

Bessie Johnson's Diary

January 1, 1941 - April 20, 1942

Introduction

Bessie had a 5-year diary that she wrote in almost daily. The diary started on January 1, 1941 and she wrote in it regularly until a few weeks after her marriage in 1942. Each space was small, so the entries are short. Some notes from earlier diaries are included to set the story that begins when Bessie moved from Miller South Dakota to Washington DC in October of 1940. The U.S. government was preparing for war, and there was a need for people to work in the various departments. Bessie got a job in the War Department.

Bessie had been working in Pierre South Dakota and was studying Stenograph. She met her friend Cecelia Hlebanja in Pierre and together they took the opportunity to travel to DC to get work there.

The diary covers the time from the early days of her relationship with Ray Gibbs through the marriage on April 4, 1942. There is a short break in entries – the honeymoon time – and then a few more entries before Bessie stopped writing in it.

These first entries are from the 1940 diary and start with Bessie's first mention of Ray Gibbs. Through the rest of 1940, only those entries that mention Ray are included. All the entries after November 20, 1940 are included. Bessie had several other boyfriends at the time and they are mentioned in the diary. The boyfriend before Ray was Don Breed from SD. They seem to be breaking up about this time. She calls it off when she decides to marry Ray.

Bessie and Ray met at the All States Club, which was a social gathering place for all the people who had come to DC to work for the War effort.

The Diary Entries

October 1940.

Bessie traveled from Miller, South Dakota to Washington DC to work in the War Department to start work on October 25, 1940.

November 20, 1940

After supper we all congregated on the stairs and harmonized on old songs. Bertha and I went to an All States Club dance and met Ray Gibbs from Virginia, a perfect old feud era hillbilly – very smooth dancer. Danced every dance and met people from lots of states.

December 5, 1940

Went shopping after work, was late for supper. Got letters from Dorothy, Louie and George. Ray Gibbs called and will come up Sat. night. Wendie (*male friend*) came over and we dictated to each other. Had a tap lesson and learned some riffs.

December 7, 1940

Grace B and I went apartment hunting all afternoon but didn't find anything very suitable. Ray Gibbs called up at 10 and came at 10:45. We drove way out into Virginia & sat & talked. He's got some pretty sound ideas & think I have. Confusion.

December 9, 1940

Wandie was over for dictation again, but we got down to business more tonight. Elbert Alexander called me up. Ray Gibbs called & then came up & took me apartment hunting. We found one pretty good one & if Grace likes it, we might take it.

December 10, 1940

The apartment was rented last night. Foey! Got a letter from Don saying we had to forget our love. It hurt me & I cried a lot. Elbert Alexander & his roommate came over & we discussed speech in different parts of the country & Elbert played my guitar & I the fiddle.

December 13, 1940

Went to All States Club & took the minutes on my Steno. Ray Gibbs came – after I had called him up. He took me home & we had a visit. His favorite dream is to play the guitar in an orchestra. He is 31 years old. Elbert was here when I got home.

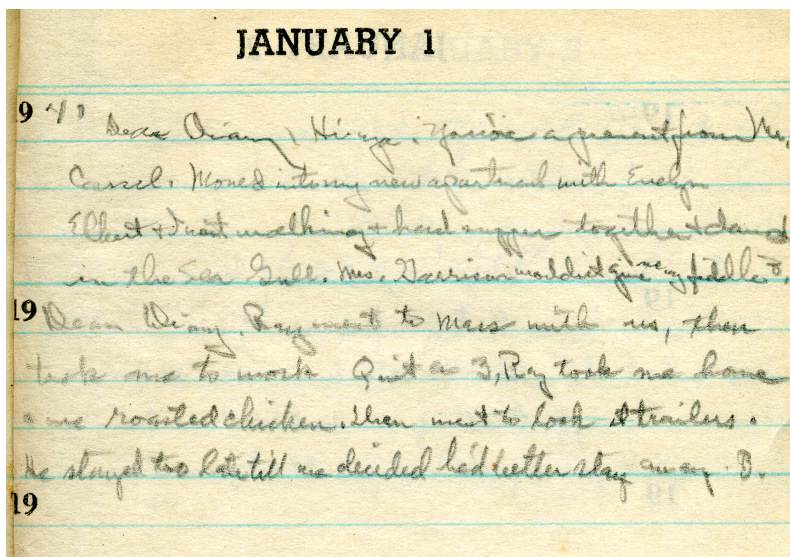
December 27, 1940

Wendie, Sam Duber, Elbert & Ray all called me tonight. Elbert went apartment hunting with me & we found a good deal for a month while the girl is gone to Florida. Elbert bought me a sandwich & loaned me a dollar. Got letters from Mama, John, Louie & Mae. Also some cards.

December 29, 1940

Practiced tap. Wrote Mama. Elbert came up & consoled (?) us. Ray came up & helped the girls move their things. Then we came back up. Mrs. G had taken my violin & skates again. Somebody called, saying there were (at) the police station – that they had warrants for Mrs. Garrison to sign.

Shown below is a picture of the first page –



January 1, 1941

Dear Diary, Hiya. You're a present from Jim Cassel (?). Moved into my new apartment with Evelyn and I went walking and had supper and danced together in the Sea Gull. Mrs. Garrison wouldn't give me my fiddle.

January 2, 1941

Dear Diary, I bought a lot of groceries and Evelyn and I had toasted cheese sandwiches, co?, and rolls for supper. She is a Jew but studies the Christian Science religion, but most of her principles are ok.

January 3, 1941

Dear Diary, Went to All States Club with Elbert and Jimmy. I am practically elected Secretary of the Club – I'm the only one on the ballot for it. 9 of us went to the Sea Gull after the meeting but Elbert and I went home early.

January 4, 1941

Dear Diary, Hurried home for dictation with Wendie? this afternoon, but he was sick so I spent the afternoon cleaning the apartment. Went to the Sea Gull with Elbert but we left at 11:15 although he didn't like it.

January 5, 1941

Dear Diary, Went to Mass at St. Stevens. Practiced dancing. Got my Christmas present from Mama – a lilac satin blouse from Kate some pins, from Jeanny a pin cushion. Ray came up tonight and we had a lunch. Mrs. Elliott moved in.

January 6, 1941

Dear Diary, Wendie came up for dictation – a mere half hour apiece. Then we went to the Sea Gull and danced once. He kissed me on the way home and it was very gentle and sweet and I wonder if it will make us part.

January 7, 1941

Dear Diary, Got a very sweet letter from Arthur Frank and wrote one. Also one from Dorothy. She gave me a lot of prayers for Christmas. A colored girl helped me clean the apt. Stayed home all evening and enjoyed it very much. Up at 6.

January 8, 1941

Dear Diary, Wendie came up for dictation tonight. Mrs. Elliott doesn't like a different boyfriend every night unless she is out. That's ok. Took quite a lot of dictation in the office today. Talked to Mr. Blonian about All States Club.

January 9, 1941

Dear Diary, I took a Rifled Bore Shell committee meeting and did all right. They also used a Dictaphone as a double check. Went to a tap recital and also took my lesson. Bertha called me tonight. Wrote to George. Evelyn had supper with me.

January 10, 1941

Dear Diary, Started on the transcript of yesterday's meeting and it went pretty slow with the Dictaphone. Took Peter Blonien to All States Club & he seemed to enjoy it. I did. I was elected Secretary of the club but didn't assume my duties yet. Bye.

January 11, 1941

Dear Diary, Still transcribing the meeting. Had a headache all day from the Dictaphone. Wendie was over for dictation 2 hrs. this afternoon. Elbert came over tonight & I had to give him a lecture on keeping his hands off me. Went to confession.

January 12, 1941

Dear Diary, Went to 9 o'clock mass and communion. Read some valuable information (on) marriage – little use as I have for it. Practiced at the studio. Ray came up and tuned up my Hawaiian guitar. We went riding. He taught me a clog step.

January 13, 1941

Dear Diary, Went to a meeting of the officers of the All States Club out north of town. Got a card from Art saying "I haven't heard from you. Is anything wrong?" Wrote to Mr. Cassel. Mrs. Elliott went out but Evelyn came in for supper.

January 14, 1941

Dear Diary, Elbert brought my typewriter back and I gave him a speed test. Typed the All States Club mailing list. Mrs. Elliott and I had an interesting talk about work. At the office when I transcribe, I am oblivious to anything else.

January 15, 1941

Dear Diary, Payday. Bought a bunch of money orders. Went to the All States Club Splash Party at the Ambassador Hotel with Peter Blonien. We had a wonderful time and I was gloriously tired when I got home & slept like a log.

January 16, 1941

Dear Diary, Had sleet & I walked the 30 blocks to work through it. Bought a rain cape & ear muffs. Went to All States Club meeting at the Hayloft & had fun. We danced to the nickelodeon. A guy that looked like Jusus gave me a ride.

January 17, 1941

Dear Diary, Took a tap lesson, but didn't learn any new steps. Am still working on that Eleanor Powell step. Had another religious discussion with Evelyn and now she is in the position of asking me about it.

January 18, 1941

Dear Diary, Got letters from Art, Leo, Dorothy. Wendie was up for dictation awhile & I spent 3 hours cleaning the apartment. Went to All States Club dance with Ray & had a swell time although we came home early.

January 19, 1941

Dear Diary, Ray & I went picture-taking and apartment hunting. I found a place I am going to move into on the 1st. We went to a show and then home for lunch. Evelyn was here. Martha saw Nelson Eddy in person.

January 20, 1941

Dear Diary, The big day – Roosevelt’s third inauguration. I got some good pictures & tried to take the speech, but couldn’t hear. The parade was all military & I appreciated the Field Artillery section of it, as that is my work.

January 21, 1941

Dear Diary, Back to work after the big day. Spent a quiet evening at home writing to Arthur Frank & sewing on buttons. Domestication? Don’t get excited – it won’t last long. My lawyer is charging a \$5 fee.

January 22, 1941

Dear Diary, Wrote some personal letters in the office. Went to an All states Club Executive meeting at Peter Follis’. Walked all the way back. My lawyer called me and I can get my violin as soon as I pay him his fee. Wrote to Art.

January 23, 1941

Dear Diary, Did a tap dance at All States Club & Joe said I missed my calling. I don’t know whether he meant as a stenog. or a dancer. Elbert played the guitar & sang. We had the best meeting yet. Ray took me there & home. Worked for the Legal Section.

January 24, 1941

Dear Diary, Finished up in the Legal Section & they hinted they could use me up there. Took another tap lesson & learned a cute step. Got some literature on Wonderful Wyoming & dropped a card to Art. Got my Reader’s Digest yesterday.

January 25, 1941

Dear Diary, Cleaned house this afternoon. Elbert was over for a while. Practiced guitar, went to confession, wrote a bunch of letters. Martha had supper with me. We had hamburgers, beans, salad, coffee & cake.

January 26, 1941

Dear Diary, Ray came up & we visited Museum of Natural History. It snowed, heavy wet snow. He had supper here with Martha & then went to the show “Northwest Mounted Police”. Nothing of importance accomplished today.

January 27, 1941

Dear Diary, The Weber of Weber Steel Co. sent me a purse as thanks for typing that contract last week. Took “Capt. Jammy” on the radio & cried. Martha said, “Here you don’t get homesick, but will cry over the radio.” A guy in the office said, “How can I work looking at you.”

January 28, 1941

Dear Diary, Ray came up tonight & dictated to me for 2 hours. I got a letter from Cec & a Xmas card for Don through me from a friend of his in Canada. I don’t know what to do with it because I don’t know where Don is. Woe is me.

January 29, 1941

Dear Diary, Woke up with a touch of the flu so I stayed home all day. I started a letter to Don's Canadian friend telling him how it was with Don & me, which in the end will be a complete story of our beautiful romance. Ray was up & I told him about Don.

January 30, 1941

Dear Diary, Went to All States Club & played the mouth organ. Met a Clarence Johnson from Laurel, Nebraska. Had hamburgers & hot dogs for refreshments. At midnight everybody started yelling to celebrate payday. Ray took me home.

January 31, 1941

Dear Diary, Payday and I am saving \$20 for my vacation. Waited for Wendie to come for dictation but he didn't show up. Took a tap lesson – very exciting. Practiced a little steno & English. Transcribed some Dictaphone records.

February 1, 1941

Dear Diary, Moved to my new place & they were anxiously awaiting me. Went to the All States Club dance & Clarence Johnson monopolized me during the last half of the dance & wanted to take me home, but Ray did. I kissed him.

February 2, 1941

Dear Diary, Went to Mass with Mr. & Mrs. Symington & spent the rest of the day at home writing to Russell about Don & my beautiful love. It's a very long letter. Haven't finished yet. Wrote to Cec on the stenotype.

February 3, 1941

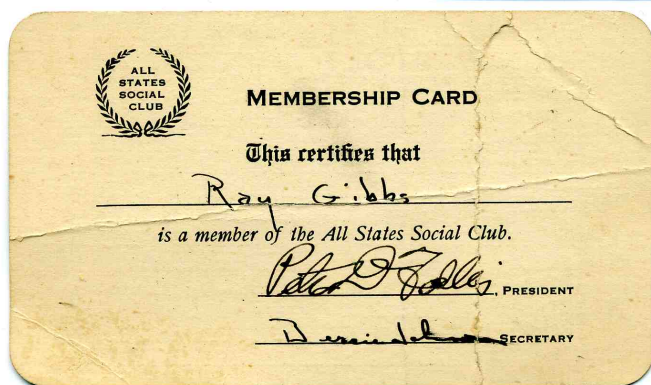
Dear Diary, Met Lieutenant Preston Northcross & had dinner with him at the Commodore. Sipped a little Bourbon with him before and he forced a ksis on me. He found out I wasn't always an "agreeable little thing". Registered for Spanish.

February 4, 1941

Dear Diary, Saw D. Northcross again & made a tentative date for Saturday. Ray came up while I was writing to Art & read the R.D.(Reader's Digest) while I finished. Then we ate & held hands & listened to the radio. He had said to call him, but I knew he'd come anyway.

February 5, 1941

Dear Diary, Went to my first session of Spanish class. She gave us a verse to learn. I don't exactly know why I kissed Ray last night – I am still in love with Don & still praying for his conversion. Pork chops.



February 6, 1941

Dear Diary, Saw the world's record for stenotype being made – 375 wpm. Very thrilling. Went to All States Club afterwards & danced. Ray was there & he took me home. I kissed him, but I can't let it go on like this.

February 7, 1941

Dear Diary, Ray dictated to me for an hour & then took me for my big lesson. For a long time I avoided his kiss, but finally I did kiss him. His kisses are so real and whole-hearted. I am trying to find a way to tell him I still love Don.

February 8, 1941

Dear Diary, Went to the first rehearsal of the All States Glee club & we didn't do badly, according to the director. Went to confession. Had a lobster dinner. He was going to kiss me but I said if he did I'd never see him again. He didn't. (Ray?)

February 9, 1941

Dear Diary, Had a housewarming party. Margaret Heron, Rae Nouins, Ray Gibbs & Peter Blonien were here. Afterwards I told Ray we shouldn't be in love because I still loved Don. He said he'd take a chance on my forgetting him and stick around. He's ok.

February 10, 1941

Dear Diary, Went to school and met a Scott kid on the way home. He walked home with me. He's a bodyguard to a Brigadier Gen. Had letters from Carl Labor & Dorothy. Worked for Major McIneny (?) today. Practiced a little Hawaiian guitar.

February 11, 1941

Dear Diary, Went up town after work & danced till 10:30 to avoid that date with the bus driver. Got my mail at Marthas – letters from Mama & Johnny. Johnny might come east next summer. Visited with Dick Halbel.

February 12, 1941

Dear Diary, Got a Spanish book and went to class tonight. Met Scotty afterwards & he came home with me & we had pumpkin pie & coffee & talked mostly about motorcycles. He drove one. Wrote to Mama, Carl & Johnny.

February 13, 1941

Dear Diary, Got a letter from Arthur Frank & a Valentine box of candy from George Pietrous. Went to Spanish class. Got a Valentine card from Ray. Practiced a little dancing & a little guitar.

February 14, 1941

Dear Diary, Sent a telegram Valentine to Art & he sent me one. Ray came up, but we only talked. He said he was sick after I told him I loved Don, but he made up his mind we had to be just friends. He took me to tap lesson. Wrote to Art.

February 15, 1941

Dear Diary, Payday – I spent the afternoon uptown. I got a pair of tap shoes. Went to the Roger Smith Hotel but there was no All States Club dance there. I guess I had a bum steer. Got sick on the streetcar & got off & walked.

