite Cowin

PHOTOGRAPHED BY

No 332528

Edith Marguerite Cowin

SIGNATURE OF BEARER

We moved to Youngstown, bought what furniture we could afford, and settled down to housekeeping in an apartment on Falls Ave.

The owner of our apartment lived in the downstairs portion of the building. I must say that my mind continued making "volte-face" about my opinion of the German people. She was of German decent and was so good to Bill and me. She changed my mind completely about German people.

We did decide to move to another apartment, because it would be easier for Bill to walk to work. We did not have a car.

When I arrived in Youngstown, I met one of Bill's older brothers, Ernest and his wife Essie. Again, I have nothing but praise for the way they treated me.

The years passed and we rejoiced at the fact that on November 8th, 1924 at 8 o'clock in the morning Richard Pierre was born. From then on, it was the life of "papa" and "mama" for Bill and me.

We managed to get a baby buggy for Pierre. I would wheel him from our apartment to Ernie and Essie's house. It was a good distance for a walk, but it was good for both of us.

Ernie and Essie had a daughter Doris. She and I became good friends. She was five at the time I arrived. I would keep her when her parents would want to go to a ball game or other places. She married Joe Kiefer and we (Doris, Joe, Bill and I) had many good times together.

Joe and Doris had two children, Jim and Carol. I still hear from Carol. She has been helpful in attending to the Youngstown gravesite for me.

When Jacqueline was young, I would make many clothes for her from the good clothes that Doris would pass on to me. Had it not been for that, I don't know what Jacqueline would have worn. We really felt the crush of the depression at that time.

I remember that I made a suit for her to wear to the wedding of Joe and Doris. Everyone told me that she looked wonderful in it. Jacqueline was six years old.

I also remember buying a bolt of flannel, during the depression, and making pajamas for Bill, Pierre and Jacqueline from it. I was very proud that my sewing ability allowed me to save money that way.

When Doris would be with us, she would hear me call Bill "pin-pin" (pronounced pai-pai; very nasal, through the nose), a shortened version of the French word lapin (rabbit). This is used in France as Americans would say "honey" to someone they cared about. Well, Doris did not know what it meant, and it made her mad because she could not understand the word. The time that I remember, that made us all laugh, is when she told Bill she was going to do something; and then she added "and I don't care what you say Pin-pin" with great emphasis on the "pinpin". Everybody laughed and we always reminded her of it as she grew up.

1978



Doris Cowin Kiefer

I think now that my experience could have been very difficult if I had not fallen in the midst of all these wonderful people.

I must return to my story of when the children were young.

The name Pierre was pretty new in this country, but Bill and I were used to it, so that is what we called him. When he went to school, however, that did not work. He was Pierre at home and Dick at school. One of life's little jokes!

He was a very good child and we, of course, spoiled him all we could. I recall that when he was a baby I wanted to help him be as healthy as I could (as any mother wants). To me, that meant being put in the fresh air for his nap. At this time, we lived in a second floor apartment and I would put him in his buggy on the porch everyday. I would wrap him up in sweaters and blankets galore, for I was afraid he would catch cold. Only his face was uncovered. He was well protected from the snow, but it was quite cold. I would go and look at him every ten minutes because I was afraid something would happen to him. He, satisfied, would sleep peacefully to appointed time and I would bring him in.

Four years and three months later, Jacqueline Marie entered the world. We were once again so happy! Nothing could happen now, we had our children. We must have been seeing into the future, because that is what happened. We had the usual children's illnesses but no major problems.

Jacqueline could not keep milk down when she was an infant. I worried so because we had to tilt the crib mattress so that her head could be elevated. She seemed so fragile and little that I was afraid she would slide down under the covers. I placed her bed next to our bed and would try to sleep, leaning on my right elbow, so that I would wake up every few minutes to reassure myself that she was safe.

After a while the doctor decided to give her a special milk for babies. From that day on there were no more problems. Bill would mix a days supply at a time and everything went well.

We moved to Philadelphia Avenue into a terrace apartment. It was quite comfortable even during the depression. It had a living room, dining room, and kitchen on the first floor, and two bedrooms and a bath on the second floor. There was also a basement and a front porch!

