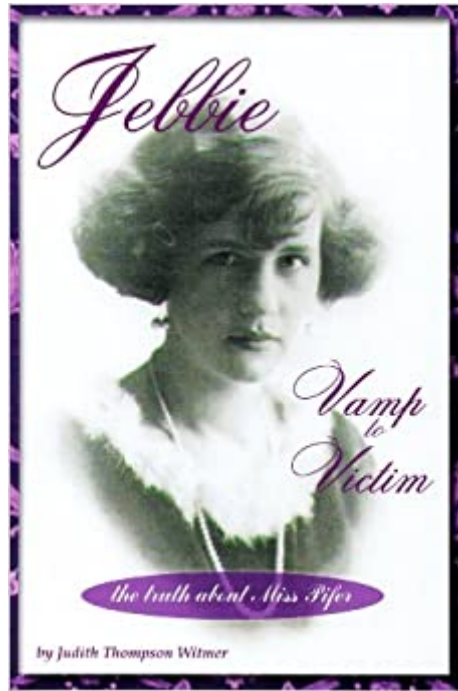




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Jebbie: Vamp To Victim



Synopsis

Jebbie: Vamp to Victim--the Truth about Miss Pifer is the story of the author's aunt, Jessie Beverly Pifer, who was completely the product of Curwensville, Pennsylvania, where she was born, grew up with her parents and four sisters, attended the local schools, became a legendary teacher in the community, served her church as a deacon, became active in the DAR, and then spent her final days. She lived, laughed, and loved in Curwensville, remaining true to herself through every phase of her life. She was dashing, independent, and ever fashionable. Jessie revealed many personas, but all reflect the identity for which she is best remembered--as the beautiful, stylish, and vibrant "Jebbie," belle of the Class of 1924. She viewed herself as urbane, yet remained a small town girl whose beginnings are traced to the 18th century, when her forebears arrived in the new country, and are rooted in the 19th Century, particularly the period immediately following the Civil War. The book follows Jessie throughout her life, providing a keen and personal perspective of the 20th Century. The culture of each decade is used to provide a personal sense of the times in which Jessie Pifer lived and by which she was shaped. First as a teacher in one-room country schools and then as a third grade teacher, Miss Pifer was described by a former student (Mary Catherine Milligan King) as "a marvelous breath of fresh air ... I can still recall thinking how beautiful she was and always so positive. I remember how she entered the room each day, greeting us every morning as if we were the joy of her life." Others refer to her as "the wonderful Jessie Pifer, delightful and entertaining," and noting "what an impact she made on so many lives and what a loving person she was." The reader is drawn into this family as they become products of the era and then are caught in a web of deceit, making the tragedy, when it occurs, all the more real and unforgiving. Everything in the biography is verifiable. Fifteen years in the research and writing, Jebbie has been edited from a manuscript twice its length and is an alert to others that even the most public members of a community can be robbed of their resources, independence, and dignity.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

Gerald Bartell: Lest we not forget the wonderful Jessie Pifer, my third grade teacher at South Side School. Of course she grounded us in the three Rs. But she also loved to put together musical programs for assembly. One year she entered her class in the Lion's Club Halloween parade. I believe they dressed as gypsies and carried tambourines. When they got to the judging stand, they stopped and did a whole dance routine. Of course they won first prize. I also remember that after outdoor recess, we came back indoors totally charged up. For a while, to calm us down, she played quiet music on the radio or the wind-up Victrola. Then one day the music stopped. I asked why and she said, "So and so (name withheld) doesn't want us to play the radio in the classroom."Gloria Kavala Bock: Miss Pifer was delightful and entertaining and always gave us something extra in teaching.Julia Heil Linn: Jessie Pifer was one of my all-time favorite persons! I loved her dearly! She was my third grade teacher and the first teacher I had after coming to Curwensville. She made me feel so welcome. I will never forget my mother telling me how I came home from school in 3rd grade and told her I just loved Miss Pifer, that she had the most beautiful hair . . .
Later in years I had an opportunity to work at the nursing home Jessie was living in. They said she would not participate in any of the activities. When she saw me she lit up; knew my name and would look forward to my coming and always participated in the activities when I was there. She had pictures of her students all over her house and if you went to visit her she would always show you your picture. I have a cup and saucer that her mother painted that she gave to my mother. I always think of her when I look at it. What an impact she made on so many lives and what a loving person she was.