February 16, 1941

Dear Diary, Went to 7 o'clock Mass & again at 11 with Ray. He was here for dinner and then we took pictures & went to the studio & I tried out my new taps. Went to All States Club & I am going to start a harmonica band. Ray didn't kiss me today.

February 17, 1941

Dear Diary, Took a conference on my Stenotype 2 ½ hrs long. Saw Lt. Northcross. Saw Ray on B Street & he took me the rest of the way to work. Letters from Mama & Mary & wrote in steno. Also wrote to Geo. P. Announcement of Mae's baby.

February 18, 1941

Dear Diary, Transcribed conference all day. LeRoy Scott came this evening and we went to the Cozy Corner for milk shakes. I feel like my time is wasted with him – more or less. Got a letter from Leo; he is (?) by George Wheelhouse.

February 19, 1941

Dear Diary, Went to Spanish class & one of the students walked home with me – forgot his name. Gov't Printing Office apprentice, studious, couth, Lutheran, artistic, intelligent, not a drunkard, has been jilted. A nice kid.

February 20, 1941

Dear Diary, Arnold Koeppler walked home with me again tonight & said he wanted to kiss me last night. Ray came over & dictated to me after school. He said he had been in a storm about me. He supposed I need all the boyfriends whirl.

February 21, 1941

Dear Diary, Ray came over & dictated, took me to dancing lesson & the All States Club dance. He said not to worry about hurting him because if he is hurt, it will be worth it. Arnold danced with me & he said How about seeing me Mon. he's carry out the other night's threat. No.

February 22, 1941

Dear Diary, Got up at 11:30 am – 8 hr. sleep – a luxury seldom indulged in. Took pictures from the top of Washington Monument. Practiced at the studio & bought Mae's baby a bonnet. Went to confession. Studied a little Spanish. Sleep tonight.

February 23, 1941

Dear Diary, Went to 7 o'clock Mass & then washed clothes, hair, me, dishes; baked pie, cake. Symingtons asked me to move. Ray brought me some eggs from Virginia. He took me to Martha's & I got the rest of my belongings.

February 24, 1941

Dear Diary, Ray picked me up after work & took me around a little house hunting. I didn't find anything. Went to school & then to a Union meeting of the Ordnance Dept. Danced & met Alex Jones, who took me home.

February 25, 1941

Dear Diary, I found an apartment in a private home & I think I'll like it. Called a meeting of the Harmonica band to be, but nobody came. Copied poems for my collection tonight & studied Spanish.

February 26, 1941

Dear Diary, Got 7 letters – Cec, Geo. Louie, Berniece, Mr. Martin. At school Arnold asked me if I wanted him to carry out that threat & I said no & he said ok. Went riding to Mt. Vernon with Alexander Jones but I avoided his kisses. Ash Wednesday.

February 27, 1941

Dear Diary, Went to school & Arnold thought I understood I had a date with him last night. I took his books home. Ray met me & took me to All States Club. We are having quite a struggle. Wrote to Art. Rode home with Skippy.

February 28, 1941

Dear Diary, Last night in my dream I heard Don say, "Bessie!" in a frightening voice. I couldn't answer, but when I was wide awake, I said, "Did someone call me?" I got up and looked at the clock and it was 2:25. Ray took me to tap lesson & to show Margaret the apartment.

March 1, 1941

Dear Diary, Ray helped me move & stayed for supper. He kissed me so passionately I said "You don't know what you're doing here." He finally understood that it was just that I'm not in the marrying mood. He is a very understanding person.

March 2, 1941

Dear Diary, Ray went to church with me & stayed for breakfast. He came back later & cooked our supper. He took me to the studio, but it was locked. He kissed me some more & I don't know whether it is good for me or bad.

March 3, 1941

Dear Diary, Have a miserable cold. Went to Mrs. Garrison's attorney's office & got my violin & skates & bought some thing for the apartment. Went to Dorothy. Started taking Pi-ree-na (?). Went to school. It was beautiful & balmy today.

March 4, 1941

Dear Diary, I called a meeting of the potential harmonica band & again no one showed up. Got a letter from Mama & wrote one. Margot decided not to move in, so I broached the subject to Grace & Harriett. Wrote to Ken McConnaughy.

March 5, 1941

Dear Diary, Up at 5:30 & practiced stenotypy. Maxine Crotts dictated to me tonight. Went to school & then to Virginia Lee's apartment, but the executive meeting was last night. Started a Steno letter to Cec.

March 6, 1941

Dear Diary, Practiced my violin a little tonight. Went to meeting of Assoc. Stenotypists & made arrangements to take a test sometime. Went to All States Party. Ray took me home. Tap danced for the group. Letter from Art.

March 7, 1941

Dear Diary, Snowed all day. Alex Jones took me home. Ray went to church with me & then took me to tap lesson. I was the only dancer that showed up of his 15 appointments. So I got a pass to the Hyattsville theater. Had coffee with Ray.

March 8, 1941

Dear Diary, Snowed some more & rained. Jonsey took me downtown from work. Baked a cake; Ray was up for supper. I went to confession & we went to the Hyattsville Theatre as guests of the owner. Ray kisses so tenderly.

March 9, 1941

Dear Diary, Ray went to church with me. We harmonized on guitar & fiddle then went out to Gracies. Came back & had supper & read some Poe. Ray said he was in love with me & he got so emotional he wept tears. Said he never loved before.

March 10, 1941

Dear Diary, I don't want to hurt Ray, but if he's in love with me, I'm afraid I will. I told him I couldn't settle down & he said, "I don't want to interfere with your work or life." Went to Spanish class tonight. No Kloeppel.

March 11, 1941

Dear Diary, Alexander Jones took me to the studio to practice & then riding to the airport. He tried to kiss me but didn't make it. He said who was I saving them for. Maxine dictated tome. Grace & Harriet were here but won't move in.

March 12, 1941

Dear Diary, Ray came over & dictated to me & took me to school. I'll bet he came last night when I was gone! Louise Kley wants to move in with me. I took dictation from Hiller today. Had French toast for supper.

March 13, 1941

Dear Diary, Louise Kley, prospective roommate came home with me & went to school & Ray took us to All States Club. She is a good sport & I like her. Ray & I had come on here after club. Up at 5 AM & studied Spanish.

March 14, 1941

Dear Diary, Ray came over & we played guitar & fiddle. Went to church & then tapping. Ray says he likes to go to church with me because he feels closer to God in my church than any other. He left at 12:15.

March 15, 1941

Dear Diary, Was on a show at an Almas (?) Temble Banquet taking the part of a wife in a harem. Wore a sleazy costume & flirted with the men from a balcony & from the stage. I was there mostly for atmosphere, but it was a different experience.

March 16, 1941

Dear Diary, Ray was here at 7:30 to go to mass with me. We went out to his 34 acres & cabin & took a nap on a side hill. Got some water cress. Came home & got supper, went for a walk, played, & he washed my hair.

March 17, 1941

Dear Diary, Art sent me a St. Patrick's Day card & I got a letter from Mama. A very cold wind blew all day. I went downtown with Louise after work. Skipped school & scribbled my floor. Mrs. Crotts was up for quite a while.

March 18, 1941

Dear Diary, Louise & Catherine Bowman came home with me for supper. Catherine will move in Saturday. Leroy Scott came up. E is in the Marines now. Started a long letter to Mama. Very cold again.

March 19, 1941

Dear Diary, Ray gave me a ride tow ork in his taxi. He met me after school & took me to All States executive meeting. I don't know what I'll do when he goes in the Army. Got a letter from Art & sent him one. Got my telephone in.

March 20, 1941

Dear Diary, After school Ray took me to All States Club. Peter Blonien said to me today I should marry Ray right quick so he won't have to be drafted. Ray said to me, "You are sweeter than all the flowers."

March 21, 1941

Dear Diary, Ray came over & took me to church & to tap lesson. Alexander Jones had called the studio to find out if I was going to be there & came up. He left first, though I told Ray that I was in love with him. He cried.

March 22, 1941

Dear Diary, Went to Glee Club & was surprised at what that woman made me do with my voice. Catherine Bowman moved in with me. She's OK. Mrs. Randolph of Luziers came and sold me powder and rouge. To bed early 11:15.

March 23, 1941

Dear Diary, Ray went to 7 o'clock mass with me. Louise, Catherine, Ray & I saw Washington from the top via the Goodyear Blimp "Enterprise". I told Ray that sometime I might leave him, though I don't want to now. Says he can take it.

March 24, 1941

Dear Diary, Up at 5 AM & practiced Steno. Mass at 6:15. Work at 8:45. Home at 5:15, school at 7:37. Ray met me at 8:44 & we went to meeting of All States Executive. Home at 11:15; in bed at approximately 11:55, & so good night.

March 25, 1941

Dear Diary, Catherine told me a soldier came to see me last night, and although the description fitted Don, the wonder has been on me all day. Could it be? It would be like a dream. Ray came up and we practiced music.

March 26, 1941

Dear Diary, I can't stop thinking about that soldier – was it Don? That dying ember of love flickes to flame again, but I'm afraid to build my hopes too high. Ray met me after school and we practiced our music again.

March 27, 1941

Dear Diary, Went to school & Catherine & Ray picked me up and we went to All States. Ray and I played a guitar-fiddle duet. Elbert Alexander was there. Wrote to Leo, Mr. C & Ken. Got Berniece's wedding announcement.

March 28, 1941

Dear Diary, Ray came over tonight & we went to church. Took Catherine along to tap lesson. Ray brought the pictures I took in the blimp, but only 7 were good. I told him I thought I would always love him.

March 29, 1941

Dear Diary, Left for Virginia with Ray from the office. His folks were awfully nice to me. We went for a run over the fields & through the woods & I turned cartwheels. He couldn't get me under the mistletoe in the woods.

March 30, 1941

Dear Diary, Ray & I took a walk before breakfast, and the Blue Ridge Mountains are really blue. He took me to church in Charlottesville. They had a banquet! Started back to Wash. At 5:45 & I drove part of the way. Had supper here.

March 31, 1941

Dear Diary, Ray's folks loaded me down with food, potatoes, eggs, bacon, sausage. Started new work hours 8:15 to 4. Went to school tonight & one of the gentleman students walked home with me & told about gold prospecting.

April 1, 1941

Dear Diary, Walked home from work in drenching rain. Ray took me to Stenotype school. Was surprised at the amount I learned in such a little time. Went to executive meeting. They want to limit the membership.

April 2, 1941

Dear Diary, Applied for a job as stenotypist in Gen. Barnes' office. Louise came home with me & she & Catherine went to Gene Autry's rodeo. Went to Spanish class, scrubbed the kitchen floor. Cec is going to get another cycle. I can have ours.

April 3, 1941

Dear Diary, Went to ASA meeting & took notes for practice. Got a letter from Art & he's teaching soldiers to read and write. Also letters from George & Cec. Went to All States Club & Ray took Catherine & me home.

April 4, 1941

Dear Diary, Ray gave me a ride to work. Says he is going to a Dr. as he doesn't feel so good. Went to Steno school tonight. Got a Court of Small Claims summons from Mrs. Garrison. Bertha didn't get one yet. Letter from Victor.

April 5, 1941

Dear Diary, Walked downtown with Louise after work & to studio to take a tap lesson. Margaret Meyer was over for supper & we had pork chops, Johnny cake, gingerbread, etc. Catherine & I talked till 12.

April 6, 1941

Dear Diary, Ray was here at 7:30 to go to mass. The weather was too drizzly for a picnic. Ray dictated to me & we went to the studio to practice. We had some soul satisfying kisses while Catherine got supper. He washed my head & kissed my neck.

April 7, 1941

Dear Diary, Before we know it Ray & I are going to be dangerously in love. I've got to slow it down. Catherine went to school with me. Got an offer of transcribing work but couldn't take it. Louise got a job in Everett, Wash. Boo hoo.

April 8, 1941

Dear Diary, Went to Reporting class, but wrote kind of slow. Ray met me after school & walked home with me. He said, "You know, there are several things I like about you." He says he even likes the way I walk.

April 9, 1941

Dear Diary, Took vocational tests on the Stenotype & made 200 wpm. Transcribed the 216 wpm by mistake. When I found I was really taking it I got scared & nervous, but made it OK. Hope it leads to something.

April 10, 1941

Dear Diary, Got letters from Johnny, Carl & Art. Art still thinks I'm going to marry him, but I'm afraid I'm not. Ray met me after school & we made a visit to the church. He said, "Why don't you just kick me out." Peter Blonien was here.

April 11, 1941

Dear Diary, Ray slept on the floor in the kitchen till 2:30 a.m. Then we went to church & said the stations. He met me after reporting class tonight & took me to tap dancing. We drove around by the cherry blossoms. I don't know who I love.

April 12, 1941

Dear Diary, Got a box of candy from George. Went to Gene & Mary Hinda's apt. for supper. Jonsie was here when I got home. Scrubbed floors today. Ray took me to work this morning. Busy all morning.

April 13, 1941

Dear Diary, Easter – Ray went to 7 o'clock mass with me, Louise, Catherine, Ray and I went on a picnic to Great Falls. Ray & I climbed to a rocky summit high above the Potomac & napped in turns. Supper on Ray's "ranch".

April 14, 1941

Dear Diary, It was hard to get up at 5:20 this a.m. Called Rodney tonight & he told me about his dealings with Mrs. Garrison. Got the book "Simon Bolivar" to read for Spanish. Made pie. Ironed.

April 15, 1941

Dear Diary, Appeared in court on the Garrian vs. Johnson case, but she didn't appear so the judgment was decided in my favor. Went shopping with Louise, to reporting class & Ray walked home with me. Wrote to Mama. Letter from Martha L.

April 16, 1941

Dear Diary, Ray drove me to work this morning. Stayed home all evening. Maxine dictated to me. Did some typing. Got a letter from George. He's coming on May 24th. Ray said, "If conditions were different (war) you wouldn't know what to do with me."

April 17, 1941

Dear Diary, Ray & I went to executive meeting & had our pictures taken for the paper for club publicity. We are going to be so much in love it will practically kill us to part. God give me strength! I love him.

April 18, 1941

Dear Diary, Went to Reporting class tonight & Arnold from Florida gave me a ride. Ray took me to tap dancing class after school. We girls had a lot of fun in the pool today joking, (?)m etc, Nite.

April 19, 1941

Dear Diary, Ray & I left for Va. Via the Skyline Drive at 5 a.m. Climbed to "Mary's Rock" & spent 3 hours on top of the world sunning ourselves & discussing life. Ray's data kissed me & said "I passed my opinion on you last time."

April 20, 1941

Dear Diary, My sunburn is a fiery red. Ray took me to church in Charlottesville & I drove. Big dinner, ice cream, guests, etc. Met his sis Anna, studied some Spanish. Ray & I went for a walk barefooted in the creek (?). I love him too much.

April 21, 1941

Dear Diary, Ray kissed me awake. We spent the day strolling in the fields & in each other's arms. He said I made everything else seem unimportant. He loves me too much. Took the train back to Wash. Went to Sp. Class.

April 22, 1941

Dear Diary, Up at 5:30 studying Spanish. Peter B. said, "I heard you got married over the weekend." Imagination. Went to Sten reporting class & Mr. Kahn said, "Here comes our star pupil." "What do you mean 'star'?" Letter from Johnny.

April 23, 1941

Dear Diary, Went to Spanish class. Coming home Mr. Mars offered me the job of editing his book "The Zirist Bible". Got a special delivery letter from Ray with an extraordinary violet plant in it. Wrote him. Had a letter from Cousin Ray (?).

Letter from Ray to Bessie, April 23, 1941. Probably sent from Pratts Va. Spelling as written.

Dear Bessie,

Hope that you are well and feeling better and the blisters just small ones. Have been sleeping in your bed since you have gone. Sleeps right well except I dream of you and miss you much. Went out to look for the little violets with the deep purple petal and delicate perfume. They are sometimes hard to find. They only grow in clean and quite places where no one walks. Very shy.

Will be back Sunday

Love, Ray

Letter from Bessie to Ray, April 13, 1941, 10:30 p.m.

Darling Ray,

I was so thrilled with the violets that I just couldn't resist sitting down and writing you about it and going out to mail it – in the rain – for it is pouring – before I go to bed. I have already planted it in the coffee can I had the "weed" I got out on your "ranch" in (it died for lack of water over the weekend.) (Poor thing).

Sweetheart, you are so thoughtful, I couldn't help but love you, even if I didn't want to. But I do want to, because it makes life worth living. But in order to protect ourselves we must be prepared for anything.

Though I am as busy as usual it seems to me there is a vague emptiness in the city, just knowing you're not here.