I remember when the children came down with scarlet fever. They stayed in the large bedroom in the front of the house. It was so big that we were able to have two double beds in there.

I was so worried about the disease, because I had lost some of my hearing from having scarlet fever as a child. However, medicine had improved and they came through it without any bad outcomes.

In those days when you had a communicable disease, the board of health came out and hung a sign on your front door, and people could not go in or out of the house. This meant that Bill had to move out for the duration in order to continue working. He would

JACQUELINE (6YRS)
&
PIERRE COWIN 10 YRS



Jackie
2/5/29

Miami University

Pierre
11/8/26

Ohio State University

come by the house every night and bring tidbits to the children on his way home from work. I would go out to the curb and get whatever he brought. The children would watch from the bedroom windows and wave to him. That was the highlight of their day.

Because of the depression and because people did not get babysitters in those days (except for special occasions), we would spend time with friends on Saturday evenings either at our house or theirs.

Time marches on, without inquiring whether or not you are ready for it.

Bill decided to take the big step of quitting the Youngstown Sheet and Tube Company. He was hired by the Agler Insurance Agency in the Mahoning Bank building.

Selling insurance was not his bit. He told me he could not tell people they were going to die and they should prepare for it. He did have one good day in the beginning. On the second day he sold a large policy!

Then the depression really hit, people were cashing in their insurance. We were among those who had to cash in our insurance in order to live! We made out by being as careful as possible, and because food was "dirt" cheap. Bill's father would also send us a check every once in a while.

Because Bill did not like selling life insurance, he was moved to the accounting end of the business. There he soon made great strides. At that time, or a little later, he was able to buy some shares of stock in the company.

The work was what he liked. He had graduated from Youngstown college with honors in accounting and had even taught some accounting classes while studying for his degree.

He became Treasurer of the Agler Insurance Agency. He was offered the presidency, but he saw the stumbling blocks that would face the firm, and refused the position.

Needless to say these events took us out of our doldrums, and we were able to change our way of living.

The children were still in school, but before long Pierre would be through High School. We bought a thirty-five year old house at 537 West Ravenwood Avenue in Youngstown, Ohio.

The house was quite common, but we had to rebuy our insurance, and we felt this house was all we could afford. It may not have been sumptuous, but it was our first house and it seemed like heaven to us. We had had enough of moving, and we were bound to stay put. It had two bedrooms, living room, dining room, kitchen and bath downstairs and a huge room up stairs. We spent many happy years there sprinkled with some bumps.

The first thing we did was to replace the narrow arch between the living room and the dining room. It was quite a project but turned out well. It made the house look more up to date. It worked out well because as the family grew we often had need for a room big enough to gather for meals. We were almost always together for Thanksgiving.

I recall one day asking Pierre to straighten up his room. He went upstairs all right and I could hear him walking back and forth, so I was sure the room was improving. When he said he was finished I went up to see the results. Hardly anything had changed much except that the walls were covered with pictures of celebrities, movie stars and such. It made me laugh!!

We made many changes over the years. One of which was to buy a pool table. (Editors note: after Jacqueline went to college!). This was a major change because we had to remove the furnace in order to make room for the pool table.

Bill liked to play billiards, so he bought billiard stops for the table. He would play billiards with his friends, and when couples came over, we would all play pool. It became the site of our Saturday night gatherings. We had quite a good time this way.

I am grateful that I learned to play pool because I play now that I am at Sycamore. I am not able to play duplicate bridge. I had been used to that game almost every day and several evenings each week. It took me a long time to give it up. My mind wanted to go back to it. Duplicate bridge is a very good game, and good for your mind. There is so much to learn and to remember. There are so many conventions to learn in order to defend yourself.