Peggy Decker: This becomes more sad as the saga continues. Love the book. That she would be kept a prisoner is unbelievable.Dr. Jean Jones: Well-written, detailed, extensive research. Loved learning about Jessie and getting to know her. Once I began reading I could not stop. I found it hard to stop reading and do anything else.Carol Rubel: ...how wonderful I think great pieces of the book are! ...warm and flowing.Stacy Gounaris: Loved it, loved it, loved it.
I feel like I've known your family forever.
I love Jessie's Thanksgiving in Philly
She had a talent for making all of her

experiences fun. I wish I could have known Jessie; she sounds like such fun.

Dr. Judith Thompson Witmer is a central Pennsylvanian and prolific writer on a wide range of topics. Her books included a guidebook for women in educational administration (*Moving Up*), a biography (*I Am from Haiti*), a book on service learning, and one on team-based professional development. Judith Witmer's passion is historical research as evidenced by her publications. Forthcoming in early 2012 is a companion publication to *Jebbie: Vamp to Victim* in the form of narrated love letters from Jebbie's suitors. *All the Gentlemen Callers: Letters Found in a 1920s Steamer Trunk* provides a first hand account of life in a gentler time and displays emotions familiar to all generations. Also to be published in 2012 is *Growing up Silent in the 1950s: Not All Tailfins and Rock 'n' Roll*, an investigation of the factors that created the Silent Generation. Its historical framework is enlivened by personal reflections by members of this generation through diaries, scrapbooks, interviews, and other memoirs. She also is currently working on a retrospective of the first fifty years of a high school, *Loyal Hearts Proclaim*. In addition to the number of books she has written, she has published numerous articles in professional journals, a cover feature in *Penn State Medicine*, newspaper columns, monographs, national speeches, and book reviews. Dr. Witmer holds a B.A. in English Literature, an M.S. in Humanities, and a Doctorate in Educational Administration, as well as post-doctoral credits from Harvard University. As a change of pace, Dr. Witmer also is a musician, featuring piano and vocals in her program "Recapture the Romance, Music of the 20th Century."

JEBBIE is a compelling and powerful page-turner. Meticulously documented, and seamlessly interspersed with historical information about the times in which Jebbie lived, this book is a must-read for all of us with elderly loved ones. It is a testament to author Witmer's dedication and courage that she is willing to share the unvarnished story of what happened to her aunt, lest the unthinkable happens in our families as well. A fast-read guaranteed to cause your jaw to drop in disbelief, *JEBBIE* is five-star stunner from cover to cover.

This book will allow the reader to understand how elder abuse can sneak into a family before anyone realizes it is happening. Having dealt with some of this in my own family, I sympathize with Jebbie and her loved ones who wonder how this could have happened and carry guilt because it did. The writer draws you into her family and makes it impossible to put the book down until you discover the outcome of the situation. A wonderful tribute to a woman who was much loved and

cared so much for others.

Jebbie is difficult to put down. I'm amazed by the details of people and events that are now many decades in the past. It is hard to realize the amount of research put into this. I've just finished the chapter, "For the Duration," and, while I knew about the rationing from my parents and from history, the way it was fleshed out painted a truer picture for me than I ever had given thought to.

I can't put Jebbie down. Every page is a new adventure in a era that has passed.

The book was purchased and received without a dustcover like in the picture. We contacted the publisher and author of the book independently and were informed it was to be sold with the dustcover. The publisher then forwarded us a dustcover.

"Jebbie" Vamp to Victim is a story that should be read by everyone who does not currently have a Will. The author writes a Social History which intertwines the veracity of Jessie's love of life, the back drop of national issues as well as a walk down the streets of small town Curwensville. I attended Church with Mrs. Mohny and she was consistently a vibrant eccentric happy lady; to think that anyone, let alone a relative, would take such advantage of her (and I've read the entire book at this point twice) is beyond despicable and sociopathic. I hope that the AARP Magazine will consider publishing excerpts in an issue to show seniors, what can happen if you are not prepared and aligned with trusted individuals. A verifiable book which keeps you wanting to turn the page.~ Â Jebbie: Vamp to Victim

This book is very well written. I loved it! The local history info is wonderful. I was not aware of how easily something like this could happen a you. The reason I loved the book sooo much was because of all the history that is included in the book. The information given on how the teaching profession and schooling changed through the decades was very interesting. I also loved how the author compared the changes in America and the world to life in the small town of Curwensville. Can't wait to read "All the Gentlemen Callers."

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