

HEEKIN FAMILY HISTORY

James Heekin (1843-1904) was the second of eight children born to Patrick Heekin (1818-1858) and Ellen (1821-1888). They lived in Malin Beg, which means "small point" in Gaelic, in County Donegal, the northwest tip of Ireland. Donegal is one of the poorest parts of Ireland, a barren, rocky area with no cities, just little towns and villages. Today the natives make a meager living by raising sheep, growing potatoes, digging peat, and fishing. There are Heekins there, but they are not particularly interested in tracing any relationship to the American Heekins. They ask: "Were they Heekins from the sea or from the mountains?"

Given the location of Malin Beg, today a row of about 10 houses on a steep slope above the rocky seacoast, it would seem that Patrick was one of the Heekins "from the sea" who probably fished for a living. However, the potato blight caused the first Irish famine from 1845 to 1851 (the second famine lasted from 1874 to 1879) but the British landowners continued to demand their rents from the tenant farmers to be paid in grain and livestock which were sold in England. During those years about a million Irish villagers died and another million emigrated, 85 per cent of them to the United States. They first had to raise money for the passage which cost about \$40 for an adult and \$20 for a child in steerage. Patrick Heekin came over alone in 1849 in order to earn the money to bring his family.

The following year Ellen set out with three of the five children born in Malin Beg; Mary (1842- ?) aged 8, James, aged 7, and Patrick (1849-1902?) who was a year old. The famine probably caused the deaths of two other little girls in the family: Annie (1845-1847) and Bridget, born 1846, who died in a few months. And it is said that one out of ten of the emigrants died on the voyage over. They had to bring enough food with them for the six weeks journey to New York, Boston, Philadelphia, or Montreal. Already malnourished because of the famine, they lived on dried fish, potatoes if they had any, thin barley soup or weak tea and brackish drinking water to which more and more vinegar had to be added as the weeks passed. If they encountered storms at sea the trip could take ten weeks and they slept in the dark, windowless hold in overcrowded bunks that were usually no more than five and a half feet high.

The family went to Cleveland where cheap labor was needed to unload the ore boats and work in the steel mills. Here James at least was able to attend elementary school and it was said that he earned his first wages by writing letters for illiterate Irish people in his neighborhood. The Irish in America were the Blacks of their time, a rural people with no skills, illiterate, with no experience of representative government. They had never been able to vote or own land in Ireland so they were a lawless group responsible for 90

percent of the violent crimes in Cleveland between 1850 and 1870.

The only authority they respected was that of the Catholic Church, their ally against the British oppressors. (I remember Dad taking a dim view of our World War II alliance with Britain saying: "You can never trust the British.") They lived in ghettos infamous for their squalor, crime, and drunkenness.

Three more sons were born to Ellen and Patrick in the States: Thomas (1852-1892?) whose twin brother died at birth, John (1854-1893?), and Peter (1857-1906?). After a few years in Cleveland they moved to Cincinnati where Ellen had relatives. Patrick became a pedlar of linens along the Ohio River traveling by boat or walking. In 1858 James was 14 and working with his father in Hickman, Kentucky when Patrick died suddenly. It was said that the boy, who couldn't afford to take the body home, just dug a grave and buried him there.

Ellen was left with fifteen-year-old Mary, who probably had a menial job, James as her main support, and Patrick, who was nine, John, who was four, and sixteen-months-old Peter. In 1862 Mary married John Emerson and no more is known about her. From 1863 to 1865 James kept a diary which reveals a great deal about the kind of man he had become and about his work during the Civil War.

James did not become a citizen until 1880, but he was subject to the Civil War draft when he became twenty in December, 1863. In August, 1863 he was unemployed so he was glad to sign up as the driver of a supply wagon for the Union Army. He called it "driving team" in a group of 125 teams of mule drivers for an army division. He described a trip to Knoxville and back to Fort Dix in Somerset, Kentucky during which they had to forage for food along the way and he was finally reduced to scrambling with the others for scraps trampled by the mules and covered with dung. Their second trip to Knoxville took fifteen days via the Cumberland Gap and, on arrival, they found the troops there were on half rations consisting of fresh beef and soft bread. He came down with diarrhea, which was prevalent, and decided to look for a way out.

James' diary demonstrates how intelligent he was and how well he could speak and write. It also shows that other men looked up to him as a leader and that he was self-confident and clever. He found himself in a Catch-22 situation with the army, as a man who was not sworn into the army, but who needed an official discharge in order to get out. He obtained a medical excuse from the hospital which he took to Quarter Master's office where he met three more sick teamsters who begged him to speak for them. He was told they must have a written discharge from the surgeon, but the surgeon said he could do nothing because they were not mustered into the regular army! Back to the Quarter Master who then said they would have to get a certificate from some doctor certifying they were physically disabled.