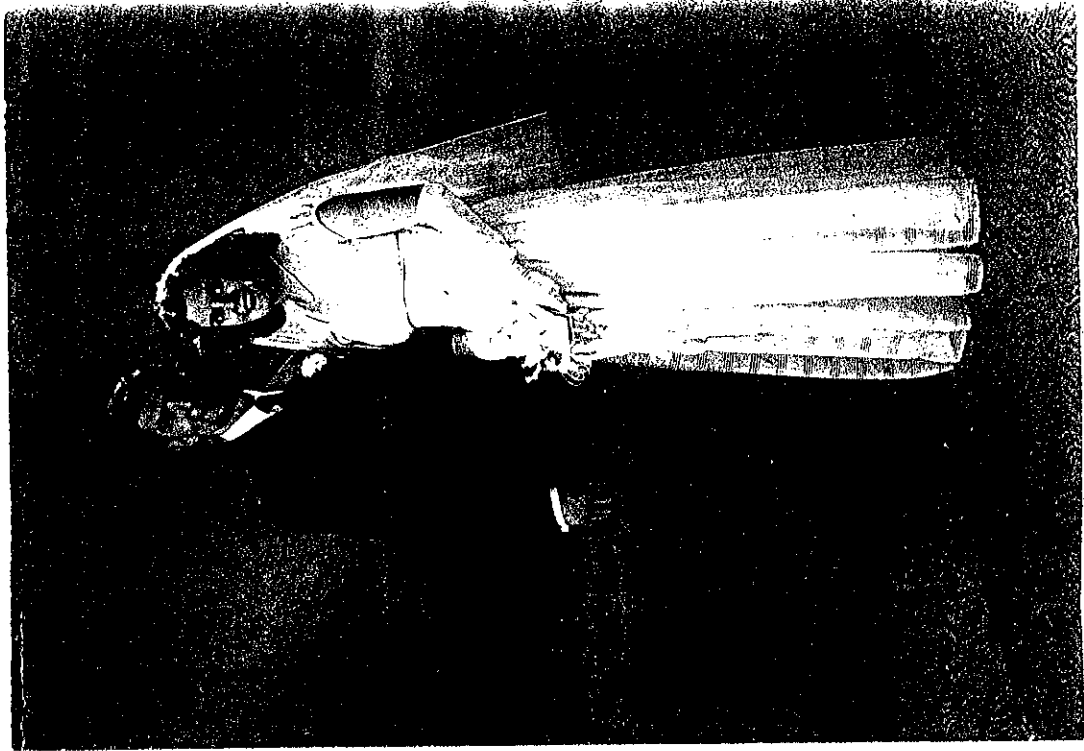
We also bought a second hand piano. I thought Jacqueline would get interested in it but she did not care for it. Instead she began dancing lessons about the time she went to junior high and continued through high school and college. She did quite well with that.

After Pierre graduated from High School he was called to the service. I'll never forget how down we felt. We took him to the train collecting a great many men headed for the war. He said "no tears". So we stiffened up and did not cry.

In due time we heard that he was at Camp Forrest. We (Bill, Jacqueline, Mary Lightbody and I) went down by train to see him in Tennessee. We had rented a room for him at the same hotel where we were staying. When he saw the bed he exclaimed, "All that sea of bed for me!!" We all laughed, but I suppose that after sleeping on an army cot it did look immense. He slept in it though, and enjoyed the change of style.

He was sent overseas. He landed, I believe, in England. The news was not very reassuring according to the radio. (There was not any television at that time.) As I recall, he was in the second wave of troops on the Northern Sea to France. It was difficult to receive news from him, but I could more or less visualize where he had landed in Normandy.

We, and many other parents, lived for the mailman hoping we would hear from our son. Our mailman would signal when he went down the other side of the street if he had a letter. I would cross over and get it, and not have to wait until he completed his route to reach our house much later in the day.



Pierre & Mary Cowin

3/30/46



Jacqueline & Bill Mann

10/10/53

The landing in Normandy at Omaha Beach was successful but not without dangerous spots. Fortunately for us Pierre did not get hurt. Then with the rest of them he crossed the northern part of France to take part in the fun of victory.

The war became more successful for our side. Pierre found out where my brother Marcel was, and made arrangements to meet him. I don't recall where but I think it was in the south of France. They had a nice visit. Probably difficult, because Marcel did not speak English very well, and Pierre's French was also limited. I was so happy to hear that they had met!!

Eventually he was scheduled to come home, and we along with Jackie and Mary Lightbody (whom he had dated since Junior High School) went to Cleveland to bring him home!!