Tell Bunny we had the turkey egg he gave me for supper tonight, and sure enough, it had 2 yellows like he said. I hope the whole family knows how much I appreciate the hospitality they showed me both times I was there.

My sunburn is at the itching stage, but the blisters didn't come out and I don't think it is going to peel. Wish I could get some more – in the same pleasant way.

I think I will be here when you get back Sunday – and I'll have lots to tell you –
Love, Bessie
p.s. Be good to Ray.

April 24, 1941

Dear Diary, Got a letter from Art & he is completely discouraged & I feel badly about it. It hurts me to hurt him. Went to a national defense dancing class that is going to entertain soldiers sometime. No study.

April 25, 1941

Dear Diary, 6 months ago today I started working for the War Department. So short a time. Went to Reporting class & then to tap lesson. Rode a street car part way home & got sick & got off. Got a ride the rest of the way home.

April 26, 1941

Dear Diary, Went motorcycle shopping today. Didn't find what I was looking for, but got a ride on a cycle & requests for dates for future rides. Had supper at Louises apartment & she came home with me, but the motorcycles didn't show up.

April 27, 1941

Dear Diary, Went to mass with Louie Slovich, & then the kids went sight-seeing while I worked on the book. Ray came back from Va, bringing provisions. The gang and Junior, a U.S. guard, were here for supper, Scotty came up & we took Louie to the train.

April 28, 1941

Dear Diary, Went to Spanish class & Mr. Mario met me & brought some more of his book over. The way he experienced some things, it is false religion, so I am doing no more work on it. Ray brought the Skyline Drive pictures over & took me to school.

April 29, 1941

Dear Diary, Went to reporting class & afterwards to Mr. Kahn's office to do some typing at 15 cents a page. Came home at 12:30. Started a letter to Art trying to make him understand the friendship I have for him.

April 30, 1941

Dear Diary, On this, the last day of my 4th 30-day novena, I have a letter from Don. He said he couldn't answer my last letter. He is a corporal now & in Louisiana. Can't understand why he wrote me. Ray came over & I told him I loved him.

May 1, 1941

Dear Diary, Got a new job in Gen. Wesson's office taking conferences on my stenotype. They wouldn't release me to O.P.M. Transcribed hearing notes for Mr. Kahn. Letter from Dorothy. I going to miss being in the pool.

May 2, 1941

Dear Diary, Went to Reporting class & Ray met me afterward for my tap lesson. We stayed in his car for some time being too much in love to say good night. We girls in the pool have fun. I'll miss it.

May 3, 1941

Dear Diary, Spent the afternoon at home cleaning house, etc. Went to confession. Ray took Catherine & me to the All States Club dance & I was doorman for a while. Danced mostly with Ray & we came home early. Lovely evening.

May 4, 1941

Dear Diary, Ray & I went to children's first communion mass. I studied my Spanish & then we went out to Ray's place & lay in the sun while I read steno notes. Had picnic. He said he thought he would marry me. We love too passionately for our own good.

May 5, 1941

Dear Diary, Went to Spanish class & wrote to Don. I said I couldn't figure out why he wrote at all after what he had said. I told Don last night to ask me about marrying him when I was in my right mind. Truly, I don't know what to say.

May 6, 1941

Dear Diary, Ray gave me a ride to school & he was in his work clothes. He is going to take me to my tap Friday & he said, "I'll be better than I have been" with his eyelids lowered & then he looked at me humbly with those dark meaningful eyes.

May 7, 1941

Dear Diary, Rita said my transcription was O.K. Monday I got a very nice, sensible letter from Art. Went to Spanish Class. Wrote to Cec. Got up at 5:20 and was sleepy all day. Had lunch with Louie as usual.

May 8, 1941

Dear Diary, We worked on Monday's lecture. Went to Spanish class & met Pat Patton, friend of Scotty, afterward and he dictated to me. He would be fresh if he had a chance. He won't get one. Ray called. G'nite.

May 9, 1941

Dear Diary, Expecting letter from Ken. Went to Reporting class & to tap lesson afterward. Told him I was quitting till July 1st. Ray was disappointed, because he won't have an excuse to see me on Fridays. He was so touching tonight.

May 10, 1941

Dear Diary, Worked until 2:30. Went to the motorcycle shop. Eddie Wiseman, general mgr., took me out & let me drive his '40 out NY Ave. He said I surprised him. He took me to the airport, Trans Lux, Chinese café in his car. Tried to kiss me.

May 11, 1941

Dear Diary, Ray was here bright & early to go to mass with me. We went to the Monastery for benediction. It's beautiful! I studied & he took a nap. After 9:30 it took us 2 hours to say "goodnight". Asked me if I'd be glad if I was married to him.

May 12, 1941

Dear Diary, Got a letter from George & he plans on coming here. Tried to discourage him. Letters from Mama & Mary. Wrote to Art. Went to Spanish class. Bought some Perema for my cold. Such misery! Slack day at the office.

May 13, 1941

Dear Diary, Ray met me after school & on the way home asked me if I would marry him. I said I couldn't – he wasn't a Catholic. After long thinking he thought he might be one. If he thought I cared enough, he'd take instruction.

May 14, 1941

Dear Diary, Ray met me after Spanish class and came home with me. Together we eliminated the noise from my Stenotype. Got an exciting letter from Cec. Catherine's b.f. (boyfriend) was up and we all had cake & pineapple juice.

May 15, 1941

Dear Diary, Got a letter from Don & I wrote back & asked him if he were going to break my heart again. Ray had his physical exam for the army tonight & he called. Guess he is O.K. Darn it! Studied a little Spanish. Cried some.

May 16, 1941

Dear Diary, Went shopping after work & to school. Ray met me afterward. When we got here Scotty called & wanted to come Sunday. It hurt Ray & that hurt me, so I said I'd have no date with anyone but Ray. My indecision about loving him hurt him.

May 17, 1941

Dear Diary, Ray came over tonight to watch me work. He read to me while I ironed. Louise came over and we had strawberry sundae. Ray & me took Louise home. He's an angel. We were happy tonight, not worried like last.

May 18, 1941

Dear Diary, Ray was here bright & early to go to mass. After breakfast he read to me while I ironed. He, Catherine & I went down by the Potomac & I read while they slept. Had a picnic. I drove the car. It's as hard for me to part at night.

May 19, 1941

Dear Diary, Made \$3.15 in 3 hours typing for Ward & Paul Reporting Agency. Ray took me down there. There is so much in his clear dark eyes! Had a letter from George and he isn't coming – thank goodness! He can't see when I don't care more for him.

May 20, 1941

Dear Diary, Took a lecture after work. Went to reporting class. Ray met me and we went to Margot's apartment for All States Club meeting. We are going to re-organize non-commercially. To bed at about 1 am. Tired.

May 21, 1941

Dear Diary, Went to work at 10:15. Fixed my machine & took part of the British conference. Transcribed all afternoon. Went to Spanish class & Ray walked home with me. He said we could keep our love always if we fought fair.

May 22, 1941

Dear Diary, Transcribed all morning & spent the afternoon in the Dept. of Interior waiting to work on a conference, but didn't have to. Took a food fact, technical lecture after work. Louise came over. Studied Spanish. Letters from Art & Cec. She's fired.

May 23, 1941

Dear Diary, Went to Reporting class & Ray met me afterwards. We practically finished my British conference. Today Rita at Dept. of Interior, all day thing.

May 24, 1941

Dear Diary, Scotty came up while I was in the midst of housekeeping so he volunteered to "swab the decks". Ray & Louise here for supper & went shopping. I bought shoes. Had sodas in the drug store.

May 25, 1941

Dear Diary, Ray was here to go to 8 o'clock mass. Went on a picnic to Rock Creek Park with Margot et al. Waded the stream. Looked at a good buy in a motorcycle – if the guy goes to the Army. A 1938 – 61 overhead for \$92.50.

May 26, 1941

Dear Diary, Ray said yesterday "If things weren't like they are would you consider marrying me?" I said I guess I would, if I could. Went to Spanish class. Wrote a short letter to Mama. Worked overtime 1 ½ hours.

May 27, 1941

Dear Diary, Took a lecture after work and then to Reporting class. Ray met me & I drove home. We got some ice cream. I hated to see him go home. He mentions how well we get along. Hot day today.

May 28, 1941

Dear Diary, Worked steadily on the 2 ½ day conference. Went downtown to see about a \$180 loan from my insurance company. I can get it. Ray walked home from school with me. He said would I wait for him if he went to the Army. I would.

May 29, 1941

Dear Diary, Catherine's sister came today, and I cooked the biggest supper we've had this week. It rained so we had good appetites. Skipped school to get ready to go down to Virginia with Ray at 4 am tomorrow.

May 30, 1941

Dear Diary, Got up at 3:15. Ray came at 4 and we started south. It was dripping fog at Panorama so we didn't go on Skyline Drive. I drove most of the way. Read a little in Simon Bolivar. Retired early with Marilyn.

May 31, 1941

Dear Diary, Up at 7 o'clock and it was still foggy. Ray & I went cherry & strawberry picking. Didn't get much. He kissed me very passionately and then I said we musn't let ourselves get that way. He agreed. Studied Spanish.

June 1, 1941

Dear Diary, Ray kissed me awake at 5 am and I got up & went for an early walk with Ray. Went to church. Company. Left for Wash. At 4:30. Stopped in Warrenton for a water pump & I drove a motorcycle with a side car and it was terrible. Home 9:15.

June 2, 1941

Dear Diary, Letters from Mama & Dorothy. Went to Spanish class. Ray met me and came home with me. We discussed our love and we embraced each other so passionately that we decided we will have to cool down right now! Bed at 1:15.

June 3, 1941

Dear Diary, Ray met me after reporting school. We agreed we had to be strong & fight to keep our love. We parted with only one kiss while holding hands. Took a lecture tonight. Sent a letter to Ray's folks. Didn't go to mass. Headache.

June 4, 1941

Dear Diary, It was raining this A.M. so I studied Spanish instead of going to mass. Went shopping. Ray met me after school. He stayed only a few minutes – just long enough to tell me he thought I was "all right".

June 5, 1941

Dear Diary, British conference worked overtime and went to ASA meeting and came home on a blasted street car. A bus driver tried to date me. Was awfully tired when I hit the hay at 11:30.

June 6, 1941

Dear Diary, Ray met me after reporting class and waited while I wrote to mama & Cecilia. He took me to the post office & before I left him I started to cry – for myself. He felt badly about it.

June 7, 1941

Dear Diary, Had a permanent. Ray was over for supper & we went to Glen Echo. Had a big time acting kiddish in the Fun House. I drove out & back. Finish British Conference by noon.

June 8, 1941

Dear Diary, Ray took us all out to Mt. Vernon for a picnic. I bought a motorcycle for \$300. The fellow took me for a ride on it. Ray said something that made tears come & then he cried.

June 9, 1941

Dear Diary, Took a final exam in Spanish but I don't think I do ell. Came home and ired & mended. Got 6 letters. Cec has gone to Rapid City to finish her Steno. Letter from Art, Carl, etc.

June 10, 1941

Dear Diary, Ray met me after reporting class. He had his second physical. Got notice of my raise to Grade 3 raiting. Heard Irving Berlin's song, "Arms for America" on radio for first time.

June 11, 1941

Dear Diary, Toni & John came over and we took the cycle to Canal Road & Ray & I rode it. Ray & I were talking about religion and he talked like he is going to take instructions. He asked me not to tell.

June 12, 1941

Dear Diary, Toni called & said he had decided not to sell his motorcycle. Bos(?) has. Went to school & got my report card. Got "C" which is bad. Catherine started packing. Had roasting ears.

June 13, 1941

Dear Diary, Ray met me after reporting class & we went out to see a motorcycle. It's just like Toni's but has a side-car – for \$350. Got a letter from Don & he isn't in love with me. Ray worries about my forgetting Don.

June 14, 1941

Dear Diary, Had a picnic tonight in honor of Catherine's going away. Toni was there. We had a bonfire and told ghost & tall stories. I wept and Ray thought it was over Don. I was blue on account of Cath.

June 15, 1941

Dear Diary, Looked at a '38 motor(cycle). Catherine & Ethel left & we saw them off. Louise & I were on the verge of crying. I got homesick & cried in Ray's arms. He comforted me till 12 o'clock & went home.

June 16, 1941

Dear Diary, Looked at the '40 motor with the sidecar and drove it. We might make a deal yet. Ray took me out there. Bunny came to Washington to work. His mother sent some goodies. Letter from home.

June 17, 1941

Dear Diary, Ray & Bunny met me after school & they came up. Bunny said he'd teach me to play tennis. Wrote to Mama & Cec. Went with Louise to get her new glasses. Paid hospitalization ins.

June 18, 1941

Dear Diary, They called off the British conference so I wrote 6 personal letters. Mr. Allen took me down to the cycle shop & Ralph offered \$25 for the side car so I made a deal with Allen to take it at \$325.

June 19, 1941

Dear Diary, Oh, but my life is exciting. Ray & I went out & I made the deal for the motorcycle – took a trip to the notary's to complete the contract. Had peppermint ice cream. Took written test for license.

June 20, 1941

Dear Diary, Stayed home all morning waiting for the cycle to take my road test on. It came at 1:30. Passed the test & the examiner, also a motorcyclist, got a kick out of it. Reporting school. Ray met me. He's sweet.

June 21, 1941

Dear Diary, At 2:20 we left for Virginia in Ray's car. I drove most of the way. Gave 3 soldiers rides. Got there about 5:30 & lolled around in the shade. Ray & his mama & papa & I lay on a quilt on the lawn after dark.

June 22, 1941

Dear Diary, Ray called me 3 times before I got up. Went to mass at Gordonsville. I made him blue by saying I would try to forget him. If I couldn't I'd know I love him. Came back to Washington & had light trouble.

June 23, 1941

Dear Diary, Back to work and no work to do. Took a lecture. Ray came over & we sat in the window with our feet hanging out. He didn't go home till much too late. Letter from Cec.

June 24, 1941

Dear Diary, Went to school & Ray met me. Had ice cream & figured out my route home. Got a letter from Johnny. Transcribed yesterday's lecture. Wrote to Cec. A girl who was to come & look at my apartment didn't come.

June 25, 1941

Dear Diary, Sold my side car to Ralph Drummond. Ray & Bunny were up for supper. Studied & wrote to Johnny in the office today. No work. Got a bunch of pictures from Arthur Frank. Wyo. & himself. (?)

June 26, 1941

Dear Diary, We girls dictated to each other in the office. Ordered a pair of riding breeches. The motorcycle title hadn't come yet so the evening ended with me at home. Ray stayed till a disgracefully late hour.

June 27, 1941

Dear Diary, Went to the last session of reporting school. Got a letter from Arthur Frank. Ray met me after school. I told him the only reason I let him stay so late is because I trust his intentions are good.

June 28, 1941

Dear Diary, Mr. Allen delivered the motorcycle this p.m. & Ray, Bunny & I rode it to Virginia, had a swell trip. I was so sleepy when I got there I couldn't eat. Bertha Cable had lunch with me and will move in.

June 29, 1941

Dear Diary, To mass in Pap's car, stalled on the way back. I drove the cycle most of the way home. Got caught in the rain but put my jacket on backwards & rode on I dried off after we got out of it. Picked cherries.

June 30, 1941

Dear Diary, Got my first raise check \$65.13. Got Bertha's luggage in my motorcycle tonight, now she is here to stay. Got my riding breeches & they fit swell. Ray came over for evening snacks.

July 1, 1941

Dear Diary, Transcribed a lecture today, wrote to Gibbs', Ken & Cec. Tried to get my title straightened out with Mr. Allen. Worked, ironed, scrubbed, baked pie & got supper tonight. Haven't seen Ray all day.

July 2, 1941

Dear Diary, Got my motorcycle tags but had to go to the director of vehicles to do it. It rained & Ray picked me up at the office & stayed for supper. Bertha, Ray & I took a little spin in the motorcycle. Ray dictated to me.

July 3, 1941

Dear Diary, Bertha left for New York. Went shopping & got caught in the rain & Ray came after me. We got too passionate & held each other too close, so close it was dangerous. When I realized it I cried & he cried & we said the Act of Contrition together. He left at 3:40.

July 4, 1941

Dear Diary, Ray came back at 7:30 & I wasn't up yet – hadn't really gone to bed. I said we'd better quit seeing each other & we both wept all day – rained today. Went for a motorcycle ride & got caught wet. I sent Ray home & he called and came back to the house. We decided on one more chance.

July 5, 1941

Dear Diary, When Ray came over he looked in my eyes & said, "You really do love me, don't you?" We walked down to see the fireworks. I had a headache & stiff neck & they got worse. Ray put camphor on my neck & cold packs on my head till I was well.

