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## 1979 Ray Family Papers

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Route 2  
Lebanon, Ky. 40033  
January 3, 1979

Dear Folks,

Rob is 8 years old today, & to celebrate, our school system canceled school for today (though I think the New Year's snow we got was also a factor). Up to now we'd been congratulating ourselves on the relatively mild fall we enjoyed, but now it looks as though this winter is shaping up possibly to be as vicious as the last two.

We had a quite delightful Christmas. The twins didn't even try to tear down or eat any of the decorations. They were quite impressed with the Christmas tree. Of course they had barrels of fun opening gifts on Christmas morning. Dad was here, and we left him with the girls for an hour or so while we went to church. When we returned we discovered that Audrey & Irene had decided to open the few gifts remaining under the tree, not bothering to notice that the tags were addressed to other people. Also they partially pruned a new poinsettia that Dad had just brought us - though neither tasted it, fortunately. The comment from ole Mr. B., the baby-sitter: "You know, two are more to look after than one." Ah so.

The girls, of course, are big buddies with Dad. Though they hadn't seen him for over 2 months, they came running with a hug & kiss as soon as he arrived at our house on Christmas Eve.

Glenn and Connie were in Lebanon the week after Christmas. Mama was thrilled, of course, to see Betsy whom she hadn't seen since she was 8 months old. It's a curious fact, but Mama has <sup>a total</sup> 4 red-headed grandchildren and no red-headed children! Of course Dad is far ahead in the grandchild department & does seem to have a disproportionate number of red-heads. Little Betsy is less than a year older than the twins, & the three seemed to get on famously. They do look a good deal alike. If they were the same size, one might take them for triplets.

Love,  
Sylvia

Route 2  
Lebanon, Kentucky 40069  
April 18, 1979

Dear Folks,

If the Robin had been a couple of weeks later this time, Pam would have been married before I even knew she was engaged! I'm sure the wedding will be lovely; we look forward to seeing the pictures.

Uncle Joe, it's good to see your multi-coloured letter again. You said that for a while your handwriting was not up to par. Par appears to have been reached now, though, as the writing to me seems identical to what it used to be.

You asked for an update on my brothers: Jack, 23, is finishing his first year of graduate work in archaeology at the U. of Missouri in Columbia. He was fortunate and able to get a research assistantship for this year and next, which covers his expenses. He is being paid to do exactly what he loves - fooling around with artifacts. What he does is called flintknapping (sounds like a case for the FBI, doesn't it?). It's fashioning arrowheads and other artificial artifacts from flint. He has papers to write on his projects, of course, but basically he's like me and is lucky enough to be able to work at what he likes to do.

Glenn, 25, is now recovered from his injured foot from last winter's car accident. He is considering getting out of mining (a move which we will all applaud).

Joe, 28, is still working for the park service at Mammoth Cave. Don't ask me what he does, but he seems to be happy with it. Joe has not re-married.

Dad braves the 400-mile trip from his house to ours quite often, but I fear dollar-a-gallon gas this summer may limit a lot of us.

Iresine and Audrey are still in the twos. No need to elaborate. They don't talk quite as plainly as Rob did at their age, but they get their messages across. As two-year-olds will, they often come out with surprising and incongruous comments. The other day Audrey looked up from her play and asked, "What time is it?" as if she had a deadline to meet or some important engagement.

Iresine is a curious little creature, too. She has an aversion to swallowing certain foods; she'll chew them up well but just won't swallow. Half an hour later she may still have it in her mouth — well masticated but unswallowed. Recently we had an evening babysitter who fixed some popcorn for the children before bed. The next morning when I got Iresine out of bed, there she had a whole mouthful of chewed-up popcorn! I've since instructed the sitter not to give the girls popcorn, as I'm afraid Iresine could get strangled if she were to pull another trick like that.

Rob continues to be a great deal of help to me, especially with the girls. What used to be a mass of red curls is now merely wavy — much to his joy. He's in the second grade and is death on spelling. He'd hauled out his spelling book this morning and was studying "watermelon" before breakfast. He won the first spelling bee his class had and now thinks he has to win the second. I try to tell him not to worry so much and that it's not necessary to win every time. But he continues to make demands on himself that are unusual for an 8-year-old, I think.

Scott, we're going to expect a visit from you this summer. I trust this will reach you before Labor Day. I suppose you will be at 714 A N. 3rd St. in Bardstown again.

Aunt Joanna, we'd love to hear from you — or better still — have a visit from you whenever you're in Louisville.

Love,  
Sylvia

Route 2  
Lebanon, Ky.  
July 6, 1979

Dear Robin,

Loved the wedding pictures and wished there had been more. Weddings are a tremendous lot of work - as no one need tell you, Pam, I'm sure - but I love them. I even enjoyed my own, though many brides say they were so numb during the whole affair they remember little of it.

It was not till after my girls were born, however, that I determined to try to preserve my wedding gown for one or both of them, should they choose to wear it some day. So after hanging in the closet for 7 years, it was finally hauled out + to the dry cleaner's (of course I should have had that done 7 years before). I read that for storage, a wedding gown should be stuffed with acid-free tissue paper (in sleeves + folds) + then covered with washed unbleached muslin + hung in a dark place. I ordered the special tissue paper + followed all directions. We shall see in 20 years or so whether my efforts were in vain.

Speaking of the girls, won't they hate me in 10 years for having taken the enclosed an-natural photos. They have very few inhibitions right now and will pose for the camera at the drop of a hat.

Bob just finished a 5-week summer term at Western Ky. U. & is now finished with his 30-hr. program above master's; now he has a principal's certification and is eager to put it to use if and when a position opens up nearby. He says he'd prefer elementary to secondary administration. I suppose there would be fewer headaches. Right now we are both planning to return to the same high school where we've been the past 9 years — Bob teaching history, me in the library. Bob will be in the 3rd grade.

We've been having a most unusual cold spell these past 2 weeks. Ordinarily it is so hot & humid in July you can barely breathe outside. This year it was so chilly on the 4<sup>th</sup> of July that we had to wrap up in jackets to watch the fireworks that night.

Love,  
Sylvia