We thought we were dreaming. He was home!! He was very trim and very thin. Before he left for college at Ohio State, he had regained some of his lost weight.

Meanwhile Jacqueline was growing up. She seemed so small at birth. Pierre had been a large baby, and she was just a little under six pounds. I was afraid I would break her but she withstood my handling of her.

She went through the usual turmoil of school days sprinkling them with dance lessons and such. She entered Miami University at Oxford, Ohio and graduated four years later.

Pierre went to Ohio State University and married Mary Lightbody. After graduation they moved to New Haven, Connecticut where William Russell Cowin was born on April 2, 1950. We thought they were an exceptional young family.

I want to tell you about Mary Lightbody, being such a beautiful girl and a very nice person. For a fact, there is a lot more I would like to tell you about her. She is very kind. There is nothing too much for Mary to share.

She and Jacqueline became, and still are good friends. I must say in passing, that I thank my lucky stars I have them, Pierre and Bill Mann to turn to in case of need. With their help, my lonely life can be quite bearable. Of course, I still miss Bill but then such is life. We have to tell ourselves that it is good and it certainly has had a good side for me.

I recall a trip we made to New Haven, when Bill (Russell) was just a baby and we just had to see him. He was a very good baby and we all adored him.

Well, the weather was very bad and we debated about the good sense of starting out. We really wanted to get there, so start we did. Mary's mother Lillian, Jackie, Bill, and I told ourselves we would turn around if we had to and come back.

We finally pulled off the Pennsylvania Turnpike just before going through the last mountain tunnel. The next morning, after passing through the mountain, the weather was like Spring. We were glad we had continued and were safe.

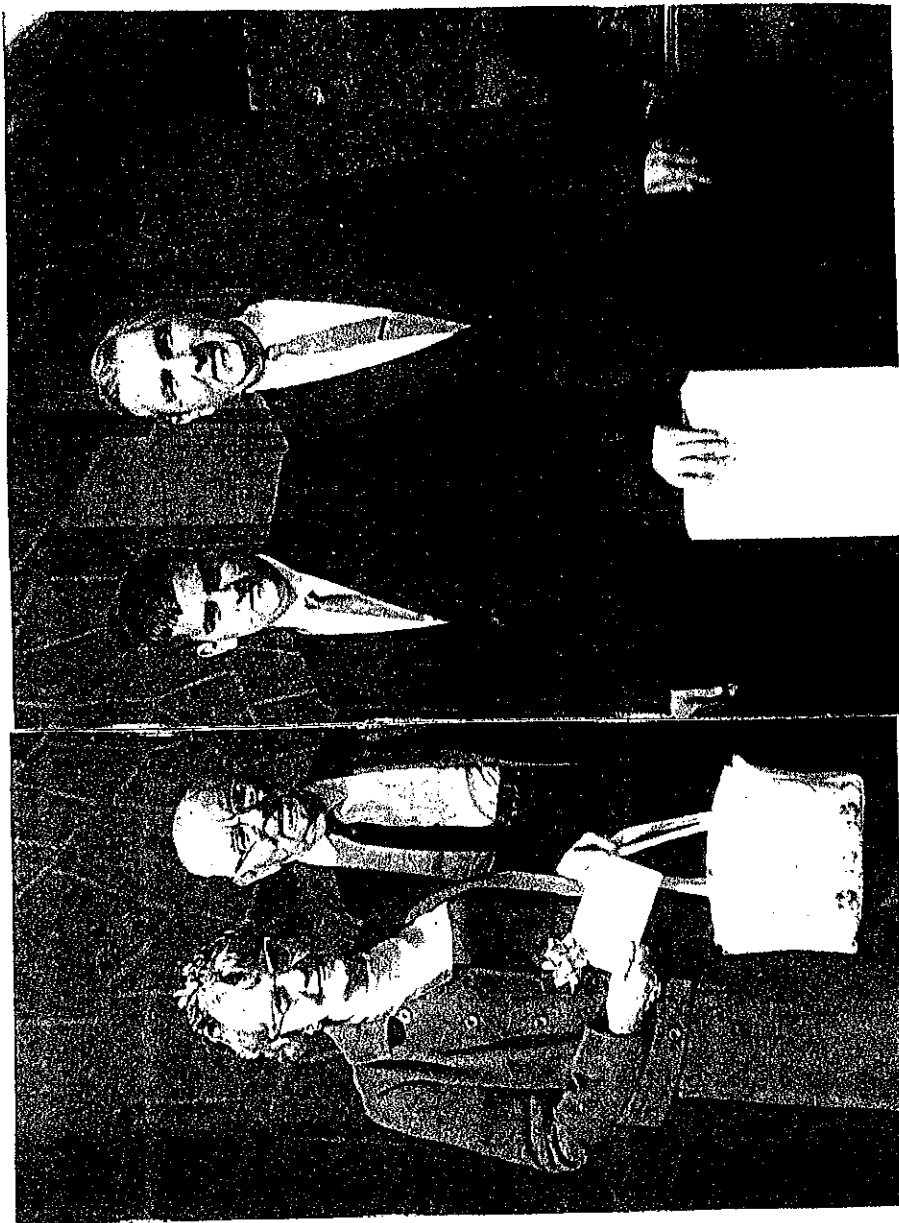
We arrived in New Haven, Connecticut enjoyed a very good visit, and enjoyed very much being with our first grandson, William Russell!! He was named after both his grandfathers and we were very proud.