A local doctor agreed that the three friends were too sick to remain in the army, but told James that "riding was a good thing for the diarrhea". He then charged each \$1.00 and the three men promptly asked James for the money. He said he would not pay for them unless he also got his discharge. The doctor quickly reconsidered, took the \$4.00, and gave him his paper.

James then walked from Knoxville to Nicholasville, Kentucky, nearly 200 miles in a week, "with no burden on me but \$60.00 on 5-cent pieces, shoes, hats, coat, pants and shirt." He called this chapter in his diary "Strategy, My Boy."

He had been gone for four months with Burnside's army and he described his situation at the end of November, 1863 as "out of funds, out of work, only consolation, out of jail." He knew he could go back to work at a bakery where he had been employed before, but that meant he had to take an entry level job there working under men he had supervised before and he didn't like that. He also thought of going back to peddling, but his mother persuaded him to stay home, so he took a job at another bakery cooping boxes at .0125 cents each. The most he ever made in a day was \$1.93 and he usually made less.

No wonder he wrote: "I am dissatisfied, discouraged, and disheartened at the prospect. What do I see to cheer me on any side? In debt but with little prospect of paying soon. True, they are none of my contracts but I think all the same. I have struggled hard since dear Father died (the Lord be good to him) to keep body and soul together in my little brothers, poor fellows, giving every cent of my hard earnings to mother to do as she thought best, denying myself the amusements which one of my age are accustomed to see aye, not even buying clothes unless absolutely necessary to hide my form, you may say, still I patiently underwent it all in hopes of my brothers being able to, at least, assist me along with the charge, but I judge from the oldest (Patrick) what the rest will do, my chances are slim indeed, as he won't work unless he feels like, which is not at all. Having a poor situation at present, the pay is not adequate to support the family. Adding to this the serious illness of the most interesting of my brothers (Tom) and then say I have not a just cause of complaint. Oh! Ye Gods, Can I endure all this, but it seems I hear "Echo" answer "Aye and much more." It is nearly six years since I began to struggle with adversity....My past and present is not of a character to urge me on, and if my future will not be crowned with success, depend upon it, it won't be my fault for " If at once you don't succeed, try, try again."

On December 18, 1863 he went with his mother to the magistrate's office to get an exemption from the draft as the son of a widow dependent upon him for support. However, he could find no work in January so he decided to go to Indianapolis to try his luck.

He stayed there with a friend named James Carr, but soon decided that the capitol of Indiana was "not much" compared with the big city of Cincinnati and noted that only two or three of the streets were paved.

He then wrote to a man in Cincinnati asking if he would send him a pack of goods on credit to peddle. By February 1st he still had received no reply and he wrote: "Got no letter or work. I never was in such a fix before. Away from home, no money, no work, no cheering word, no bright prospect to illumine the dark, crooked and narrow path that I am treading. No shoes to my feet and sick from the effect of it... I would not care if i were alone in the world. But how are Mother and Brothers faring for they did not have a cent when I left them. There is where the load hangs heaviest on me mentally; enough to crush me to the earth. and if I don't get something in the shape of greenbacks or their equivalent soon, I should not wonder if I will be counted among the things that were."

He finally found a day's work shoveling coal off two freight cars that paid \$1.50, but that was ill. He then received a letter from his mother enclosing \$4.00 and asking him to come home. He returned to Cincinnati and still could find no work so he signed himself and Patrick up to go as laborers to Nashville. They left on February 19th and traveled for two days by freight car where they "nigh froze" in the nights. They had no food until "Mr. Dougherty was kind enough to loan me a dollar" on February 21st.

James and Patrick were part of a group of 75 laborers who were quartered at a race track outside Nashville. The work was very hard - packing corn and oats up a levee that was not graded, emptying hay barges, and carrying railroad iron. Minimal meals were provided: coffee and bread and fat bacon for breakfast, soup, hard tack, sow belly and sometimes beef for dinner, and coffee, mush, and soft bread for supper. James noted that in two days they couldn't muster 30 of the 75 men because the work was so hard, but he commented: "It came hard with me at first, but I stood it fine."

The men called James "Preacher" because he entertained them on Sunday in the bunk room by giving them a sermon burlesquing that of an fundamentalist preacher, mixing the sublime with the ridiculous. On another Sunday when they were called out to work, the men had James mount a hay stack about two stories high and "expostulate with the superintendent on the impropriety of making us labor on the Sabbath, threatening him with fire and brimstone in the next world." They were let off in the afternoon. The diary shows that James was well-read and spoke and wrote far better than the average immigrant with his limited education. He mentions going to the theatre which he enjoyed.

The men were then sent on March 22nd from Nashville back to Camp Nelson in Lexington. They traveled in old freight cars "shivering and shaking like frozen rats" in the bitter cold. They were put in an old barracks with broken windows and no heat in it and they could not leave it unless they had a

pass from their foreman who disappeared. James remarked: "The consequence was that when they did get out the boys got drunk and they had the devil to pay." He obviously didn't think of himself as one of "the boys" and was too sensible to get into this kind of trouble.