July 6, 1941

Dear Diary, We went to 7 o'clock mass, but it was still raining so we didn't go to the beach till afternoon – on the motorcycle. Looked at the Bay, (?) navy riding breeches. Had a picnic. We are both very much in love today & chanced it.

July 7, 1941

Dear Diary, Got a letter from Mama. Starting a novena tonight for Dorothy, Ray and Don. Ralph took my machine away to take the side car off & clean the machine. Dictated to each other at the office this p.m.

July 8, 1941

Dear Diary, Ray and * went on the moonlight cruise. When he came over he opened his eyes wide & said "You love me, don't you, Bessie." Like he was trying to make himself believe it. He says, "You're going to keep me around, aren't you?"

July 9, 1941

Dear Diary, Ray & I took the motorcycle out without the side car for the first time. I know St. Christopher was along because I got by so well. Went to studio & practiced my dancing. Ray has a lot of patience with me. Lecture tonight.

July 10, 1941

Dear Diary, Ray came & we were going cycling but Ray wasn't in the mood, so we sat in the car & talked religion. He won't study Catholicism unless he is married to me, but I won't marry him unless he is a Catholic. Some mess, huh?

July 11, 1941

Dear Diary, Another day of studying in the office. Made a pie, cake, salmon loaf tonight. Ray came over & washed dishes. I haven't heard from Art for a long time. Ray thinks he must be married. I doubt it. Good night, darling.

July 12, 1941

Dear Diary, Went up town after work & did my vacation shopping. Washed clothes & cleaned house. Ray came up for supper & to eat his pie. He washed my hair & went home early. He's very elated over the fast (?). I haven't heard from Art.

July 13, 1941

Dear Diary, Went to 6 o'clock mass with Ray. Went for a spin on the cycle to the new airport. Practiced dancing at studio. Ray, Bertha & her friend George went along. Back home, G. made himself obnoxious & we ordered him out. Ray & I went cycle riding again.

July 14, 1941

Dear Diary, Back to the office & no work. I studied & read a vacation book. Mary was back on her vacation. Letter from Victor. Bertha & I spent a quiet evening at home mending clothes, etc. Cycle is being fixed. Louise is back.

July 15, 1941

Dear Diary, Ray met me after work & we went down & ordered my motorcycle belt. He ate with us. Letters from Art, George P., Johnny. Ray said he'd be a Catholic if he were a little certain I would marry him. I am uncertain myself. I told him not to come over till Sunday.

July 16, 1941

Dear Diary, Letter from Mama, she asked how Ray rates. Ray called me & almost cried over the phone. He asked to come over & I let him. I said maybe I could marry him sometime but don't make me say it now. He went home happier than he came.

July 17, 1941

Dear Diary, Tried on my motorcycle belt & it is fine. Baked cake & fixed a ham. They didn't bring my cycle back from the shop yet & I am very restless to get out. Wrote to Mama & George. To Art & Johnny yesterday. Rained again.

July 18, 1941

Dear Diary, Got my motorcycle from the shop. Ray called & I let him come over & help me drive the cycle. A car crowded us & the engine stalled. We started rolling down the ditch so I tipped it over. Not a scratch. Ray still loves me.

July 19, 1941

Dear Diary, Wrote to Bill Bonger & Catherine Atkinson. Scrubbed floors, washed, ironed, sewed & went to confession. Mary O'D. predicted that I would marry Ray, although I haven't told her anything important. Talked to Ray on the phone.

July 20, 1941

Dear Diary, Ray and I went to 6 o'clock mass & then 9 of us went to the beach in 2 cars & a motorcycle. Breezy Point & it was wonderful. Bright sunburn. Ray & I did a crazy ballet dance while half a dozen kids watched. The Bay was so restful looking, salt water, too.

July 21, 1941

Dear Diary, Card from Cec & she took a medical convention. Good! Letter from Leo & he will go home with me. Went to lawn party. Took chances on \$100, played "Patsy". Wrote to Cec. Took dictation on the radio. Transcribed today.

July 22, 1941

Dear Diary, Ray brought my motorcycle belt over and it fits very well. Got a new refrigerator in the apartment. Ray & I rode the cycle to the studio & practiced. We were trying to say good night at the top of the stairs & we sank to the floor.

July 23, 1941

Dear Diary, Letter from Mae. Ray & I took a spoon back to Margot's apartment & I took a tap lesson. I didn't forget so much. Transcribed Steno Convention notes all day. Was so sleepy. He is so loving and sweet. He can't say good night & go home.

July 24, 1941

Dear Diary, Worked for Mr. Kahn from 6:15 to 10:45 & made \$5 or \$6. Got a letter from Arthur Frank and he is getting back in the habit of signing his letters with "Love". Am I going to have to jolt him again. Hope not.

July 25, 1941

Dear Diary, Rushed home from work, got supper, washed clothes, washed my hair, went with Ray out to Allens & paid the last \$25 on my motorcycle. Wrote to Art, Victor & Mae. Got a few letters asking my opinion on stenotypy. Skipped mass.

July 26, 1941

Dear Diary, Ray & I left for Rehobeth Beach at 3 o'clock after getting the motorcycle in shape. Had a good trip & got there at 10 p.m. I got peeved at Ray & left him for an hour & looked for a room. It worried him & he was kind of mad at me. Stayed in cabins.

July 27, 1941

Dear Diary, Ray was still mad at me for running off & he didn't feel so well when we went swimming in the ocean. We lay in the sand quite a while. Started home at 3 o'clock. Didn't have to wait in line for the ferry. Ray tipped the cycle over.

July 28, 1941

Dear Diary, Still nursing ankle bruise from yesterday's tip-over. Ray had been going too fast to make the curve so he took the bank. Got a picture of mountain cabin from Art. Washed, ironed. Ray called. Extremely hot.

July 29, 1941

Dear Diary, Had a conference today – on explosives. Ray came after me & went to where Hazel is staying and waited for Bunny to come from Baltimore so we could go to Glen Echo. Bunny never showed up. Hazel is sweet.

July 30, 1941

Dear Diary, Took a tap lesson & then Ray and I went to Glen Echo & I rode the roller coaster for the first time. Stopped & talked to some motorcyclists & Ray got mad & I cried because it breaks my heart when he is mad at me. Finally he said, "Make me like it."

July 31, 1941

Dear Diary, Talked to Ray on the phone & he didn't feel so well. Took Scotty for a motorcycle ride. Went to see the (?) last night & the mechanic fixed my spark plugs & adjusted my carburetor. I started it on the first kick.

August 1, 1941

Dear Diary, We moved our office to third floor in a room with a hundred people. Went downtown & shopped. Ray called & came over for half an hour. He was so tender and a little worried about us. Sent in an application or transfer to Bermuda.

August 2, 1941

Dear Diary, Ray & I left for Virginia bout 3pm. Had clear sailing all the way. Saw Jim & Margaret's new daughter. Roasting ears for supper. Reclined on the grass in the moonlight while Tricia & Marilyn played around.

August 3, 1941

Dear Diary, Started the day with a kiss from Ray. He says he wants me to be happy & have friends. I said I loved him too much to love anyone else. Stopped & saw Catherine & Jim. Had a couple of minor accidents. I drove all the way home.

August 4, 1941

Dear Diary, Cut stencils all day. Had a letter from Catherine tonight. She says Scotty's real name is Thomas Pardom. Talked to him on the phone but didn't let on I knew. Stayed home with Bertha tonight. Wash my head & clothes.

August 5, 1941

Dear Diary, Had quite an adventure this p.m. although I didn't leave Wash. Went for an interview for a job in Bermuda which turned out to be one in Trinidad. They only offered \$1620 so I didn't take it. Ray came over – motorcycle out of gas.

August 6, 1941

Dear Diary, Spent most of the day at the office proofreading stencils. Ray & I tried to start the motorcycle tonight, but with no success. Took tap lesson. Ray went to see about another job & I went along. Got pictures of cycle.

August 7, 1941

Dear Diary, Ray & I and Ace Williamson & his girl went cycling. Ray just simply doesn't mix well with a crowd. We had a long talk about it when we got home. He wants me to teach him to mix well.

August 8, 1941

Dear Diary, Ray & I took my motorcycle over to the repairman to have her checked over. Walked home. Read the Reader's Digest & wrote letters at work. Went downtown after work & bought new sunglasses.

August 9, 1941

Dear Diary, Washed clothes & cleaned house. Ray came over & we went after the m-cycle but it wasn't finished yet. Ray, Bertha & I went out to Ray's place and lay on a quilt till midnight & fought mosquitos.

August 10, 1941

Dear Diary, 6 o'clock mass & did a big ironing. My boyfriend & I went to the Maryland side of Great Falls & took a nap and had a picnic – in more ways than one. Came home after dark. Sometimes he infuriates me, but I love him.

August 11, 1941

Dear Diary, Got a letter from Eileen & she says to come by Lyons. Took my motor over to the shop again. Ray & I visited the Houdas (?). Ray keeps telling me not to let the S.D. boys kidnap me. Wrote a letter to Don.

August 12, 1941

Dear Diary, Stayed home & baked cake & pie, washed clothes. Ray came over & talked about going to Alaska. Maybe he's teasing me. Got a letter from George. He still has his hopes. Have to have new rings in my cycle.

August 13, 1941

Dear Diary, While I was taking my tap lesson Cec called me & bawled me out for getting so excited. She drove down with Johnny & they picked up Leo in Angola. The place was a mad house. Johnny slept with Ray.

August 14, 1941

Dear Diary, Cec reported for work today. Went over after my machine tonight. Cec drove my machine a little. We had a conference today which made the time go faster. Cec & I had one of our discussions.

August 15, 1941

Dear Diary, Took annual leave and got ready for my trip. It rained so I couldn't take the cycle out. Ray came over, but the boys didn't come back from Virginia. Got acquainted with the girl in front room.

Bessie's mother Anna Lawless Johnson was eagerly anticipating Bessie's visit and wrote this poem.

ANTICIPATION SONG

She'll be ridin on her 'cycle when she comes
On her faithful motorcycle that he drives,
Be it named for Dick or Michael, she has faith in her veickle*
And she'll measure every mile till she arrives.

O we'll all run out to meet her when she comes
With a hundred hugs we'll greet her when she's here
We will kill two young white roosters, with ice cream and pie for boosters
Then we'll all pitch in and celebrate with cheer.

Will there ever be a hub-bub when she comes!
We'll turn every pan and tub up for the drums
We will pound them with the broomsticks, with the windowsticks and shoesticks
Till the whole endurm' territory hums.

She will take us all a-ridin' on her cyke
Never thinkin' once of askin' what we'd like
All we'll do is sit an holler, hangin tight onto her collar
Tho' it be a rootin' tootin' way to hike.

Oh, we'll never miss the moments till she goes
Then we'll grab our old bandanas to our nose
But we'll profit by her visit, and the more consolin' is it
To know our hearts' re-union doesn't close.

-written at the Old Brown House July 22, 1941

* vehikle is pronounced to rhyme with Michael

August 16, 1941

Dear Diary, Johnny & Leo & I left Washington at 4 p.m. Took Skyline Drive from Sperryville on to Waynesboro. After dark we could see the towns in the valley sparkling like jewels. Ray called me before I left. Wrote to Art.

August 17, 1941

Dear Diary, Mass in Waynesboro. Went to Natural Bridge, but they wanted \$1.10 to see it, so we looked at pictures of it instead. Stayed at Johnny's cousin's at Terys, W.Va. overnight. Real hillbillies – but hospitable.

August 18, 1941

Dear Diary, Drove 6 hours in the rain in W. Va & Ohio. Stopped for an hour in Indiana while a storm raged & drove another hour. Are staying at a nice tourist home. Wrote a card to Ray.

August 19, 1941

Dear Diary, Travelled 14 ½ hours & covered 517 miles. Had ideal weather conditions. Traversed half of Ind., all of Illinois & over half of Iowa. At 11:30 we stopped Osceola, ate lunch & got rooms in the hotel.

LETTER – *from Ray to Bessie, written August 19, 1941. Bessie on the way way to SD.*

Dearest Bessie,

You must be in Missouri about now. I am very much aware of the fact that you aren't here, still I feel that you are. I took Cecelia and Bertha out for a ride Sunday. We went out to Silver Spring to see those people you and me tried to see that Sunday and then to the zoo. Cecelia hasn't been moved her machine since you left. We were going to take it to the shop tonight and it rained.

Expect to go home this weekend. Reckon the folks think I'm in South Dakota by now. We have been talking about meeting you in Indiana when you return.

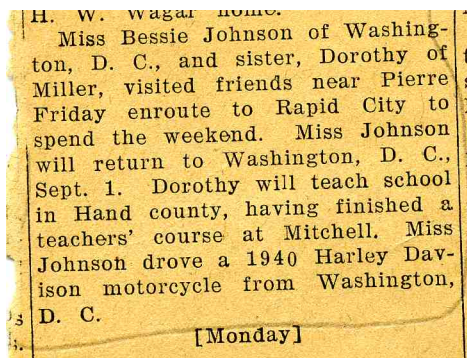
I haven't caught up with my reading yet. I hope you have a great big time. Send me a postcard or something.

Always the same, Ray.

Been right much cooler since you all left. I mailed your camera last nite. Didn't think they did such a good job on it, must have been afraid of breaking it.

August 20, 1941

Dear Diary, Got to Omaha before noon & as Johnny was leading me thorough it he stopped suddenly & I crashed into him. Little harm done. Stopped in Lyons at Dads & Jims & got Eileen. Stayed all night at Uncle Johnny's and saw cousin Jackie. (*John, Jackie and Blanche Lawless. Anna's brother. Jim is Oliver's brother.*)



August 21, 1941

Dear Diary, Left Johnny's at 6:30 am. Saw Aunt Gene (*Eugenia Lawless*) in Sioux City for 15 minutes. At Yankton Eileen & I left Leo & Johnny in the dust & came home at the rate of 70 m.p.h. It seemed I hadn't been away from home more than a week.

August 22, 1941

Dear Diary, Dorothy & I left for Rapid City at 11 am. Stopped at Pietries for dinner. Johnny Kuniak thought he'd never see me again. Got on that awful Bad Lands road. Got to Rapid at 9:05 & registered.

LETTER – from Bessie to Ray, written in Miller, SD August 22, 1941.

Darling Ray

Your letter was waiting for me when I got here yesterday at 1 p.m. and was I ever glad to hear from you.

We decided not to go through Missouri because we found a shorter road to Omaha. We spent quite a bit of time visiting people so we didn't get home as soon as we expected. I traveled 1857 miles from the time I left Washington, but 518 was the most we did in a day and that was Tuesday when we had ideal weather conditions.

I drove for 6 ½ hours without stopping for anything but gas & oil.

Didn't get the camera yet but I am waiting for the mail now and it will probably come today.

Are you going to have to work on Labor Day? I would surely appreciate it if you could come to Angola and meet me. If you could leave Washington with Cecelia Saturday afternoon & get there by Sunday afternoon, I could be there ready to start to Washington & we could get there before Tuesday morning. But don't miss any work on account of me – because your work is more important.

How about Bermuda – did you get the job yet?

Bye darlin' – Bessie

August 23, 1941

Dear Diary, Arthur Frank knocked at our 9th floor room door at 7 & at 9 we left to see the Hills. Visited Wonderland cave, Sturgis, Spearfish Canyon & Wyoming. Got a cabin at Devil's Tower. Nice Place.

LETTER – from Ray to Bessie, written August 23, 1941.

Dearest Bessie,

Was pleased to receive a card from you and know that you are thinking of me. This is one very good Sun. morning. I'm at home now and we have lots of roasting corn. The Folks expected for me to take off with you until I showed up here. Bertha, Hazel, Bunny and Al are here, Al he is from North Dakota. I wanted Cecelia to come too but she wanted to go to



the beach today.

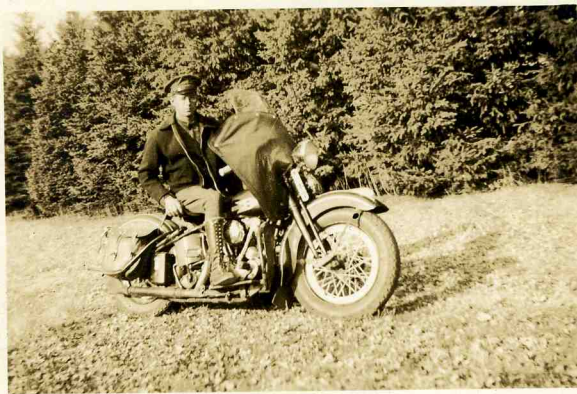
I think she wanted to wait until you came back. We rode the machine down to the shop and put a new tire on it. Cecelia can handle the cycle well. Every nite it seems I dream of you and it seems that as I know more about you I know more of the things that are good and pure. Walked around some this morning everything real green had plenty rain.