William Russell Cowin

4/2/50

1st Grandson



1972 Ohio State University
Graduation

Bill Cowin married Linda Gentilcore. As her name implies she is a gentle, lovely person. She is following in the tracks made by her father and mother.

Bill graduated from Ohio State University and is now an officer in the Downtown Oldsmobile Distributorship. He and Linda live in Warren, Ohio.

The summer after Jacqueline's freshman year at Miami University, Bill said one day that she and I should make a trip to France. Of course, I agreed.

When we were flying from New York, I so clearly remember seeing the Aurora Borealis at three a.m. It should be everyone's good luck to see this stupendous display in the sky. First, I happened to be looking out the window when I saw what looked like a very black ink or paint, then suddenly red appeared and they mixed, to make the most unlikely picture!!! I wanted to wake Jacqueline up but I knew she was tired. I have regretted ever since, not doing so. Within minutes the sky had changed to a mixture of pink, red, black, and whatnot. It did not last long. No one should miss that sight.

We stayed a few days in London and then on to Paris and to a hotel where we had reservations. It was not the newest hotel but we were safe and close enough to Marcel's apartment that we could walk over to visit.

I tried to take her to see the sights of Paris but we had to skip over many things because we were scheduled to go to Strassbourg to visit my mother. (My father had passed away some time before that.)

We did go to the Louvre, Luxembourg Gardens (where the Senate House sits), the Eiffel Tower and ever so many spots.

In Strassbourg we visited with my mother. My niece, Eleian came for a few days. She and Jacqueline went to town on the streetcar and bought an eel which was wrapped alive and wiggling in a newspaper. Marcel's wife prepared it for dinner. It was fixed in wine sauce and was very good but Jacqueline only tasted it.

During the war I worried about my family suffering from a shortage of food so Bill and I sent many, many boxes of food (one a week) to my mother so she would not suffer from the hard times. When Jacqueline and I arrived, I opened a large armoire and there was practically everything I had sent!!! I was provoked but I understand that she was saving it in case the Germans would come back, and then when she knew we were coming over she saved it for us!!

She was quite frail and I hated seeing that. She, Jacqueline and I went shopping one day. That was a major venture. She began to prepare at five o'clock in the morning.

Not too long after our trip my brother Marcel wrote to say she was in a nursing home. I went to visit her once again later on and I was shocked. She did not know me!!! Me!!! I could not make her understand who I was. She lived about a year after

that. I must say, I was almost glad that she left this earth where she could no longer know what was going on. It seemed like a release.

After our visit to Strassbourg we went to the South of France. We visited Nice, the queen of the cities in that part of the country.

Jacqueline graduated from Miami University and two years later married Bill Mann. The years of married life have given them a bevy of five children. It is to their credit that by the time Christmas rolls around this year all five of their children will be college graduates.

Bill and Jackie are grandparents of two in Indianapolis at Jim's house and one in North Carolina at Claudia's house.