At Camp Nelson on Easter Saturday James was careful to pick five tent mates who were congenial and "free of vermin." They slept on blankets laid on straw. They stayed there a week and then James picked out a good team to drive to Nashville in a group of 105 U.S. transfer wagons, 300 horses, and 500 mules. It took them two weeks to travel about 200 miles and James recorded that he was in good health afterwards although he "endured considerable hunger" en route.

On April 27th he drew his pay for the two months, \$55.40, and he immediately sent \$50 home to his mother. Deducted from his wages was the cost of clothing he had bought at the commissary: 4 shirts at \$1.50 each, a pair of pants costing \$2.50, 5 pairs of socks at 32 cents each, and a pair of shoes. His brother, Pat, was paid \$57.75 and James sent \$50.00 of this home to their mother.

On May 19th the laboreres, who were badly treated, heard that they were to begin drilling with guns, so they all rushed to get discharged, and to prevent this the Quarter Master deducted \$16.00 of their pay for "transportation to Nashville." So James forged a letter from his mother saying that he had received a draft notice at home and should return at once. He received his discharge, but Pat was refused his. James then took Pat to the office and told them he would be needed at home when James was drafted so he secured his brother's discharge, too.

They went by train to Louisville and then got on the mail boat to Cincinnati. Together they brought home \$90.00 so James was encouraged that they were able to pay off some of their debts. He then heard that the militia was called out and that his regiment, the 8th, was in Washington and he wrote: "...not caring to report and caring less to be taken as a deserter, I concluded to go to Indianapolis until it would blow over." There he found work in the government stables at \$125.00 a month and when he was paid his first \$30.00 he sent \$15.00 home to Mother.

On July 15th his mother and the family, except for Paddy, arrived in Indianapolis unexpectedly. By then James was working in a brickyard which he found a very hard job and, on August 2nd, they decided to return to Cincinnati. There, he and Pat took odd jobs when they could find them and the family lived in a single room for which they paid \$5.00 a month. James finally found work in a bakery for a Mr. Forster and Pat went to Nashville much to James' disappointment.

In September he described the draft lottery in his Ward, the 6th. The draftees, those aged 20 to 45, were given the option to enlist for which they could receive \$3.75 cash down and \$100 in three payments. He also told of

going to the office of the Provost Marshall to see the drafted men report. There, substitutes were in great demand and were offered from \$600 to \$1000 to serve in place of some draftees. James himself was offered \$1000, but when he asked for \$1200 was refused.

He continued to work in the bakery and found two rooms on Mill Street where he moved the family. On October 28th his number was drawn in the lottery which made his mother cry bitterly and beg him to get alien papers. he did so and remarked "...Mother now contented and the Lord knows I little care for them (his British papers), only for her I would be counted in among the last men that would do it."

A diary entry on January 8, 1865 is sarcastic: "Brother Pat arrived from Nashville today with a great sum of \$10.00 net profit, the sum total of nearly four months' labor." James was then working at Cameron's Planing Mill for \$8.00 a week, but so many were unemployed that he felt he had better stay there. And he wrote in late January: "There are now three of my brothers working in the same shop." He totaled up their weekly earnings: \$6.00 for Paddy who was 16, \$3.00 for Tommy who was 13, and \$3.00 for Johnny who was 11, giving their mother a weekly income of \$20.00.

On January 24th James had a disagreement with the shop foreman and quit. He then borrowed \$30.00 from Jas. Gallagher and \$25.95 from D. Burns, friends who were pedlars, and spent the money on linens to peddle in the countryside. His last night in Cincinnati he went to the theatre with his friend, L. Nadand, who was in the army.

From February 1st until mid-April he worked through Ohio north of Dayton to Springfield and his diary describes this journey. He would take a train to the larger towns like Springfield and Xenia and then walk many miles around them to sell his goods. He was sometimes given a bed free for the night when lonely farm families were glad to see a stranger, often he was charged 75 cents to a dollar. One entry mentioned that he bought a pair of shoes from a discharged soldier for \$2.00 and sold his for 10 cents.

He met up with Jas. Gallagher in Hillsboro and they traveled together for four days "walking nearly 40 miles with a heavy pack and through the mud. Mud was no name for it, without selling anything." On March 10th he returned to Cincinnati from New Richmond on a steamboat, bought two more packs of goods, and left again on Tuesday by boat for Ripley, Ohio. He had no luck there so, on Saturday, he crossed into Kentucky by ferry. In various towns there he stayed with Irish friends indicating that he had traveled this territory several times before. He finally sold out his linens and went to Chilo to get a steamer home.