Hope to hear from you soon

Love, Ray

August 24, 1941

Dear Diary, Had pancakes & coffee at cabin after climbing the mountain to Devil's Tower. Church in Lead. Ice Box Canyon, Needles Highway, Sylvan Lake & climbed to top of Rushmore. Art was very much let down that I wouldn't marry him. We're pals.



Carl Labor

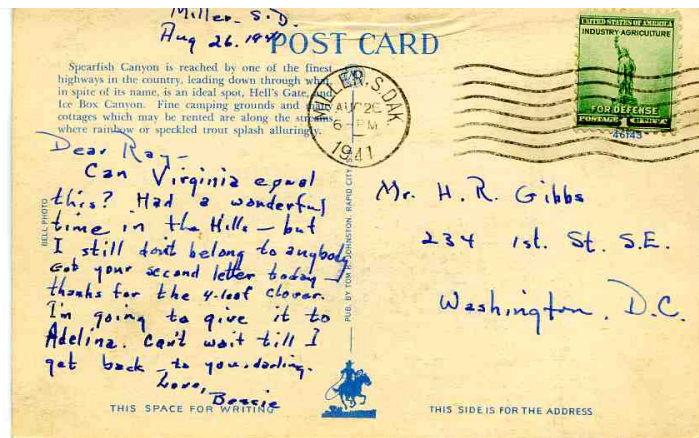
August 25, 1941

Dear Diary, Dorothy & I left Rapid City about 8:15. Stopped at Hill Top & in Pierre. Visited state house & even Duke. He envied me.

Victor was here when we got home. Went to the end of a street circus. All 8 kids at home.

August 26, 1941

Dear Diary, At home all day – going up town on my motorcycle & out to Carl's (Labor) & brought him in. Victor showed colored slides. Louie Hadler & Johnny Pugh were here. Got a letter from Ray yesterday.



POSTCARD – From Bessie to Ray, Aug. 26, 1941. Picture of Spearfish Canyon on the front.

Dear Ray

Can Virginia equal this? Had a wonderful time in the Hills – but I still don't belong to anybody. Got your second letter today – thanks for the 4-leaf clover. I'm

going to give it to Adelina. Can't wait till I got back to you, darling.
Love, Bessie.

From Victor Johnson Diary, Aug. 26, 1941.

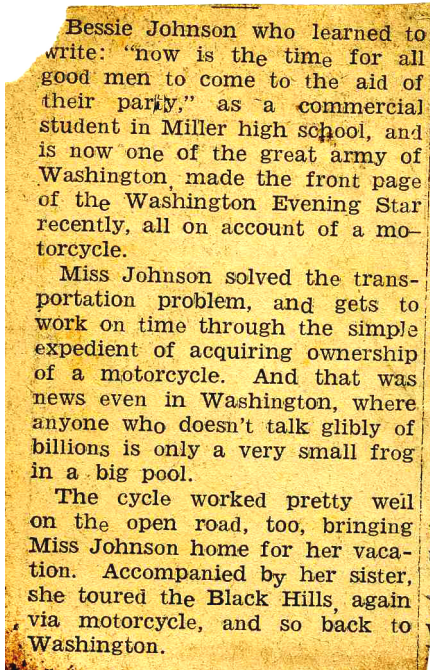
Today I rode Bessie's motor cycle all around the Ree Hills. I had it up to 96 miles per hour on Highway 4. I ran out of gas near Ufans. Julias gave me two gallons for getting his horses. After dinner took pictures of Miller from the top of the water tower.

August 27, 1941.

This morning I went to the court house and got the bill of taxes on the Titas place. After dinner I took pictures of the family. In the evening I took Erwin Bauer and his wife to a house dance at Hill's northwest of Ree Heights. We got home at 3:00.

August 27, 1941

Dear Diary, Louie Hadelor got up a dance at Roy Hill's to celebrate Arvilla's birthday. The house was full & overflowing. Sat down 5 minutes from 10 til 2. Saw Louise Brown uptown. Went to church. Taught Johnny Pugh how to dance again. He is O.K.



Bessie Johnson who learned to write: "now is the time for all good men to come to the aid of their party," as a commercial student in Miller high school, and is now one of the great army of Washington, made the front page of the Washington Evening Star recently, all on account of a motorcycle.

Miss Johnson solved the transportation problem, and gets to work on time through the simple expedient of acquiring ownership of a motorcycle. And that was news even in Washington, where anyone who doesn't talk glibly of billions is only a very small frog in a big pool.

The cycle worked pretty well on the open road, too, bringing Miss Johnson home for her vacation. Accompanied by her sister, she toured the Black Hills, again via motorcycle, and so back to Washington.

August 28, 1941

Dear Diary, After saying goodbyes to Johnny P., Johnny C. & Carl & the family, Leo and I left for the East. I drove 200 miles & Leo almost a hundred. Stopping at a tourist home East of Mankato, Minn. Tired. (*Bessie's note, 2004 – first rode motorcycles with Carl Labor.*)

August 29, 1941

Dear Diary, Got up at 8:30 & covered over 400 miles by 9 p.m. Hot, strong wind. Stopped at Atkinson's and the kids all got out of bed. Stopping at a tourist home in South Milwaukee at 10:30.

August 30, 1941

Dear Diary, Went to see Bill Boanger but nobody home. Bought mirror, grips(?) & Cec's initials in Milwaukee. Got soaked in the rain 4 times & stopped 4 times. Changed clothes once & then let them dry on me after that.

August 31, 1941

Dear Diary, Leo & I got into Angola at 9 & went to mass at 11. Went to Crone's Dairy while waiting for Cec & Ray. Cycle slipped into gear & I headed for a tree. Sprained my wrist a little. Cec, Ray & I started for Wash. At 9 p.m. I couldn't drive after 30 miles. Stopped at 11.

September 1, 1941

Dear Diary, Went to bed at 1:30 & got up at 4 & on our way. Couldn't sleep for pain. Ray rubbed it with liniment. Started traveling at 5:30. Ray driving, Adelina & me riding with Cec. Al's back wheel wobbled all the way. Got off of Super Highway & Ray was too tired to go on.

September 2, 1941

Dear Diary, Stayed at a tourist house near Breezewood, Pa. Sent telegrams to our offices for emergency leave & took our time. Ate on top of a mountain & reclined in the shade. Home at 6 p.m. I had a letter & telegram from Art. Told Ray I still love him.

September 3, 1941

Dear Diary, Back at the office with my sore hand & a lot of work to do. Had to shift carriage with the other hand. Ray called up & wanted to come over & we really smooched while Cec slept. I think we are really in love. Another letter from Art.

September 4, 1941

Dear Diary, Went to mass & to work. Finished up the second conference, wrote to Mama. Ray came over & took me to the cycle shop. Machine not done yet. Mrs. Crotts keeps trying to get Ray & me married. Rained.

September 5, 1941

Dear Diary, Wrote four letters in the office & did a little English studying. Ray came over & we went to the shop after our motorcycles. Bertha went along & got a kick out of the boys. Lonnie was crazy. Home at midnight.

September 6, 1941

Dear Diary, Went shopping, cleaned house & ironed & tried to get to bed by 6 but was there by 7. Met a Mrs. Brooks who rides an English Ariel – cute. Ray called me up but didn't come over. He is very attentive & sweet.

September 7, 1941

Dear Diary, Mass at 2 am. At 5:45 Cec, Ray, Benny & I left for Skyline Drive. Cec & Benny went on while Ray & I reclined under an apple tree. We became much too passionate for our own good. Finally I said I'd marry him. He was much more tender then.

September 8, 1941

Dear Diary, Ray stayed home. I ironed & baked 2 apple pies. Bertha stayed up late & we talked about her folks & slightly about men. Took a conference most of the afternoon. Had a card from Louie Hadelar at the fair.

September 9, 1941

Dear Diary, Took Under Secretary of War Patterson in a conference today. Ray came over & we went on my motor to see about a Spanish school - couldn't – over to Fox's at Arlington & to the cycle shop to have my chain tightened. I drove & my wrist hurts.

September 10, 1941

Dear Diary, 5 of us have formed a clinic & had dictation for an hour & a half after work. Scotty called to tell me he's married. I called Ray & said I was busy. He had some peaches for me but I told him to eat them himself. Did a monstrous washing.

September 11, 1941

Dear Diary, Ray called up to see if we wanted to go home with him. Cec & I went to A.S.A. meeting on her motorcycle & took notes, also listened to the President's speech which sounded an awful lot like war. Ironed. Got my riding breeches back.

September 12, 1941

Dear Diary, Had 2 conferences today & I took all of one. Worked till 7:30 – came home & ironed. Ray washed the dishes & acted as general flunk for Cec. Called a school about Spanish. I wonder if I will always love Ray like I do now.

September 13, 1941

Dear Diary, Finished the rush conference 5 minutes before quitting time. Cec & Ray & I left for Va. At 4 p.m. I drove all the way in Ray's car. Ate a hearty supper & had to lay down afterward. Cec & I entertained them talking motorcycles.

September 14, 1941

Dear Diary, Ray woke me up with a kiss. We went to mass at Gordonsville & drove to Orange. After a hearty dinner Ray & I napped on the parlor floor & then talked about our future. Arr. In Wash. 9:40. We talked about getting married in the spring.

September 15, 1941

Dear Diary, Worked hard all day & it was hard to concentrate. Cec & I went to Temple school & Spanish school to inquire about classes. Took my motorcycle to the shop – it was putting on one. Left it there & came home.

September 16, 1941

Dear Diary, Mary married Johnny today. Ray was over for supper. Got my cycle from the shop but it still wouldn't work. Went to Spanish school again, but not to class. Ray took us in his car. We're going to build us a stone house.

September 17, 1941

Dear Diary, Had a miserable cold. Was in a conference all afternoon & got 6 folds of notes. Read Reader's Digest to keep from going to sleep. Had dictation after work. Ray washed my hair. Studied Spanish. Took a hot bath & hot lemonade.

September 18, 1941

Dear Diary, Still got a cold. Went to first official Spanish class & just reviewed what I knew before. Ray took me home. Wrote a letter to Mama. My motorcycle is in a different shop for a real check up. G'nite.

September 19, 1941

Dear Diary, Was interviewed for a \$2000 a year job as reporter in O.P.M. Ray came over & we went to the cycle shop. Cec gave Louise a ride on her cycle. Being in love with Ray never makes me worry or anxious like love always did.

September 20, 1941

Dear Diary, Had dictation after work. Cec & I baked a cake & 3 pies. Cleaned house & had Ray here for supper. Went to the cycle shop but couldn't get my Adelina. Clipped a guy's fender & Ray silently paid him \$9.00.

September 21, 1941

Dear Diary, Ray, Cec & I went to 7 o'clock mass. Went to the studio in the p.m. & then on a picnic out to Ray's place & built a bonfire to make coffee. Ray said, "I'll bet we could raise some pretty smart kids."

September 22, 1941

Dear Diary, Can't get that O.P.M. reporting job because Ordnance won't or can't release me. Maybe my job will be raised to \$18.00. Went to Spanish class & the good-looking young professor taught it. Called Ray

September 23, 1941

Dear Diary, Had dictation after work. Ray came over & when I paid him for the accident he wouldn't take it & insisted I send it to Mama. So I did. We talked about building a house – and made love.

September 24, 1941

Dear Diary, Got my motorcycle out of the shop & it cost me \$37.50. Runs pretty well. Ray, Cec, Bertha & I went out for a spin. Got a letter from Mama telling about the wedding. Made index of steno abbreviations.

September 25, 1941

Dear Diary, Had an offer of a job in Jamaica at \$1620 but wasn't interested inasmuch as I expect my present job to be raised to \$1800. Letter from Carl. Took motorcycle out. Saw Wendy & went to Spanish school. He kept us til 9:30.

September 26, 1941

Dear Diary, Went to Temple school & David Hahn's class for dictation. Both were too slow. Temple will increase speed for me. Practiced in office & went downtown for Rita on her overtime. Called Ray. He is trying to get used to staying home.

September 27, 1941

Dear Diary, Went to a chiropractor for a wrist adjustment. Didn't do much good. Cec & I went groc. Shopping on motorcycle. Cec, Bertha, Ray & I went to Louise & Dorothy's apartment for supper. Had our pictures taken for paper. Helped Cec get her permit.

September 28, 1941

Dear Diary, Ray, Cec & I went to 6 o'clock mass. I went to take Wendy for a ride but couldn't find him. Ray got jealous & I got mad at him for it. We four went to cycle races – thrilling!! Met a kid named Gordon. Ray & I washed each other's heads & other things.



September 29, 1941

Dear Diary, Our pictures on the cycle appeared in the paper today with a tricky writeup. Took my machine to the shop & Ray took me to Spanish school. Met a girl rider Fritzie Laner, went to Brooks & 4 cyclists had lunch at our place.

September 30, 1941

Dear Diary, It is my Mama's birthday. We had a dictation class after work & Mary O'D came home with me. Ray & Cec each went after my machine & couldn't get it. I was really mad at the shop. Showed it, too. Cec took May home. Ray stayed with me.

October 1, 1941

Dear Diary, Mr. Brock picked me up on the areal(?) after work & took me to school – met me after school & took me to the shop & I got my machine. Worked for Mr. Kahn from 7:20 to 11:30. He asked me if I rode my motorcycle down there. I did.

October 2, 1941

Dear Diary, Went to the office with a toothache, but left right away for the dentist at College Pk. Md on my motor. Had it pulled. Slept till 4:30 & made pies & got supper. Too weak to go to school. Ray was here, also Jimmie Norfolk to see Cec. He's nice.

October 3, 1941

Dear Diary, Rode my cycle to work popping on one. Mary & I took a conference at Hotel 2400. Had \$1.50 lunch. Red, a manager, rode up to school with me & found out where I could get the plug cleaned. Went up to the shop. Letters from Mama. Called Ray to talk about all.

October 4, 1941

Dear Diary, Mary & I took another conference at Hotel 2400, slower & busier than yesterday. Ray, Cec, Jimmie, Kep & I got some apples on a vacant lot in our saddlebags. Cops stopped us & looked us over. Home at midnight.

October 5, 1941

Dear Diary, Ray, Cec, Alec & I went to cycle races at Piney Grove. One had spill, but he walked back to the track. Jimmie & we three drove to Baltimore on 2 cycles. White door steps & gas street lamps. Home at 11 p.m. Bed at 1.

October 6, 1941

Dear Diary, Last night Ray thought I was always brooding – maybe over the situation I am in. I said I still loved him, but he is still married. Went to Temple School & Spanish class & to work on my cycle. Letters from Mary & Art. He wrote me one I didn't get.

October 7, 1941

Dear Diary, Dictation class after work & took Mary home on my motorcycle. Ray was here when I got home – slightly worried. He asked me if I were going to marry him – I asked him when he was going to start taking instructions.

Letter from Ray's parents – dated October 7, 1941

Most was written by "Daddy Bun" (Bernard Scott), with note at the end from his mother, Nelie. Spellings are as is.

Dear Ray and Three Girls Friend,

We thought maby you all would come home this week end. We are looking for you all soon if not this week.

We sure did enjoy reading the letter you girls wrote.

We thought the picture in paper was just fine, and what a wonderfull write up they had. How are you getting along this hot dry weather.

I sold only 3 cattle (weight 3610 lbs). I think I will hafter go after the rest of them.

Gary wrote and said he believe if they were his he would move them home and feed them.

Anna & Rye was at home this weekend seem to be getting along fine. We are through cutting corn and harrowed the land all over sowed oats and lime on some of it. I guess we will sow rye tomorrow. I don't know when I will sow wheat. Sis came home with her new daughter Monday. I think they are getting along O.K. Lots of girls grand girls. Mar and Jim and girls getting along fine. We sprayed all of his buildings in about two days. Did a very good job I think. Gra Ma is not so well in bed now. Mary Lowry was buried at Rochelle last Sat eve -- We made lots of hay got it all cut at least.

We heard from Bunny today. They are getting along good. I think expecting a raise Monday of about 10 or 20 per ct.

We have not sold turkeys yet. Pullets are laying about 60 eggs a day, have not put them in house yet. We were sorry we did not think of giving you and your family some eggs to take home with you all when you all were here.

We all most had too much fire around the wash pot last Monday week. Nelie went out while we were milking and made a fire under the pot. Fire got in

some trash and got a good start burnt the wardrobe right bad she rung the bell and we got there in time to put it out all most too much fire.