Telling about my six grandchildren and three great grandchildren makes me very proud. I love them all.

Bill Cowin, my first grandchild and Pierre and Mary's son, married Linda Gentlecore but I have already told you about that. Linda is a nurse and works in the hospital in Warren, Ohio.

Now I will tell you about Bill and Jackie's children. Jim, their eldest, married Carol Fogt. They have two children making another exemplary home. The children are Jacob and Susan and I love the whole family. They live in Indianapolis.

David is Bill and Jackie's second child and is hard at work at school and work in Cincinnati. David is a fine young man and further more he knows how to cook and take care of people. He came to Youngstown for a visit shortly after Bill's death and found me with my arm and shoulder in a sling. He took charge and cooked our meals and helped me out for a few days.

I had injured my shoulder in a car accident. I was driving and looking for the post office at the same time. My car had to be sold. I was not a bit anxious to drive after that even though it was not a bad accident. I decided I was just getting too old to drive. I had not learned to drive until several years after I came to Youngstown but that is another story.

My being in that shape did not make a good visit for David but we had a lot of chit-chat and I got to know him better.

When Paula was in the hospital as a young child I went to Columbus to stay with David and Jim. They were very good and no hardship to supervise.

Paula, their third child and first daughter, is making her stride as an engineer with General Motors. She is currently in a suburb of Tokyo, Japan. She will stay for a year and return to Indianapolis and General Motors next summer. She loves the Japanese people and Japan. During this stay she is teaching English to adult Japanese. All in all, she is happy with the leave and move to Japan. It is bound to be fruitful as business with Japan looks as if it is on an up curve. She and I have quite a correspondence relating our stumbles in a new language. Her experience reminds me of mistakes I made and she will no doubt make.

March 1959



Jim & David Mann
with PerePere

James C. Mann
10/1/54

David R. Mann
7/22/56

both
Miami University



Claudia Mann
1/5/62

Ohio State University



Paula Mann
9/24/58

General Motors Institute

Easter Sunday 1989



Tom with Nanere

Thomas O. Mann
11/20/66

University of Cincinnati

Claudia, three years younger than Paula, graduated from Ohio State in agriculture. I think it was a good choice for her because she eventually met Brian Stevenson, who had graduated from Arizona State University also in Agriculture. They now have a twenty month old daughter, Janelle who is TOPS! She never seems to be flustered at anything. I recall watching her last June when she was just over a year old. She was trying to put a toy back together. She tried and tried (at least ten times). She stuck to it and finally solved the problem. Brian is with DeKalb Swine Breeders in North Carolina and Claudia is a big help to him, typing his reports etc.

Claudia is a District Conservationist for Greene County in North Carolina.

Thomas is the youngest of the five. I guess he is destined to be the showman of the family. Jackie and Bill were concerned with his choice of studies. That was not the kind of life they wanted for him. But he is quite successful at it. He finished his education at the University of Cincinnati this year. He is quite tall and everyone loves him.

When Bill Cowin retired in 1954 I felt sure he would be lost after having worked so steadily for so many years. I don't recall his ever being late to office. He missed only a few days due to minor illnesses.

I was glad when he mentioned going to France. We decided to go right after he retired. We thought this would help him adjust to his new schedule.

Really men should take up knitting, latch hooking or anything that would help them enjoy passing the time. Of course he had golf in season and billiards at which he claimed to be only passable but I heard differently from his friends.

Billiards became his biggest occupation. I was so thankful for it. The golf season is so short in Northeast Ohio. I call it good therapy. However he was no longer anxious to play. It happened twice that a friend he was with dropped dead on the course. Both times he had the job of telling the new widows what had happened. I could not blame him for not wanting to be reminded of those occasions by playing golf.

At any rate, we decided to go to France by ship as soon as he retired. Accommodations were made on the S.S. France. We also planned to visit London. Our friends the Feeses also wanted to go and so we were able to travel together most of the way. The France was a beautiful ship and we had a very good trip. It was scheduled to make the trip in four days. We took in all that was offered on board ship in the way of games, shopping, etc.

In London we witnessed the changing of the guard, Buckingham Palace and the usual sights seen by tourists. I remember seeing a string of royal carriages. That happens every other day to exercise the horses.