On Saturday, April 15th, he wrote: "Coming down the River at Jamestown, Kentucky, I saw flags at half mast. A thought struck me that Seward (Secretary of War) was dead on account of the injuries he received in a buggy. When we landed at Newport heard with regret that Abe Lincoln was no more.

I was completely thunderstruck. I could not believe it. I could see it in every man's face I would look at; in their slow measured tread. One could tell in the deep tolling of the bells, by the hollow voices of men accustomed to speak in a lively, gay and happy strain. I was warmly welcomed home; Mother thought I was dead."

He returned to work on Monday in the bakery as foreman at \$20.00 a week and went to the opera twice the same week. The diary ends with the notation that he only worked three days in three weeks so we can assume he had to go in debt again to support the family.

The rest of James' history has to be gleaned from city directories and newspaper articles, but this two-year diary tells us a great deal about his character and personality. He felt responsible for the support of his mother and brothers and he worried about being in debt. He was a leader whom other men looked to for help and he was admired and trusted by his friends who were ready to help him when he needed a loan. He wrote extremely well, using a very educated vocabulary that demonstrates that he must have learned a good deal from reading. He also had the Irish "gift of gab", a good sense of humor, and many friends. He enjoyed flirting with girls he met and visiting with the families he met as a pedlar. He appears to have been an astute judge of his fellow men, a hard worker, and a self-assured person who was willing to take chances in order to better himself.

Later, in 1865, he became a salesman for Brock, Champlin & Foster Spice Mills at Water and Walnut Streets and soon was made manager of the company when Jacob Brock became sole owner. In 1868, when he was twenty-five, he married Mary Molloy (Wawa - 1850-1934) whom he met at St. Patrick's Church on Third and Mill Streets which was the center of social life in the Irish section. Mary had been brought to Cincinnati from Cavan, Ireland as a girl by her mother and stepfather (Robert E. said he was named Brannigan). Her father, who died in Ireland, was called "Gentleman Dan" Molloy and she had a sister, Mrs. Dundon, who lived in Columbus. Aunt Stella recalled that, when they began to talk of marriage, she told him he had to have \$500.00 saved before she would set the date. But, when his mother cried about his coming marriage, he gave her the \$500.00 instead. As he was earning \$135.00 a month, they decided to get married anyway. Since they did not want a large wedding, or couldn't afford one, they went to All Saints Church on Eagleton Avenue for the 9:00 a.m. ceremony, leaving home at 6:00 a.m. to get there. They then returned to the St. Nicholas Hotel at 8th and Linn Street for their wedding breakfast. For the next nine years the couple lived at various addresses near the waterfront - 47 Hathaway, 434 W. Front, 317 W. Third Street.

In 1870 James formed a partnership with Barney Corbett, who served as a city councilman in 1872, as Corbett & Heekin, buying the spice business from

Brock, and such was Brock's confidence in his former manager that he sold him the business on time without any down payment or any security at all. James Brock reappeared many years later, old and penniless, and James arranged for him to live in an old folks' home at his expense.

Corbett died in 1875 and the company became Jas. Heekin & Co., American Spice, Coffee, and Mustard Mills at 43 West Second Street. The City directory listings are rather confusing because they list the company alternately at Water and Walnut Streets and West Second Street. Water and Walnut is given as the address in 1875 and 1877 and later only the Second Street address is given. Probably the spice business began at the Second Street plant and space was later rented at the Water and Walnut building and when the coffee business expanded James bought it.

James and Mary moved in 1877 to Linwood Village, which had been incorporated in 1874. Transportation to the city was provided by the Little Miami Railroad and a slow and unreliable horsecar line on Eastern Avenue. They bought a farm in the area called Linwood Heights (now Ault Park) on the hill north of the Town Hall (now Our Lady of Loretto Church). As of 1880 the village had a population of 722, a furniture factory, three churches, and a public grade school. They had four children at this time: Loretto (1870-1958), James J., called Jim, (1872-1959), Joseph (1874?-1889?), and Helena, called Nell, (1876 -) having lost their first child, Robert Emmet, named for the Irish patriot.

By 1880 there were four more children: Albert (1877-1955), Mary Alice (1879-1918), Honora, called Nora (1880-1947), and Stella (1881-1978). James now had a large family to support as well as his mother and he also provided jobs for his four brothers. He obviously needed to expand his business in order to provide for so many, so in 1878 he took in a partner, Alexander Stuart, who is listed as co-proprietor until 1882.

All four of his brothers were employed by James. Patrick was made a foreman at Jas. Heekin & Co. in 1882 and worked there for some years. He lived in Kentucky and had five children, one of whom, Joseph J., worked as a salesman at the company, then as a pulverizer, and finally as a packer in 1921. Brother John worked as a spice grinder and, when he married, had five children. He died about 1893 and his son, John J., then worked as a coffee roaster in the factory from 1904 to 1921. In 1897 one of his four daughters, Clara, was listed as a forewoman at the Heekin Spice Company. Patrick and John were always a problem for James. He would have to bail them out of jail and promise the judge he would see that they behaved. When their mother died in 1888, he returned to the office and dismissed them saying: "Mother's gone and things are different now."