We are still rejoicing over finding Cecelia's pin. I know she would never have gotten over it if she had not gotten it back.

How is Bessie, Bertha, and Cecelia getting along. We enjoyed having the old firm Girls to visit us. It is so easy to know what to do with girls like that. I think you have a good lot of girls to be with. Do you ever see Reid.

Pa has told all news so will close. Marilyn about ready for school.

Hope to see you all soon.

Love to all, Nelie

October 8, 1941

Dear Diary, Jimmie & Kep were up & also Ray. He and I went to Haines Point in the car but didn't see the cherry blossoms because we were making love all the time. He said he'd start instructions after he finished his present job.

October 9, 1941

Dear Diary, Cec's soldier friend called & I called back to call off her date, but we made a double date with his roommate for tomorrow. Kep & Jimmie came over. Kep wants a date with Mary so I am going to arrange.

October 10, 1941

Dear Diary, Temple School after work. Cec & I took the soldiers for a motorcycle ride to airport and around. Not too well impressed. Got a card from Ray that he went home. Burned my lights out on a short.

October 11, 1941

Dear Diary, Almost finished the conferences. Went to the dentist on my motorcycle for x-rays of my jaws. Jimmie & Kep helped us bake cookies & pie, washed dishes. Ray & I went shopping on K Street & I got a cocky hat.

October 12, 1941

Dear Diary, Ray, Cec, Alec & I went to races out in Maryland. Drove over a terrible road. Dugan's machine burned up. I didn't make Ray go home & he stayed till 2:30 am. I was asleep most of the time.

October 13, 1941

Dear Diary, Temple School after work. Ray jumped off a street car & I gave him a 1-block ride on my motorcycle after work. He came over and I didn't seem happy because I was tired. He thought I was made at him.

October 14, 1941

Dear Diary, 23 years old today. Got a book on Wyoming from Art. Had 3 ½ hours dictation after work. Cec., Jimmie, Kep, & I had eats at a café & went riding out in the country. Jimmie gave me a licking & I tickled him.

October 15, 1941

Dear Diary, Went to a Mexican restaurant for a hot Mexican dinner with the Spanish class. Very good. Ray called & was in bad spirits – lonely, thought I didn't love him. Thought I had a date with someone tonight.

October 16, 1941

Dear Diary, Dictation class, Spanish class without any supper. Ray came over at 7:30. I was tired & he said I ran around too much. I said, "If it isn't you it is someone else." It hurt him. I was stepping out on him.

October 17, 1941

Dear Diary, Ray, Cec, Jimmie & I went to Baltimore to attend Jim's cousin's wedding, but Cec's chain broke in Baltimore & we missed the wedding. Stopped 6 times to fix it on the way home. Built a camp fire, caught in the rain. Retired at 6:40 am.

October 18, 1941

Dear Diary, Ray went to church and prayed for me on my birthday. Ray woke me up at 4 pm. Mary called & said she thought I must have got drunk at the wedding. Ray & I went shopping & bought him a leather jacket, me a coat, & Arthur Frank a belt. To bed at 12:10.

October 19, 1941

Dear Diary, 9 motorcycles drove in formation to Winchester, Va. To the motorcycle races. Jimmie drove my machine & Ray rode with another kid. Watched races from the top of a pine tree. Ray called the priest to see about taking instructions last week.

October 20, 1941

Dear Diary, Had a conference this a.m. a very good one. Went to dictation class at O.P.M. after work, home, & to Spanish school. Gave Cec a ride home from school as her machine is in the shop. Nite.

October 21, 1941

Dear Diary, Transcribed all day. Had Harry's dictation class after work. Couldn't get up for mass. Tried all day, or rather sleepy. Ray, Kep & Jimmie came over to watch us do our work. Ate pomegranates.

October 23, 1941

Dear Diary, No school tonight, walked to work & home for the first time in 3 weeks. Ray & I rode the motor to Reid's. We talked about going out with other people & got a little irked at each other. We made love till 2:30 a.m.

October 23, 1941

Dear Diary, Didn't do much work today – wrote to Johnny. Bertha came back yesterday & I rode her to work on Adeline. She kicked back tonight & now my knee is swelled. Went to Spanish class also dictation class.

October 24, 1941

Dear Diary, Went to dictation on O.P.M. only 2 of us there & we read Q&A to each other. Cec took my motorcycle to work & school afterward. Did considerable housework. Ray saw Msgr. McAdams to talk about taking instructions.

October 25, 1941

Dear Diary, Went to the dentist & got 2 fillings in my teeth. Cec & I chased around all afternoon & got ready in our Hill Billy outfits & took Ray and Jimmie to ASA Halloween Party. Cec & I took a prize for funniest dressed. Good time.

October 26, 1941

Dear Diary, Went to 9 o'clock mass. Went to Parade in honor of Christ the King. We marched for over an hour. Rode around town. The President went by – I waved & so did he. Cooked a pot roast & had a big supper at 9 p.m. G'nite.

October 27, 1941

Dear Diary, Ray read to me till I went to sleep & then he snored last night. Ot much doing at the office. Ray came over tonight. He had been to see Msgr. McAdams again. He says I have to love him an awful lot. I do.

October 28, 1941

Dear Diary, Slept till 9:45 & got to work at 11:15. Not much doing. Had dictation class. Rita & Mary took a lecture & we stayed till 2 am transcribing it and got it done, too. It was cold driving my motorcycle home.

October 29, 1941

Dear Diary, Went to work at 10:40 & put in the day. Wrote to mama, studied some. Went to dictation class at Stenotype Institute & my stenotype stalled. Went to Mrs. Randolph's. Washed my head. Letter from Arthur Frank.

October 30, 1941

Dear Diary, Another dull day at the office. Dictation class and Spanish class. Corbin Fox left a note on my ignition switch asking me to go to the circus with him at midnight. He came after me on his m-cycle. He wanted to kiss me, but I didn't feel the same.

October 31, 1941

Dear Diary, Bertha, Cec, & I left with Ray for Madison. Ray was quite put out about my going to the circus. Wore Hill Billy costumes to the party & danced square dances & made fun of the people who laughed at me. I wore Ray's work shoes.

November 1, 1941

Dear Diary, It was rainy. We went to Charlottesville for mass, but were too late & missed mass. Ray & I took a walk in the beautiful moonlit evening & I had to straighten him out on my intentions about our future, etc. & reassure him of my love.

November 2, 1941

Dear Diary, Mass at Gordonsville. Ray & I napped afterward and I had to reassure him again. We acted like babies at the table & had the whole family laughing. I drove all the way back to Washington. He went home early. He's sweet now.

November 3, 1941

Dear Diary, Took a conference for 5 ½ hours today all by myself. Went to O.P.M. study class. Mrs. Dennis assigned me chairman of the vocational committee. Went to Spanish class, home & cooked supper. Ray called. Has to work nights.

November 4, 1941

Dear Diary, The men in the conference presented me with a 2-lb. box of Louis Sherry chocolates. Took all day. Had a spat with Bertha this a.m. Ray came over & stayed till 1 a.m. It's getting so I hate to see him go home.

November 5, 1941

Dear Diary, Took Red Griffin, a messenger, motorcycling tonight. The lights went out & he tried to fix them. He had to push to get it started. He was sporting about it. Went to dictation class at Stenotype Institute.

November 6, 1941

Dear Diary, Took a 2-hour conference with Evelyn. Red dropped in this morning. Letters from Mama, Dot, Carl & Catherine Atkinson. Call from Corbin Fox. Motorcycle on the (?) so I skipped Spanish class.

November 7, 1941

Dear Diary, Spent \$8.95 for a new battery at Indian shop. Went to ASA meeting. Ray called & I invited him to go, too. He did. Berry Ham spoke. Victor was here when we got back. Had cocoa & talked till after midnight. And to bed.

November 8, 1941

Dear Diary, Worked till 4 o'clock, came home & got supper & Victor showed his colored slides. Jimmie & Cec were over. We're going to go out, but Cec, Vic & Jim went & left Ray and me asleep on the couch.



Bessie slept in the kitchen of her apartment. Victor Johnson took this picture of Bessie & Ray napping. The picture was taken at 628 E St. NE in Washington DC where Bessie was living at the time.

November 9, 1941

Dear Diary, The 4 of us went to 9 o'clock mass. Johnny Ferguson joined us & we went to Mount Vernon. To Fat Bay for chicken in the rough for supper. Danced some with Ray. Bertha more or less loosened up. To bed very late.

November 10, 1941

Dear Diary, Worked frantically on a conference all day & stayed till 7:45 getting it mailed. Ray picked me up. Saw Victor off for Miami and hence to Panama. Skipped Spanish class. Was so tired I could hardly talk. Ray left early.

November 11, 1941

Dear Diary, Cec and I went to 9 o'clock mass. I worked on a conference till 1:30. Ray picked me up & we went out to "our" place & dreamed & planned our future. He put on my winter shield. Whole family went to Jimmie's & danced. Fun.

November 12, 1941

Dear Diary, Mary & I took a conference at Hotel Carlton. Had a \$2.00 luncheon. Went to Indian shop & then got a coat. Went to dictation class & to a special meeting of reporters to discuss getting higher salaries for gov't reporters.

November 13, 1941

Dear Diary, Worked frantically on another conference. I quit at 7:30 & went to Spanish class, came home & washed my head. Everybody at class wondered why I hadn't been to class. Red was down to see me.

November 14, 1941

Dear Diary, Cec took my motorcycle to work. Rita had hid my dress to scare me, but I wore another. Ray came over and we lost our dignity & I cried & so did he. He put me in bed with my clothes on and went home.

November 15, 1941

Dear Diary, Didn't go to work today – slept till 11. Went to confession. Was going to be gone when Ray came but didn't make it. We went to a show & to the Harbor Room. He said he needed me & I said, "what for?" Cried.

November 16, 1941

Dear Diary, Had to put ice on my eyelids this morning. I couldn't greet Ray normally. Alvin Buleon & Cal came over & the 6 of us went to Sugarloaf Mountain. Nice trip. Ate lunch on top of the mountain. Ray isn't making any more promises – acting.

November 17, 1941

Dear Diary, Edited transcript all day. Came home for supper & went to Spanish & took my Stenotype. Miguel was much impressed. Went to ASA meeting. Haines Dennis treated me to sandwich afterward. Bed late.

November 18, 1941

Dear Diary, Saw Ray for a few minutes down by the office building. He said, "Don't think hard of me." I said, "I don't." Margot Heron called me. Stayed home all evening. Alvin Bason & friend Ray came home with Cec.

November 19, 1941

Dear Diary, Cec, May, Evelyn, Margot & I went to All States Club dance. Drove Victor's car to pick up the girls. Battery was dead & had to get pushed 5 times. Met a Russian, Sammy Dubin & a lot of the old gang were there. Danced every dance.

November 20, 1941

Dear Diary, One year ago today I met Ray. He went to mass with us this morning. Went to Norfolks for dinner. Made records of the group. Went riding & Ray & I didn't wait for the rest. Got caught in the rain.

November 21, 1941

Dear Diary, Back to the transcribing. Red came down & we made a date to go cycling tonight but he cancelled it later. Washed my green knit, ironed, read a book on speaking. Wrote to Art & Johnny P.

November 22, 1941

Dear Diary, Home all afternoon except for taking my cycle to get muffler fixed. Ray took me to the show, "Shadow of the Thin Man." Washed my hair. Ray paid \$250 on "our" place. He said we would get it straightened out before we leave D.C.

November 23, 1941

Dear Diary, Went to 9 o'clock mass. It was raining. Ray & I slept all day, went for a walk, made pies & slept some more. We find it hard not to act like married people already. He wants to get married right away. He tucked me in before he left.

November 24, 1941

Dear Diary, My mind was out of the office all day. Tried to call Ray but he wasn't in – at the rectory, no doubt. Went to Spanish class & home right afterwards. Sometimes I think it's a good thing marriage is complicated.

November 25, 1941

Dear Diary, Mary & I took a conference. We went on blind dates with Neil Chamberlain & Jack Leach to the "823" and to Brookings Institute. Played Ping Pong, basketball & danced with our shoes off. Neil walked me home. He's nice – educated.

November 26, 1941

Dear Diary, Had a Rubber Products conference all day till 6 o'clock. Ray called & I had to call him back. Went to dictation class & took Red motorcycle riding afterwards. He doesn't impress me too much. I like Ray better every day.

November 27, 1941

Dear Diary, Dictation class after work & 2 hours of Spanish. Jimmy & Corky were over tonight. Ray called about arrangements for tomorrow. Transcribed in final form today. Letter from Louie Hadelier. Bertha's birthday.

November 28, 1941

Dear Diary, Ray met me after work & we went down to his folks. We talked about our future. We are going to Panama in a trailer house. Went to bed early – Ray tucked me in & kissed me.

November 29, 1941

Dear Diary, Ray & I & Jimmy went hunting. I shot a rabbit several times. Got a partridge with the double barreled. Was really warm out. Retired early with a goodnight kiss. He was proud of my hunting.

November 30, 1941

Dear Diary, Slept 10 hrs. After church we napped again. Didn't get a chance to get hungry. Had a long talk about what each expected of marriage – and a declaration of love. I really think he's the one for me & I'm happy.

December 1, 1941

Dear Diary, Back to the routine of transcribing. Went to dictation class, home, cycle shop. Got taken to Spanish class, Cec took me home. Jimmy was here. Have the hives from eating so much at Gibbs'.

December 2, 1941

Dear Diary, Hectic day – I insulted Mary & apologized. I am always insinuating I am good & smart. Ray took me to studio to pace(?) & to shop to get my cycle. Went to a fire – didn't amount to much.

December 3, 1941

Dear Diary, Went to mass this a.m. Mary was still mad at me. Bought Ray a rosary for his birthday & mailed it, also a St. Christopher medal. Went to dictation class & didn't do as well. Feeling low.

December 4, 1941

Dear Diary, Went to confession & said a rosary for Ray on the occasion of his birthday. Kep & Minnie came over. Went to Spanish. Edited some conference at home. Letters from Mama & Dorothy. Rained. Mary still mad.

December 5, 1941

Dear Diary, Worked an hour overtime. Took Ray to ASA. Ed Hammock spoke & I took verbatim minutes. They introduced me as Chm. Of vocational committee. Ray was pleased with the rosary. Said "You've got me a Catholic already."

December 6, 1941

Dear Diary, Took the A.S.R. test but the testimony was too fast for me. Took efficiency exams at 175-200. Ray & I went to Baltimore to Bunny's. Went to a party that turned out to be a liquor party. We left as it began to take effect.

December 7, 1941

Dear Diary, Ray & I went to mass. Ray dreamed he was sleeping on my shoulder, but when he woke up it was Bunny. Drove to the docks, etc. We looked at trailer houses on our way back & talked about our dreams for the future.

December 8, 1941

Dear Diary, Ray got to worrying about my old boyfriends last night. I had to reassure him. Got a letter from Mama & started one. Went down town, also to Spanish class. Did some typing – making up vocational tests. War declared.

December 9, 1941

Dear Diary, Drove my motorcycle to Temple School to hold vocational tests. Drove with lights out to save battery, but whenever anyone mentioned the fact, I said "Blackout." Lot of war rumors going around. Wrote to Mama.

December 10, 1941

Dear Diary, The war rages on the western ocean. It looks bad. Took vocational test at 175 & I think I passed. People say the war will last two years. What will happen to my Ray? God preserve us. Blue.

December 11, 1941

Dear Diary, Went to Spanish class, after which Jimmy took Cec & I to the police station to volunteer for national defense as motorcycle messengers. They told me to put down "streamlined" as my build. Bye.

December 12, 1941

Dear Diary, Rita & I had a talk & now we understand each other better. Ray & I went Christmas shopping on 14th St. Jimmu & Kep were here. Ray put me in bed & kissed me & set my alarm. Said he had been lonesome.

December 13, 1941

Dear Diary, Didn't go to work because my eyes were swelled shut. Ray was waiting for me to wake up. Jimmy & Kep here for supper. Ray & I went shopping again at Sears. Ray went out & bought our groceries. He was here all day.

December 14, 1941

Dear Diary, Mass at 7 am with Ray & Cec. Made plum pudding. Ray & I went out & got Christmas trees at our place. We talked about our probable futures. Looks dark. He said I could tell Mama we were going to get married. Decorated tree.

December 15, 1941

Dear Diary, This is 150th anniversary of Bill of Rights. Went to Spanish class. Ran out of gas on Constitution & a negro got me some. Had a private Spanish lesson. Letter from Johnny. Bombs & Japs don't worry him.