William E. +
Edith M. Coevins

1963

We went on to Paris where we stayed at the Grand Hotel. That became our home base. We could leave whatever luggage we did not need there while we took short trips.

We went to Switzerland to admire the Alps and their display of colors. Actually there was very little white. The mountains were rose or blue, and sometimes the colors got mixed up as though they did not know where to go!

I must mention going through the Rhone glacier in the Alps. Everyone should have that opportunity. We had made reservations for a trip to the second highest peak of the chain of the Alps. We were at that time staying in Chamonix, which is the closest we could get to the cable car that would take us across the DEEP, DEEP valley.

The trip to the glacier stands out in my mind as one of the highlights of that vacation. The weather was snowy down in the valley, and we were afraid of what we were getting into, but when we reached the high altitude, the sun was shining and we were delighted that we could enter the tunnel of ice.

Once in the cable car it is better not to look down. It is scary. We hoped the cables engineering the small sized gondola would make it. Well, it did for a fact. I only heard of one episode where there had been an accident.

After leaving the valley in deep bad weather we arrived in a sea of sunshine. We thoroughly enjoyed the trip. We had the same experience when we left the valley to go to the glacier. A trip one should take.

As I said, the sun was shining quite hard when we reached the glacier. The ice was a beautiful pink. We went through the tunnel, and low and behold, the ice was all blue. We saw that display of colors coming back from Nice by plane. The whole Alps were pink and blue. So much for the effect of the prisms.

Of course we had to go to Mont Blanc, the second highest peak in that part of the chain. The Alps continue their course east as far as Yugoslavia; of course by different names.

When we were in Chamonix, the closest town to Mont Blanc, we bought souvenirs to take back to our family that we had left behind. One thing I remember was a brief case for Pierre. Milan was supposed to be the leather spot of Italy.

On our way back we stopped in Roquefort and saw the cheese being made. This was worth seeing. First a layer of about three inches of custard-like goats milk is placed into a large round mold and allowed to thicken. After a prescribed amount of time a layer of molded rye bread is laid on top. Then another layer of goat's milk custard and after a prescribed amount of time the cheese is turned over. That spreads the goat's milk and moldy rye bread evenly in the cheese.

The story of how the cheese was discovered is interesting. There was a young shepherd well used to the mountains taking his sheep there to graze. A nightmare of a storm came up and it lasted a couple of days. The poor shepherd could not get back to

the valley. He thought he was dying of hunger, since all he had to eat was some moldy cheese and some old rye bread. He decided it was pretty good and roquefort cheese was developed. This story is from a fact and fiction article I read.

We bought many presents for those at home. Jimmy was an infant and we brought him a sunsuit from Switzerland. Jacqueline had his picture taken when he was nine months old in this suit. She has had every child and grandchild in the family have a picture taken in this same suit when they are nine months old. The handiwork on it is beautiful and is a farm scene.

From Italy we went back to Paris. I think we were getting a little tired of traveling. All those countries should be seen one by one because there is so much to see in each one. They all offer so much that your mind gets tired. In Paris we had a change of scenery. We, of course, saw the Pyrenees mountains which are the beginning of the chain which is the mighty Alps.

Then we decided to go to Spain because the weather was so chilly in Paris. I had been used to shedding winter clothing when I was growing up and I guess I didn't remember Paris as getting so cold. We had not taken adequate clothing for sharper weather.

In Spain the story was the same, just too cool for comfort. We had to buy a wool shirt for Bill and a warm dress for me..

I had been writing my uncle (my mother's brother) and we had been invited to dinner. They lived in a provincial town in France but we found our way to it. We had a wonderful visit with him and his wife. My uncle August had always been a favorite of mine when I knew him and I was glad to see him again.

We returned to Paris and started thinking about our trip home on the Rotterdam. A very classy ship. The tone of the furniture and everything was gold. Maybe not practical but beautiful. One stinking spot marred the end of the trip. The waiters and kitchen personnel were getting ready to strike and the food left a little to be desired.