Peter and Tommy lived with their mother in the downtown area until her death at the age of 67. Peter worked as a coffee roaster for James and apparently married after their mother's death. Tommy also worked there as a

coffee roaster and remained a bachelor. He may have died about 1892.

James finally took out citizenship papers in April, 1880 and "renounced his allegiance to the Queen of Great Britain and Ireland". And his family continued to grow. They named another son Robert Emmet (1883-1961) and had Daniel Molloy (1886?-1968), Aileen (1888-), Walter (1889-1954), Herbert (1893?-1977), and Marguerite, the fifteenth child, who died young. An older sister was assigned to take care of one of these younger children and Stella was responsible for Robert called Rob by his mother and Bob by everyone else. There was an Irish cook, called Annie Bannie, who is buried in the family plot in St. Joseph's cemetery in Price Hill.

In 1887 Jim was fifteen and he became a clerk at the spice company on Second Street. The company listing was: Jas Heekin & Co., American Spice Mills, Importers, Roasters and Jobbers of Coffee, Importers and Grinders of Spices, Mustards and Herbs, and Jobbers of Molasses and Syrups. In the summer of 1891 James and Simon Ross, vice-president of a machine tool company in Linwood, Ross-Moyer Manufacturing, traveled in Europe for six weeks. They visited the foundry in Munich that had cast Cincinnati's Tyler Davidson fountain on Fountain Square. While he was gone Wawa apparently thought she deserved a treat too so she bought herself a fur coat and a Steinway grand piano which was also a player piano.

James was active in civic affairs. He was elected to the Linwood School Board and then as Mayor of Linwood in 1891. He held this office until 1896 when the village was annexed to Cincinnati as a suburb. At the time the street leading up the hill from Easter Avenue, Linn Street, was renamed Heekin Avenue and the first cross street was named LeBlond Avenue since the LeBlonds were early settlers in the village.

During his tenure as mayor, James devoted much time to the building of a waterworks and an electric light plant for the town. Some of those who served on the board with him were Robert E. LeBlond (R.K.'s father, an English immigrant who was a printer) Richard E. Hardisty, and Frank Andrews. When the Town Hall, built in 1875, was no longer needed, James bought it in 1903 and donated it to the archdiocese as Our Lady of Loretto Church. (The name Loretto for Aunt Loretto and the church is a changed spelling of the shrine of Our Lady of Loreto in Italy, apparently a special devotion of Wawa's).

James also served on the board of St. Joseph Orphan Asylum in Cumminsville and on the board of the Fourth National Bank which had been organized in 1863 and was located at Third and Walnut Streets. It merged with Central Trust Bank in 1923. His son, Jim, served on the board of Central Trust from 1925 to 1958 and Buzz succeeded him. In 1903 James ran as a Republican along with Nicholas Longworth and ten other Republicans and eight Democrats for election as a representative of the First Ward on City Council.

Albert was eighteen when he started his business career as a clerk at the

coffee company at Water and Walnut in 1895, but in two years he became a traveling salesman for the firm. the officers of Jas. Heekin & Co. were listed in 1897 as James Heekin, James J. Heekin, and Charles Lewis.

The latter was a coffee broker whose business failed so he joined James to form the Heekin Tea and spice company. (R.E. was proud of the fact that Mr. Lewis , who wa a 32nd degree Mason, left him his Masonic rign when he died). As James prospered he loaned money to others just as he had been helped when he was a young man. However, in two cases at least he did demand collateral. One debtor left him with a pair of diamond earrings which eventually were made into rings for Nora and Mary Alice. Another security deposit was a piece of land in Muncie, Indiana that was expected to produce natural gas. There is a Heekin Park in Muncie on the land which he donated to the city.

Jim married Alma Robson in 1897 and they moved that year to Forest Avenue in Avondale. They had three children: Jim, Kitty (Herrlinger), and Don. The city directories only list heads of households so it is difficult to determine when the girls married. Loretto married Richard K. LeBlond, who founded the LeBlond Machine Tool Co. in 1887, about 1895 and they had four children: Harold, Rita (Fuller), Elizabeth (Balch), and Richard. Nell married John Clarke and they had one son; Mary Alice married Stow Garlick of Kentucky. He was a doctor whose prosperous family sold marine supplies like turpentine and rosin. They had receiving yards on the river in Ludlow, Kentucky and warehouses and offices on Water Street in Cincinnati. It would seem that the immigrant's daughter had married well, but she soon found that he was a morphine addict and they moved in with his parents. He must have improved, however, because she died in the 1918 flu epidemic in Laredo, Texas where Garlick had gone to practice medicine. His brother, Rob, was in R.E.'s wedding party.