December 16, 1941

Dear Diary, Ray & I went shopping down town. Got my pictures & gave Ray one. Ray spent all his time helping me buy my present. Wrote to Mama asking what she thought of my marrying Ray.

December 17, 1941

Dear Diary, Ray came over & helped me pack my presents to send home & then took them to the express office. He is so sweet and wonderful, but he was tired. Got Jimmy a toy motorcycle.

December 18, 1941

Dear Diary, Ray met me after work & had supper with me. We rested before going shopping & rested too long. Ray got some Xmas cards. I mailed a few packages. He didn't feel well tonight.

December 19, 1941

Dear Diary, Addressed Christmas cards, wrote letters, wrapped packages. Sent Art my picture since he said he would never throw it away. Got a present from Mary & Evelyn.

December 20, 1941

Dear Diary, Fast days almost kill me. Cleaned house & then Ray came & we went shopping. Went to confession. We moved our office into a room. Didn't get much work done. Ray has been sick.

December 21, 1941

Dear Diary, 7 o'clock mass. Ray & I went out in the country & walked a few miles. Jim & Kep were over. Ray & I wrapped Xmas presents. He slept while I ironed, then I lay down beside him & we slept till 11:45.

December 22, 1941

Dear Diary, Cleaned out a lot of drawers & boxes. Transcribed minutes of ASA meeting. Washed my hair. Ray came over & told em what Fr. McAdams taught him. He also said he wrote to mama saying he wanted to marry me.

December 23, 1941

Dear Diary, Got the first money of my grade 4. Went with Cec to blood donation but they wouldn't take me today. Ray got jealous because I wrote to Carl & asked for that dime ring he promised me. He left early.

December 24, 1941

Dear Diary, Left work at 1:30 & left town at 3 pm. Driving Victor's car. Took a nap. Decorated the Christmas tree at Gibbs' and Ray took Cec & me to midnight mass in Charlottesville. Got a pocketbook from Rita. Jerry Sternberg joined the office.

December 25, 1941

Dear Diary, Got up before Ray did. All Gibbs kids were there & they opened the presents. Ray gave me a very good camera & we spent most of the day figuring it out. Cec & I drove back, arriving at 9 pm. Brought lots of stuff with us.

December 26, 1941

Dear Diary, Jimmy & I went skating at the ice palace. It has been 2 years since I skated & I forgot most of it. Got a cuddly doll from Dorothy & Eileen. Bath oil from Kate & Jeanny. Clock from Louie Hadel, basked from Art, scarf from Mary.

December 27, 1941

Dear Diary, Left work at 11:15 & took the train to Orange Va. Where Ray met me. Took pictures. Painted Ray's fingernails. Read a little, went to bed early. Ray turned down 3 invitations for us to go out. Slept with Marilyn.

December 28, 1941

Dear Diary, Ray woke me with a kiss & built a fire. Went to mass & then to the Lutheran church after his mama ate & took a walk in the pasture. After we got back to work I wouldn't let him go home & he stayed till 3 a.m.

Miller SD
Dec. 28, 1941

Dear Mr. Gibbs, Or I will call you Ray as Bessie does:

Thank you for your letter which I rec'd two days ago & which I should have answered sooner but for the house being full until now. I appreciate it that you place confidence in me in the matter on which you wrote me.

As to my opinion of the idea of you marrying Bessie, I can only say that my first wish is that any such step taken should be for the future happiness for both of you. As you mentioned, you have been acquainted for a year now, and should have a fair idea of the main characteristics of each other. I wish I could talk to you personally, too.

As far as I have heard, I believe that Religion is the only one of the important things to be considered for a home of harmony, in which you & Bessie might differ. As I have always seen it, a unity of religious belief is the main foundation of a Christian home, and a strong shield against most of our present day menaces to harmony & happiness in married life.

So I would say, that unless you can feel, after due consideration, that you can accept the same belief as Bessie (as I know she could never possibly part from her Faith that is a part of her very life) it might be only strife ahead for both of you. You can see that too, can't you?

However, I am hoping that all will turn out beautifully because, after all, why couldn't you, after taking the instructions, see the truth of the Catholic religion the same as Bessie can since you are just as much one of God's children as she is.

My new son-in-law, John Christiansen, is very happy in the Catholic religion since he entered Church last August just prior to his marriage to Mary in Sept. He says his outlook on life affords him a meaning that he lacked before.

As I know both you & Bessie are sincere in wanting to do the right thing and are old enough to know your own minds, I feel confident that I shall soon hear very happy news. I would be glad to have Bessie settled in a home of her own and have been glad for her that she has had the friends that you and your people have been to her since she went to Washington. It was the first time she had ever been so far away from home. I know she was homesick at first, but I could see a difference when she was at home last summer. Altho she was happy to be with us all again, still she was mostly looking forward to getting back to Washington.

We are having a white Christmas season here. We all had a fine Christmas with news & presents from all our people, tho somewhat lonesome at dinner with just the girls I have at home, myself and one neighbor. I imagine you all had a great time at your home as Bessie &

Cec predicted.

Sincerely, Anna J. Johnson

p.s. Your letter is held in absolute confidence as none of us open each others letters and I haven't mentioned it to anyone as I know. Neither of you would wish it just yet. A.J.

December 29, 1941

Dear Diary, Had a District Control Conference & Lord Beaverbrook from London spoke. Thrill, thrill! Got an American Beauty hostess gown from Johnny P. Letters from the kids and mama. She was glad about Ray & me. Ray was here.

December 30, 1941

Dear Diary, Had practice black outs & we were caught in 3 of them going shopping. Bought shoes. Visited Weavers in Silver Spring. Letter from Art & also from Carl. Conference all day. I surely am getting experience.

December 31, 1941

Dear Diary, New Year's Eve and no party. Had to go to bed early. Went shopping & bought shoes & slippers. Ray got a letter from Mama with her comments about our getting married. Saw the New Year in with Ray.

1942

January 1, 1942

Dear Diary, Ray went to Mass with us, then took me to work. Quit at 3, Ray took me home and we roasted chicken. Then went to look at trailers. He stayed too late till we decided he'd better stay away.

January 2, 1942

Dear Diary, Took an all-day conference at Bureau of Standards. Went to bed at 5 – headache – worried. At 8 Ray was standing by my bed calling me. He hadn't worked. Said he didn't want to give up the religion I had given him.

January 3, 1942

Dear Diary, We decided last night to only see each other on Sundays. Father McAdams said we should get married as soon as possible. John Peters and Margaret were over. Letter from Don and Mae yesterday. Nite.

January 4, 1942

Dear Diary, Ray took us to Mass. After breakfast Cec and I transcribed at the office till 4. Ray picked us up. Pete and Jalin brought oysters and shrimp. Ray was catching cold. I told him what Fr. McAdams said. He was glad. He left at 11 p.m.

January 5, 1942

Dear Diary, Transcribed all day. Went to Spanish class and was the only student. Gave the teacher a ride downtown and he wanted to take me to eat but I declined. Jimmy and Kep were here when I got home. Letters from Johnny P. and Mary

January 6, 1942

Dear Diary, Still plugging away at District Control conference. Card from Don and he expects to drop in soon. Thrill, Thrill! Called Ray. He was sick yesterday and today. Letter from Mama with her comments on our plans. Wrote to her.

Letter from Anne Johnson to Bessie

Old Brown House
Jan. 2, 1942

Dear Bessie

I just received your letter this am and reading the first of it left me speechless when I read what you said about my only saying one word about the news. Why, my darling, I wish I could take you in my arms and tell you how I care about your plans and how happy I am for you that you are planning for all the happiness that your marriage will sure bring you. If you both decide on living in the same faith. It must be that you didn't get the letter I sent you the very same day. I got your letter asking me my idea of your plans. I can repeat about what I said in the other letter. I think all things being normal it is a grand idea from anything I have heard from Ray and his Family. Of course there might be things about them that could create a hazard for happiness and harmony. The only thing I could think of would be difference in religious views. At this age, more than ever before.

I think it makes the venture dangerous because Catholic standards remain unchanged throughout the ages and other ideas are introduced, new fads that a Catholic can't try out. For instance Birth control (I suppose you have heard that so often it sounds stale.) However it is the one thing that could cause unending conflict. That is why I am so glad Johnny joined the Church. If he tries anything against the church a priest can talk to him. Otherwise as in the case of my experience. Nothing could be done, but for me to turn up my nose and walk on, causing tragedy.

I'll tell you this on the q.t. & don't believe I am betraying confidence when I do, Ray wrote me a few lines and asked me what I thought of your plans. He marked it confidential, but I figured that was so no one else would read it in case I wasn't home or something. The confidential was on the inside.

I wrote him soon as I had a chance which was two days later. I told him the same as I am telling you. I do so hope that he can see the truth of the Catholic religion. If anyone ever deserved to have a happy home and a good husband, it is you darling. You have always been a great comfort to me and if you ever neglected to do anything for me that a chance presented, I don't know when it could have been. I remember before you were born. Just at first I was hoping it

was not so, that I was to have another baby so soon, only for the one reason, that I was afraid I would lose it by miscarriage as my health was so bad. But when I knew it was to be I made the most perfect act of resignation to God's will that I ever made and asked him to bless and protect us both. And I have always known that he answered my prayer in a big way.

I often thought of it afterwards when I noticed your friendliness as a little child and your love for me and everybody, and how you used to feel when you thought that Victor didn't like you. You were destined to be little Bessie that I always planned on with mother. And now it seems such a short time that I had you, so to know you are happy in a home of your own with children and a good husband will be the best thing I could think of. I am starting my third Novena to the Sorrowful Mother today and you may be sure I will remember you in it and Ray too, of course.

Love
Mother

January 7, 1942

Dear Diary, Don is in Fort Dix, N.J. waiting to leave the U.S. He might come down or I'll go up there this weekend. I asked Ray if I could and he said yes. He wanted to break our resolution and come over. I wouldn't let him. Be strong.

Bessie's letter to Ray, Jan 7, 1942. Included with the letter Anna wrote on January 2.

Sweetheart,

I love you.

My mama's letter is a very personal one, and you must understand when you read it that it was written for nobody but me to read and that is why she says it the way she does.

If I weren't going to marry you I wouldn't let you read it. But since I am, I want you to know my innermost secrets and thoughts and hopes and fears so that we can understand each other better.

My mama is an indulgent parent, she has to do the job of both parents, so don't take her too literally in what she says about me.

Easter is the 5th of April this year – early. Which means we won't have to wait so long. Everything will be beautiful in April, the best of which will be our love.

I am going to quit studying for a while then. I told Mama when I wrote last night that then I was going to quit all my studies, save the study of my sweetheart's whims.

Honey, we have to practice following through on what we make up our minds to do, because we will have to follow through on a lot of things from now on till we are holding hands in Heaven.

Three months is a short time compared to the time we will spend

together afterward, but a long time compared to the way time flies when we are together.

My love for you will ever flow like water down a 'tater row –

Bessie

January 8, 1942

Dear Diary, Transcribed Lord Beaverbrook. Couldn't get the car started to go to Spanish so I baked a cake and wrote to Johnny & Louise. Wrote to Don, Ray & Art last night. Sent Ray Mama's letter on marriage, etc. Card from Art.

January 9, 1942

Dear Diary, Got a long distance telephone call from Don. He wanted me to come up to Fort Dix. Ray came over and I argued with him, also cried. Maybe because I gave a half pint of blood for defense.

January 10, 1942

Dear Diary, Took the 11 o'clock train. Couldn't get off train right. Finally saw Don at 9 pm. He held me in his arms very tight and I said, "It's been a long time." Told him I was going to marry Ray. We stayed up all night and at 5:30 am I kissed him.

January 11, 1942

Dear Diary, Went to mass at 12 but was late. Went out to Fort Dix & spent 3 hours with Don. He said he'd come to visit me when we're married. He said, "You're Ray's Bessie now, but isn't a little tiny spot in your heart that's mine?"

January 12, 1942

Dear Diary, A couple of corporals accompanied me home and helped me with the bed roll Don gave me. Ray came over and I told him all about it and argued and I baked ham and he babied me. Said I seemed different.

January 13, 1942

Dear Diary, Moved our office today. Took a conference. Had dictation class tonight. I talked to Ray on the phone for half an hour. Did some domestic duties. Wrote a letter to Ray apologizing for last night.

January 14, 1942

Dear Diary, Letter from Don said he had been in love with someone but couldn't tell me because I would believe he didn't love me most. Says now there are no loose ends between us. Sent the letter to Ray. I said my trip was the last scene of a beautiful romance.

January 15, 1942

Dear Diary, Had a terrific headache all day. Went to bed at 6 o'clock and couldn't sleep till after 9 it hurt so. Got a sweet letter from Ray. Got four new stenographers in the office. Wish I were married to Ray right now.

January 16, 1942

Dear Diary, Ray had to have some things about Don's letter explained, also he had to be reassured of my love. He was worried about the part where Don said he'd always love above others. I guess I put his heart at ease. Cleaned house.

January 17, 1942

Dear Diary, Had to work till 5 today. Ray picked me and Bertha up at work & helped us get groceries. Spent w hours driving around Hyattsville & Alexandria trying to find a barn dance. Couldn't find any. Had sandwiches at the Hot Shop.

January 18, 1942

Dear Diary, 8 o'clock mass. Made pies after breakfast. Ray & I went out to the ranch and planned our future & roamed and made love till long after dark. Went trailer shopping. Ray is going to get me a diamond. We're more in love than ever.

January 19, 1942

Dear Diary, The time seems to fly on leaden wings. Had a sore throat. No letter from home so I read the Press. Called Ray. He had gone to instructions. Asked him to pray for me on his rosary. He said he would. He's wonderful.

January 20, 1942

Dear Diary, Letter from mama & Johnny Pugh. He wrote a love letter, said he was sending me something else. Took a conference at Carlton Hotel with Evelyn Joseph. Have a sore throat, cold sore & feel bad. Worked, battled. Gnite.

January 21, 1942

Dear Diary, Spent the day at home, in bed till 2 pm nursing my sore throat & cold. Letter from Don. He said it meant more to him to know I was going to be happy than if we'd tried to hang onto the impossible.

January 22, 1942

Dear Diary, Went back to work and sniffled all day. Transcribed in final form all day. Started liking Peruna. Called Ray. Think he was a little hurt about talking about Art. He sent me the final form of his autobiography.

January 23, 1942

Dear Diary, Sniffled & blew thru the day. Left office at 3:20. Cleaned house & went to bed suffering. Ray came over & brought more drops, ice cream & pineapple juice & doctored me up. Brought me a nose spray, too. Stayed with me till 11 p.m.

January 24, 1942

Dear Diary, Stayed home from work. Ray had lunch me and took me to the dentist. Then shopping and to the waterfront for a seafood dinner. Said he would have gone to Bermuda last week were it not for me.

January 25, 1942

Dear Diary, 9 o'clock mass, breakfast, cleaned, clothes. Went to see Margot Heron. I joked about Ray & he was insulted. Then I cried & couldn't stop. He was patient & loving & let me cry it out. Took me for a walk & then went home.

January 26, 1942

Dear Diary, Typed on an electric typewriter. We might get them. Ray called me at the office and hung up. Then I called him. He didn't go to work and wanted to see if I did. Talked to him tonight. Dictation class with O.P.M. Goodnite

January 27, 1942

Dear Diary, Ray was feeling bad till I called him & then he felt good. He's got it bad. Is that good? No class tonight, so spent the evening doing general housework. Transcribed all day at the office. Sent \$90 to my insurance.

January 28, 1942

Dear Diary, Rained & sleeted. Baked a cake tonite. Ray called. He mentioned a fine place & warming the rheumatism out of my knees with it. He said I could tell Johnny about our future plans.

January 29, 1942

Dear Diary, Heard Jimmie Norfolk had an accident. Went to the hospital but we couldn't see him. Jimmie Boxin was there with a bullet in his leg. Ray took us over to the hospital. Am worried about Jimmy N.

January 30, 1942

Dear Diary, Jimmie Norfolk died at 10:45 last night. Kep & Mussie were over. Ray sent me an azalea because Fr. McAdams had said, "Don't wait till they're dead to send flowers." Bertha & I cleaned house. I baked pies.

January 31, 1942

Dear Diary, Don called last night and came down from Ft. Dix. We took a pie over to Norfolks & went to see Jimmie. Took pictures of him. Took Don on a tour of the city – with Ray, Bertha & Cec. Had cocoa & Don went home with Ray.

February 1, 1942

Dear Diary, Don & Ray here for 7 o'clock mass. Took Don for a motorcycle ride out to Ray's ranch. Took pictures. Ray took us sightseeing some more. After supper took him to the train. Ray tucked me in bed.