Once again the years have passed. After Bill retired and we were living a calm easy life. Then after hardly ever missing a day when he worked he had a succession of short illnesses which took him to the hospital several times. Nothing real serious but of course he was getting older. He was a very patient patient. The last episode was in February of 1977. I felt completely lost when he died. All at once there was no one to talk to, to cook for, to take for a ride. I just had to talk myself into thinking it was normal.

Bill and I had a lovely life. I miss him very much.

I stayed in the house quite a while and then decided to sell it. All at once it was just too big.

The housing market was down because of the economic problems caused by the Youngstown Sheet and Tube folding. Eventually the house sold for a small \$25,000 but considering the small amount (\$13,00) we had paid for it and the fact I was able to unload it,



I was happy. We had made considerable improvements on the house over the years. I knew the two young men who bought the house would not take care of it since they had shown themselves to be that type as renters.

I then lived at 4071 Glenwood Avenue in an apartment. That was quite satisfactory except it was down one half a flight of steps and this made the apartment dark. The sun would reflect on the windows of the cars parked in front of my living room windows. The only thing I could do was pull the shades. Otherwise it was quite comfortable with two bedrooms. This was good because Jacqueline would come to visit and she would have a place to sleep.

Jacqueline found a retirement center that was being built in Miamisburg five minutes from her home. I moved into Sycamore Glen Retirement Center on July 28, 1986. The place was not quite finished. The dining room at that time had only three or four tables occupied. It is now four years old and the residents number 135.

My apartment is a studio apartment. I don't think I could live in a single room. Life is pleasant here. I can see the sun rising every morning and I have learned to live in the cut down space.

On November 11, Armistice day, I had a wonderful view of three parachutists landing on the front yard of our center. Bill Mann and Omar Brown joined me to watch this celebration.

I am sure that Paula, putting up with the restricted area in Tokyo that she is, would think I have ample room. Well in a way I have, except that it is hard to find what to put where. However, I have now been here for fifty-one months and I am quite comfortable. (Of course I still miss my old house.)

The food on the whole is good and that helps because I don't cook, which gives me more time to read, and do latch hook rugs and other handiwork.

I spend a good deal of time making latchhook rugs. I made one years ago for Pierre and Mary and got back to it when I moved here. I have now made one for each of the grandchildren and their parents. I have also made an afghan for each of the three great-grand children. I play a game of pool every day unless time does not permit. It is a good game because it gives me a lot of stretching and walking exercise. I play usually with one or two men. I cannot find any women who play. Omar Brown and Joe Whelan both like to play. Joe plays while his wife plays bingo.

Omar lost his wife several years ago. He is a very nice person and so is Joe. It helps to pass the time, and we enjoy playing. We play a game called Rotation if all three of us are playing. If Joe does not play, we play Eight Ball. It helps me not miss my bridge. That has been hard to overcome because I used to play practically every day and several evenings a week. One must have a pattern to go by or you will end up being lonesome and worrying.

The residents here are mostly retired teachers or farmers and are very nice. Once again I have had to realign my thinking of the German people. A lot of the residents are of German decent. Everyone is lovely, to sum it all up.

The retirement home is under the tutelage of the Seventh Day Adventists. One thing was quite odd at first. There would be so much work to do to finish the building but when Saturday came it would be dead quiet and then on Sunday the hammers and saws would start their chirping again.

And so I arrive at the end of my tale of blessings not woes. My 93rd birthday on November 29, 1990 is coming much too fast. I am so much better off than so many here. I am so grateful for my family and the help they give me. Each is special and help in their own way to ease the job of getting old.

I am blessed, truly blessed, and wish everyone could be as well off as I am. True, my hearing is quite faulty and I walk about as gracefully as a duck flies due to losing the cartilage in my right knee; but otherwise I am pretty healthy.

I religiously take my vitamins and nutrients to overcome the shortages that are brought on by time. Since those are no longer supplied after thirty years of age, and the reserve wears off so I am glad for replacements.

I do not have many friends here in Dayton but I do want to mention Tom and Charlotte Fogt. They have done so much for me and they are someone I can turn to when Jacqueline and Bill are away. I have also enjoyed several lunches with Barb Hamm and her mother-in-law Lillian. These, plus the people mentioned here at Sycamore and my family, all help to make me happy.