Albert served in the Spanish-American War in 1898. Later on he received a miniscule military pension of something like \$15.00 a month? a year? and when asked why he accepted it he replied: " The government takes so much of my money that they can give a little back." Back at work the next year, he was made a vice president of The Heekin Spice Co. at 11 E. Second Street as was Jim, and the original spice business expanded to include tea, extract, and baking powder. In 1900 the Kin-Hee coffee pot was patented. That same year the R.K. LeBlond Machine Tool Co. is listed on Eastern Avenue.

In 1901 J.P. Morgan, founded the American Can Company and existing can manufacturers were persuaded to trade their companies for stock in the new monopoly. The price of cans, which James bought in Hamilton, doubled, so to insure their supply and to get into a lucrative business James organized The Heekin Can Company of which he was president, Charles Lewis vice-president, and Albert secretary-treasurer. To finance it , James borrowed from David Sinton, an emigrant from northern Ireland, whose

daughter, Anna, married Charles P. Taft. Sinton stipulated that the debt could not be repaid for ten years. In 1905 James built the can plant at New and Culvert Streets which was bought and razed by Procter and Gamble in 1981.

James Heekin died of cancer January 10, 1904 at the age of 59 after an illness of just eight weeks. His funeral was held at St. Stephen's Church on Eastern Avenue probably because Our Lady of Loretto wasn't large enough. The Mass was attended by Archbishop William Elder and his coadjutor, Bishop Henry Moeller, since he was a prominent Catholic layman. Charles Lewis then became president of Jas. Heekin & Co. with Albert as secretary-treasurer and Jim replaced his father as president of The Heekin Can Co. with Charles Lewis as vice-president and Albert as secretary - treasurer. Albert also took his favorite position in The Heekin Spice Company - secretary-treasurer.

The following year Albert married Bertha Ebersole and they moved to Mooney Avenue in Hyde Park. They had three sons: George, Charles, and Albert, Jr. In 1906 R. E., the first in the family to go to college, left Ohio State after his junior year. He was quite an athlete playing end on the football team and was an outfielder on the baseball team known for stealing bases. He was a star on the track team running the 100-yard dash, the 220-yard dash, the mile relay, and the quarter mile. He ran the quarter mile in 50 seconds a dozen times and held the record for it in Ohio until 1922. The world record was 49.5. He probably left Ohio State because he was declared ineligible for the football team because he took money for playing baseball. He became a clerk at The Heekin Spice Co. at 65 Main Street. In 1908 he married Laura Foy and they lived in Hyde Park first at 3425 Stettinius Avenue and then on Peasenhall Lane. They had twelve children: Bobby, Ed, Dick, Tom, Robert, Joe, Frank, Teddy, Mary Alice, Harold, Laura Jean, and Bill.

In 1909 Wawa, with Stella, Aileen, Dan, Walter, and Herb moved to 3305 Reading Road. The farmhouse had burned down and was razed when Levi A. Ault, founder of the Ault and Wiborg Corporation, bought 143 acres of Linwood Heights to form Ault Park. He was then president of the Cincinnati Park Board and his original gift to the city was made up of six homesteads belonging to Mary Heekin, Eleanora W. Lang, Emma B. Thompson, Wm. M. Monroe, and Mary A. Nolan. He later bought up and donated another forty-one tracts to make up 205 acres of the present park of 224 acres. Originally a flock of ninety-seven sheep was one of the park's attractions and kept down weeds and briars.

Wawa now found herself extremely well off and she proceeded to enjoy her money. Aunt Stella said that she was constantly overdrawn in her checking account as she never filled in the stubs. It is said that German immigrants educated their sons but not their daughters and the Irish did the opposite. Her daughters had gone to convent schools - Loretto was sent to Philadelphia and Nora, Mary Alice, Stella, and Aileen were in the first

graduating classes at The Summit, in 1898, 1900, and 1906. But Jim and Albert went to work early. R. E. was the first of the family to go to college. Wawa now sent the younger boys to the private Franklin School and all three went on to college.

Charles F. Goss's Cincinnati, The Queen City, 1788-1912 page 950 gives a biography of Jim Heekin as "president of the Heekin Spice Company, president of the Heekin Park Company, secretary-treasurer of the Jas. Heekin Company, and president of the Heekin Can Company employing over 1200 people. He was president of the Chamber of Commerce in 1910-11, also a director of the Cincinnati Commercial Association, and well known in fraternal circles. He is supreme commander for Ohio, Kentucky, Indiana, and Missouri of the Order of the Alhambra and past grand commander of Al Kamel Caravan, No. 10, Order of Alhambra."