February 2, 1942

Dear Diary, Don is now in Air Corps. After the war he is going to marry a widow with 2 little girls. No work to do. Studied Spanish stenotypy. Dictation class at 6 pm. Bought flowers for Jimmie & Mrs. N. Called Ray.

February 3, 1942

Dear Diary, Cec & I rode our motorcycles in Jimmie's funeral procession, Cec leading. Very cold. Felt the loss of Jimmie the most this afternoon. Ray had lunch with us & took Bertha & me to work. He called.

February 4, 1942

Dear Diary, Letters from Mama & Don. He said Ray & he talked the same language. No work at office, only practicing & reading Wuthering Heights. Called Ray tonight. Says he needs someone to love him. Baked cake.

February 5, 1942

Dear Diary, Read Wuthering Heights all afternoon & took it home & finished the book. Called Ray. He complains always of not feeling so well – says he needs to be in the country & someone to love him. I'll fix that.

February 6, 1942

Dear Diary, Letter from Carl with a ring made of a dime, but I have promised Ray I won't wear it till I wear his. Had a conference. Cleaned house – looked at the "Wish Book" & dreamed. Called Ray.

February 7, 1942

Dear Diary, Ray picked me up at the office & we went shopping. Bought some fiesta dishes. Went to see Mike about a trailer, but he had sold it. Had supper at the Hot Shop & then up to Mike's house & his girl came up.

February 8, 1942

Dear Diary, Went to 7 o'clock mass & Ray took me to work. He picked me up at 5, took me home, & laid me on the bed while he got supper on the table. We went out to look at trailers. He kept talking about a diamond & whether I wanted one.

February 9, 1942

Dear Diary, We spent the whole afternoon practicing reading "You Can't Do Business With Hitler." Went to ?. Mrs. Dennis asked me to take a part in David Kalin's mock trial. My name is Eileen Back. Called Ray.

February 10, 1942

Dear Diary, Ray called & his conscience had been worrying him about telling me he'd be a Catholic anyway since he was marrying me. So I let him come over and did what I could to straighten him out. Took a conference. Had a letter from Mac G.

February 11, 1942

Dear Diary, Ray took me out trailer hunting and I think we found it. Ray is going back tomorrow and make the deal. Our dreams are beginning to come true. I will have to wait a while for the diamond but that's O.K. Happy Day.

February 12, 1942

Dear Diary, Had 2 conferences & had to leave the first before it was finished to get to the next. Dictation class. Had dinner at Red Circle & went to ASA executive meeting. Wrote to Carl. Got a valentine from Don. Very tired tonite.

February 13, 1942

Dear Diary, Ray picked me up a little after 6 and we headed for Va. He made a down payment on our trailer, so it is practically ours. Went to the dance at Madison school house, after visiting at Clores.

February 14, 1942

Dear Diary, I slept till 10 am. Ray and I went for a long walk through woods & across fields. Dozed & made love in a sunny pasture. I asked Mr. & Mrs. G. if I could have Ray. They said they'd just as soon I had him as anybody.

February 15, 1942

Dear Diary, Got up at 8 & made some biscuits & helped get breakfast. Mass at Charlottesville. Shopped in the Sears Roebuck catalog & Ray looked at diamonds. He said "I wonder why I never loved so before – I think I know."

February 16, 1942

Dear Diary, Cec said Arthur Frank called me long distance from Wyo. Friday night. Ray bought me a motorcycle tire tonite. Got a valentine card from Carl saying, "I love you, sweetheart." Tsk!

February 17, 1942

Dear Diary, Got a letter from Mama. Talked to Ray an hour and a half on the phone – mostly about religion. He says he can't go back to what he was nor yet on the Catholicism. Mama said this was hardest time for him.

February 18, 1942

Dear Diary, Ash Wednesday. Ray came over & we went to church & he got ashes, too. He is worried about becoming a Catholic. He said "Everything is right for us." I said Duke said that, too. He was hurt & I cried because he was hurt & then he was hurt.

February 19, 1942

Dear Diary, Went to an executive meeting of ASA for the purpose of convincing Doris Overmeir of the good of the ASA legislative program – on motorcycle. Wrote to Mama. I talked to Ray from O.P.M. office. Took lecture.

February 20, 1942

Dear Diary, Had a conference this pm for 2 ³/₄ hours without a break – fast, too. Some of it so secret they wouldn't even let us transcribe it. Did housework & ironed, interrupted by a call from Ray. He's a darling.

February 21, 1942

Dear Diary, Ray met me at work & we bought groceries. He took me over to Dennis' where we had play practice. Ray & Haines hit it off well. At Al Grane, Dane Kahn, etc. were there. Home pretty late. Chilly weather.

February 22, 1942

Dear Diary, Went to 7 o'clock mass with Cec & 10 o'clock with Ray. Don called & asked for \$20 so I telegraphed it. Ray & I visited Mellon Art gallery. Had company for supper – Kay. Made a joke about mine & Ray's wedding. Cec looked hard at Ray.

February 23, 1942

Dear Diary, Mass with Ray and then he took me shopping. Bought coat, dress, suit, leather jacket, etc. Stayed home all pm. Convinced Cec & Bertha that we're really going to get married. We make love too much. Then he tucked me in & talked to me.

February 24, 1942

Dear Diary, Stayed home & sewed on my coat buttons & some other mending. I called Ray and we chatted for half an hour. I feel so comfortable after the serious talk we had last night about marriage, etc.

February 25, 1942

Dear Diary, Took a conference. Wrote Mary, Eileen, Jeannie & told about me & Ray. Went to play practice at OEH office. Al Grain & Ed Center walked me home after we had tea at Red Circle. They sure are crazy, both of them.

February 26, 1942

Dear Diary, Got my check from Ins. Co. Ray called me & we went out to complete the trailer deal. They weren't home. Ray said, "I think this is going to be a pretty important week for me." Visited Vi who lives in a trailer. Nite.

February 27, 1942

Dear Diary, We paid the balance on the trailer. Then we went to see Fr. McAdams. He took it for granted we wanted a mixed marriage and started making arrangements. I wouldn't sign the request for a dispensation. The thought of Ray's not becoming a Catholic made me cry.

February 28, 1942

Dear Diary, Ray had been crying today out at his place & here because he was worried about how I felt about our marriage. I tried to cheer him up although I was sick at heart myself. Wrote & told Mama all. Wrote Art. Ray brought my beautiful diamond tonite.

March 1, 1942

Dear Diary, Wonderful day. To mass with Ray & he met me at 4:30. Went to visit Reid et al in country. Only Mrs. & kids at home. We had a discussion about religion. We started a Novena to St. Joseph for Ray to be a Catholic. Feel better.

March 2, 1942

Dear Diary, Rained tonight. Ray came over for supper & took me to practice at Dennis'. He almost laughed himself sick over Ed Carter. Got a letter from Mama asking me if I thought of the possibility of Ray's not joining the church. Novena.

March 3, 1942

Dear Diary, Ray took me to the jewelry store so I could get my diamond made smaller & our initials engraved in it. Blackout practice tonight and lights go out at 8 pm. So for once I'll get a good night's sleep. Said Novena.

March 4, 1942

Dear Diary, I think about what I'll do if Ray doesn't become a Catholic before our wedding day – run away without explaining or what. But when I talk to him he is so sincere I just couldn't let him down. But what about my dream of perfect marriage?

March 5, 1942

Dear Diary, Put on the play tonight & it was a wow! I had a "repertoire" of 2 turkish towels. Started slipping as I was leaving. Letter from Mama with a lot of help in it. Ray & I had a long talk on religion. Nite.

March 6, 1942

Dear Diary, Ray went to Stations of the Cross with me. Got letters from Johnny & Art. They took it OK. We didn't get to say our Novena together. The more Ray talks, the more I know he is close to being a Catholic.

March 7, 1942

Dear Diary, Wore my diamond at the office today. Rita noticed it first & everybody gathered round. Ray met me. We got groceries, money orders. He cooked supper while I rested. He rubbed my neck after I was in bed. Talked.

March 8, 1942

Dear Diary, Eight o'clock mass. Took the car for appraisal. Went up to Mike's on the cycle & took him out to our place. Mike rode my motorcycle to Chain Bridge. Invited him up to supper. Had fried oysters. He told tales of his past.

March 9, 1942

Dear Diary, Payday. Took parts of two conferences today. Transcribed another. Ray called me at the office to see if he could take me home. He could. Went to dictation class. Took Al Grain home on my motorcycle.

March 10, 1942

Dear Diary, A cold is bothering me again. Sore throat, too. Transcribed all day. Paid my income tax - \$68. Got the book "The Rhythm" & begin studying tonite. Ray called me. The man called & said we could get the trailer.

March 11, 1942

Dear Diary, Spent the day in bed till 4 pm reading "The Rhythm". Got up at 4, took a bath & called Ray. He came over. Asked me when we'd get married. I hesitated & said I'd rather wait till he's a Catholic if it would be soon. It bent his heart.

March 12, 1942

Dear Diary, Got up at 9, went back from 2 to 4. Ray & I went out to get the title to the trailer & make arrangements to move it, measured it, etc. Can't wait to live in it. Gave Ray "The Rhythm" to read last night. He doctored my cold & put me to bed.

March 13, 1942

Dear Diary, Went back to work & blew my nose all day. Ray took me down & I ordered a Stenograph. We went for a walk in the blackout, then home for hot lemonade with Cec & a heart to heart talk about marriage.

March 14, 1942

Dear Diary, Ray came over tonight in a very serious mood. Said he wanted to get straightened out about our marriage. We argued about religion. I cried, said if we were going to act like this after marriage I didn't care to be married. He didn't either.

March 15, 1942

Dear Diary, Instead of arguing against the church, he is arguing for it. He thinks he will be able to be a Catholic with my help. Worked at office till 5. Ray & I were going visiting but he was tired, so we took a nap on the couch till 11 pm. Got rather intimate.

March 16, 1942

Dear Diary, Rode cycle up to Radius to bring Cec. Back. Rain. Went to dictation class then over to Ray's. We talked about our marriage & suddenly he got uncertain again. Says one reason he hesitates is what his mother would think.

March 17, 1942

Dear Diary, Ray & I went to see Fr. McAdams & came away feeling much better. He said we could get married whenever we wanted to. Ray is still not wholly certain, but he is going to tell Fr. tomorrow to read the bans. Did some planning.

March 18, 1942

Dear Diary, Transcribed hard all day. Ray picked me up at 5 and we went out to the place & chopped down trees to make a clearing for the trailer. He called Fr. McAdams to have the bans read. Letters from Mom & Jeanny.

March 19, 1942

Dear Diary, Went to ASA executive meeting on motorcycle. It kicked me. Ordered wedding announcements. Talked to Ray. Had a long talk with Cec bout life. She is very pessimistic, thinks she is ignorant that she can't be a Stenotypist.

March 20, 1942

Dear Diary, Drove the Dodge to dictation class. Took a British Tank Mission meeting. I sure appreciate taking Americans after trying to take their prattle. Called Ray after school. He couldn't move the trailer tonight.

March 21, 1942

Dear Diary, Ray, Bertha & I went "down home" this AM. Surprised them. Rained all day. We slept, etc. talked about the future. Ray told his Ma & Pa he might be a Catholic. They won't disown him. Said novena together.

March 22, 1942

Dear Diary, Mass in Charlottesville. Had an argument on way home. Slept some more. Helped feed cows. Came back to Wash. At 10:30. Had cocoa & a headache. Ray got sheets & blankets from his hope chest for us to use.

March 23, 1942

Dear Diary, Went downtown at lunch hour. Bought Mrs. Gibbs dress & apron (red) for her birthday. Transcribed lecture on optics at 80 cents an hour. Went to dictation class in Dodge. Ray called me. Still didn't get trailer moved.

March 24, 1942

Dear Diary, Another British conference. Interesting people, those British. Ray met me and we got the wedding ring. Had chicken supper at home. Ray made out an order while I mended Cec's slacks & top.

March 25, 1942

Dear Diary, Got a telegram from Don asking for \$25. Called him at Mt. Holly, NJ tonite & Cec supplied the dough. Got a permanent. Called Ray. The trailer is moved. Got my announcements, also printer from Leo. Transcribed British C. & lecture.

March 26, 1942

Dear Diary, Went shopping from 4 to 9 & bought practically my whole trousseau: blue (?), blue hat, pants, brassiers, hose, and midriff pajamas. Sent my announcements to Mama to send out: one for George Peetries. Tired.

March 27, 1942

Dear Diary, Ray met me at 4:30 and we went to his doctor to examine me. Made it short. We're going back Sunday. The kids had a good laugh over my pajamas that are hard to get into and out of. Went to class. Told them I was getting married.

March 28, 1942

Dear Diary, Rain all day & night. Wrote to Art & Jeanny. Transcribed on lecture. Saw Louise Kley. Ironed, mended & washed tonight & now I am very tired. Only a week from today ... fly, time!

March 29, 1942

Dear Diary, Seven o'clock mass. Went to the doctor and he still can't find anything wrong with me. Ironed, packed some. Ray was conditionally baptized & taken into the church. He went to confession & so did I.

March 30, 1942

Dear Diary, Ray made his first Communion today and I went to communion with him. Had a conference this day. Got my new Stenograph & Ray took me to class. Al Grain wanted to kiss the bride. Ray wrote & sent announcement to his old girl friend.

March 31, 1942

Dear Diary, Ray & I took some of my things out to the place tonight & got them assembled in the trailer. Got stuck in the mud. Transcribed all day. Brought Bertha's friend home to look at the apartment. Cec looked sad when I was moving.

April 1, 1942

Dear Diary, Transcribed & cut stencils. Letter from Mama. Stayed home & packed, etc. Ray stopped in to eat some cereal. He is driving taxicab tonight. Mrs. Norfolk wants Cec & Bertha to stay there. Wrote to Mama, no April fools.

April 2, 1942

Dear Diary, Washed my head & got my hair set. Sewed. Cut stencils all day. Mary & I paid each other pennies when we made mistakes. Had a discussion on what to do with wedding rings when you weren't married any more.

April 3, 1942

Dear Diary, The kids at the office had a surprise party on me today, all gave me gifts. Rita gave me a nightgown with a note "I couldn't let you get married in pajamas." Called Ray to take me home. Am excited. So I go to bed alone for the last time. So long.

April 4, 1942

(Wedding day, no entry)

(***** put their wedding pictures here *****)

- - - - - no entries until:

April 12, 1942

Dear Diary, Spent the day cleaning house, washing clothes & my head, while Ray worked outside. Cec & her cop, Ross, came out for supper at 5. Cooked a roast. Ray put me up a nice clothesline, very tired.

April 13, 1942

Dear Diary, One week since we spent our first night in our little house. Got oven, ironing board, iron, gas lantern from M.S. Bought flower & garden seeds. I get very tired these days. I think it must be traffic.

April 14, 1942

Dear Diary, Got a letter from Bertha Carel Richter & she said her father died on Feb. 6. Diary, your donor is gone. Transcribed all day. Came home to my little house & got supper for my sweetheart. Made out District income tax.

April 15, 1942

Dear Diary, Ray met me after work. Came home, got supper & then I was so tired I couldn't eat, & started crying. Ray was disgusted and I cried all evening until I went to bed. I was mad at him for no sound reason – just tired.

April 16, 1942

Dear Diary, My eyes were swelled shut from crying so I didn't go to work. Decided I was trying to do too much, so we are going to eat out evenings after this. Baked pies & meat soufflé. Did cleaning, washing, etc. Ray had sick spell.

April 17, 1942

Dear Diary, Ray & I went to A.S.A. & heard Miller & Foster of Philadelphia on history of stenotype. Practiced on my new machine. We had supper at the little tea room. (?) baked & stuffed. And then I was stuffed. Sprinkled.

April 18, 1942

Dear Diary, Took a conference – a tough one – Under Secretary, three generals. Ray met me at 5 & we had light supper at home. Went to bed early. We are practicing the Rhythm method, but we still make love & have lots of fun.

April 19, 1942

Dear Diary, Cec & Bertha brought a letter from Mama. She told all about Jeanny's death & funeral. It was a beautiful letter. Worked around the house this p.m. but this morning after breakfast we just made love – Life is wonderful.

April 20, 1942

Dear Diary, Took a conference today at which Adam Blandy was present. Found a picture of him in the paper tonite. We had supper at a drug store on Lee Highway & Glebe Road. Ironed & Ray worked outside. I got up first this a.m. to show Ray I could.

--- That was the last entry in the diaries for these years. ---

(***** put pictures here. Wedding picture, trailer, pictures from the wedding day. See: C:\0Scans\Gibbs\Bessie *****)