In 1913 Jim and Charles Lewis effectively broke the Jas. Heekin Company when speculating in coffee futures. Albert persuaded the bank to keep the company going with Robert as manager and Jim retired with the title of president of the Can Company at \$25,000 a year.

That same year Wawa started to build a house on a large lot on the corner of Baker Place and Madison Road. It was a five bedroom, two bath brick house with a sleeping porch, a Rookwood solarium with a fountain, and a garage for the Pierce Arrow with chauffeur's quarters over it. Sunday visits there found Wawa presiding in a rocker in the solarium. She wore long black dresses on weekdays and long white dresses on Sunday. There were two Irish maids dressed in black uniforms with white aprons.

Wawa and Stella went to Europe in 1914 and sent back furnishings for the new house, marble urns and an alabaster grotto, and carved tables with marble tops. They went to Ireland and in Malin Beg Wawa gave the priest a donation of \$100.00. He would not take it since he didn't want to be responsible for so much money so she gave it to the priest in the next parish. They were still in Europe when the Germans invaded Belgium and it was very difficult to secure passage home.

In 1911 the LeBlonds moved into the house at the corner of Vista Avenue and Madison Road which Albert bought from them in 1925 and later razed to build the Grasmoor Apartments there. The LeBlonds built Broadview Manor on Vineyard Place, a 40-room Tudor style mansion, designed by George Rapp, with a Rookwood solarium, a nursery with Rookwood murals of Mother Goose scenes, a huge two-story drawing room with an organ that could play automatically. (An architectural student at U.C. has written a thesis on this house and its relation to British architecture.) Uncle Dick patented a gun-boring lathe which made him a fortune, but hard times came during the Depression and Mother said : "Loretto had to go to New York to sell her pearls." Also the Heekins helped out by buying Le Blond stock. When Loretto

died in 1958 she willed the estate to the archdiocese which sold it to the St. Ursula nuns for a school known as St. Ursula Villa.

Dan graduated in engineering from Purdue and became superintendent of the Can Company and he married Crescentia Verkamp in 1913. They had three children: Dan, Jr., Winifred (Graham) and Jean (Graham) The Norwood plant was purchased in 1915 to make the lithographed Prince Albert tobacco cans for R. J. Reynolds Tobacco Company of Winston-Salem, North Carolina.

Nora married Walter Murray, a patent attorney, tell story of Waterman Pen and they had eleven children: Marguerite, Walter, Jr., Alice (Scherer) Eileen, Kathleen, Stella, (Dunston) Dave, Justin, Joan (Rust), Hugh, and Louise (Smith-Adams) Aileen married John Bering whose well-to-do family had lost the family business and he never worked. When he was buried Uncle Dan said Robert remarked: "Now he gets perpetual care." They had one daughter, Mary Elizabeth. Herb was listed as a cashier at the Heekin Spice Company in 1914, the year he married Marie Adams and they moved to 3424 Linwood Avenue where they raised their seven children: Sue (Cahill) Mary (McConnell) Herb, Jr., Dave, Rita () Ruth (Mullee) and Steve. Walter began work a clerk at the Can Company that year.

Stella remained at home with Wawa and her irritable Scottie dog, Angus. Nell returned home with her only child and she died young so that Stella raised the boy, John Clarke. It was said that Stella wanted to become a nun, but that her health was considered too uncertain. She lived to be 97, was very religious, and had a wonderful sense of humor. When Wawa died Stella moved into a very small apartment in Walnut Hills crowded with big, carved furniture from the Madison Road house and devoted herself to good works. She later shared a home for some years with Aileen and her daughter, Mary Elizabeth probably to help her sister financially.

Walter, also a graduate of Purdue, married Ethel Clasgens in 1917 and they raised their family - Walt, Mary Frances (Free Fitzgerald), Pat (Ryan) Jack, Nancy (Bachmeyer), Martha (Bunker), and Marion (Mio on Stettinius Avenue in Hyde Park. The year before Robert and Laura had built a house on 2201 East Hill Avenue.

The Heekin Spice Company and Jas. Heekin & Company were merged in 1919 into The Heekin company (Wholesale Coffees, Teas, Spices, Extracts, Baking Powder and Grocers' Sundries) at Water and Walnut Streets. Jim was president, Albert vice-president and treasurer, and Robert secretary. Walter became purchasing agent of the Can company of which Charles Lewis was president, Albert secretary-treasurer, and Dan manager. That year Robert bought the Andrews house on seven acres at 3256 Hardisty Avenue for \$15,000 and thought he was extending himself to do it. It had six bedrooms, one bath, a sleeping porch, two maids' rooms with bath in the attic, a three-car garage in a barn with a hayloft, a swimming pool, and a tennis court. In 1921 Jim and Alma moved to 2731 Johnstone Place.

In 1923 Herb became manager of coffee sales for The Heekin Company and the following year Albert became treasurer of The Drackett Chemical Company at 5020 Spring Grove Avenue. Harry Drackett, the president, was an Ohio State alumnus who knew Robert and came to the Heekins for capital he needed for expansion. The Drackett Company had built a plant on Spring Grove Avenue in 1919 where they manufactured their first consumer-product, Drano. A second loan became necessary, the best investment the family ever made, in which Albert arranged that Drackett issue enough shares to give Heekin Can Company control. The family shareholders received Drackett stock in proportion to their Heekin Can shares.

Albert remained treasurer of Drackett's until at least 1929. It was one of the pioneers in national advertising on a large scale which greatly increased the sales of Drano and then Windex, which was introduced in 1934. By 1940, Harry Drackett was able to regain control. He split the business into The H. R. Drackett Company which made cleaning compounds - this company had Jim Heekin as president, King Jones as vice president, Albert as secretary, and Howard Helfrey as treasurer - and The Drackett Company which had Harry Drackett as president, Albert Shattuck as vice-president, King Jones as treasurer, and Howard Helfrey as secretary. The company went public in 1944. Drackett stock split many times until Harry's son, Roger Drackett as president sold the company to Bristol-Myers Corporation in 1965. Stockholders received 46 shares of Bristol-Myers for each 100 shares of Drackett. By that time Drackett manufactured such household products as Windex, Drano, Vanish, Endust, O-Cedar products, and related items and employed about 1500 people. In 1988 Bristol-Myers merged with Squibb.

Over the years with Albert as the financial advisor the Heekins invested in other companies to assure their supplies for the Can Company. Around 1919 they started the Federal Color Laboratories to make the special red pigment required for the Prince Albert cans. Later the pigment they developed was used by the Bureau of Engraving and Printing for the then first class two-cent stamp. Some time after 1960 it was sold to Sun Chemical Corporation. (Dad took me there once and pointed out a barrel of red dust which he said would make a million lipsticks.) They also invested in the Jackson Box Company to assure a supply of shipping containers. W.J. Cassady was president of this company in Norwood which was sold to Mead Corporation in the 1960's. (Dad wisely invested all his proceeds in Drackett stock) They owned a trucking company which was run by the Robsons at a terminal on Eastern Avenue where the Bicentennial Park is today. Albert, of course, served as treasurer of all three companies. The Weirton Steel Company of Steubenville supplied all their tinplate which was shipped by river barge to the Can Company's terminal on the waterfront west of the Brent Spence bridge.

In 1928 Jim became chairman of the board of the Heekin Can Company and

Albert became president with Charles Lewis as vice-president and Dan as secretary. Two years later Jim was made chairman of the board of The Heekin Company with Robert as president with Miss Burks, the perfect secretary, Albert as vice-president and treasurer, and Herb as secretary. We all remember the shabby offices there with their ancient desks and brass spittoons. The basement flooded every year, but in the big flood of 1936 the water rose to the third floor. Dad took us in a rowboat from Fourth Street to see it. Uncle Jim came in about 10:00 a.m. to read the Wall Street Journal until he and Dad met Albert and Dan for lunch in their private dining room at the Queen City Club. Robert died in 1961 and Michael Stewart, Sugie Heekin's husband, bought the business, but it didn't prosper. The building was bought by the city and torn down when Riverfront stadium was built.

During World War II the Can Company made ration cans and fulfilled a contract for one billion bullet noses and for anti-aircraft artillery shell cases. In 1948 Dan succeeded Albert as president and, in 1949 set up a modern can plant at Springdale, Arkansas. Other plants were also set up in Blytheville, Arkansas, and Chestnut Hill and Clinton, Tennessee.

Albert's son Albert, Jr. (Buzz) became president when Dan retired in 1954. He closed the Norwood plant and built a new one in Newtown to manufacture beer cans and produce plastic cups, closures, and other injection molded products. But it became apparent that plant modernizations were needed to keep the company competitive. This demanded a bigger capital outlay than the family was willing and/or able to provide so, in 1964 it was sold to Diamond International for Diamond shares worth \$18,000,000. Diamond spent about \$45,000,000 in modernization by 1982 when corporate raider Sir James Goldsmith bought Diamond. He in turn sold Heekin Can to Wesray Corporation, a New Jersey holding (raiding?) company headed by William E. Simon who also bought Cincinnati's Gibson Greeting Card Company and Xtek Inc. The Can Company had sales of \$215,000,000 in 1984.

Dick Heekin did an official count of the descendants of James and Mary Heekin in September, 1987. He made a list of 851 living, 74 who had died, and 291 in-laws. As Uncle Herb said at the first family reunion in 1962 attended by about 300: "To think that all this came from Mother and Father !"

** The business was sold in 1961 to Charles Hart, who was in West Virginia. Subsequently Mr. Hart sold the business to Michael Stewart in 1966. He then sold the company in 1972.*