

NO GUNS ON SUNDAY

A Memoir

Roger E. Schubert

NO GUNS ON SUNDAY

Growing up in Manchester, Connecticut

1930 - 1954

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Roger E. Schubert

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Dedication

To Lena Margaret Roth Schubert
And
Barbara Jean Hall Schubert
The two ladies who made me what I am today.

WITH LOVE
A. Meyer

FIRST EDITION

No: 5 of 4022
SECOND PRINTING

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Chapter I

57 1/2 Cooper Street

My name is Roger Edward Schubert. I was born five days before my Brother Richard's first birthday, on March 21, 1930, in Manchester Connecticut, at the Manchester Memorial Hospital. This happenstance had both its pluses and minuses. For five days each year I could claim to be the same age as Dick, and not be his "younger" brother. On the other hand, since our father's birthday was March 27, I never had a birthday party or cake of my own. We always had a triple celebration on the Sunday that fell between our birthdays, with only one cake, (we alternated on whose favorite flavor the cake would be). Dick always chose chocolate, while mine was white with strawberry frosting. The most spectacular cake was created by Mom in 1955, when both Dick and I and our new families returned home to help Dad celebrate his fifty-first birthday. The cake's icing read:

$$\begin{array}{r} 25 \\ +26 \\ \hline 51 \end{array}$$

We lived at 57 1/2 Cooper Street, on the West Side of Manchester, in a small German enclave, consisting of the Schuberts, Roths, Schutzes, Doelners, Helmses, and Reichenbachs. We rented a cold water apartment from my mother's father, John Roth, whose house (59 Cooper Street), was fronted by two stores, with our flat over the larger store. When I was born, the larger store (57) was the barbershop which Bill Pagani rented from my Grandfather. The smaller store, my grandfather's neighborhood grocery was 57 3/4.

Summer Street met Cooper Street in a "T" intersection, running downhill to the West, just to the north of the Roth property which was on the east side of Cooper. Directly opposite my Grandfather's property was an almost identical complex of one house, two stores and one apartment. This was owned by Mr. Donnelly, who was not German, but Irish, and whose grocery store was a direct competitor of my Grandfather's. The third corner of the intersection was owned by my fraternal grandfather, Robert Schubert. Grandpa also had a block of two stores, one of which was his shoe repair shop which fronted on Summer Street. The other, which faced Cooper Street, he rented first to the West Hill Market and then to the First National Stores, a New England chain of grocery stores. My grandfather lived in the adjacent house (54 Cooper Street), and converted the upstairs into an apartment for the newlyweds, when my Aunt Margaret married Joe Wright in 1937.

In 1930, only my Aunt Margaret lived with my grandfather, and his second wife, Aunt Fannie, his first wife's younger sister. My father's older siblings were all married, Elizabeth had moved to East Hartford, Benny lived three houses north of us on Cooper Street, and Bob was farther north on West Center Street. All my mother's sisters except Louise, (Elsie, Frieda, and Martha) lived next door along with her brother, Albert. Louise was married and living on the East Side.

My earliest memories are of family holiday celebrations: Thanksgiving Dinner with the Roths, and Christmas Eve at the Schuberts. For over fifty years, the Roths celebrated Thanksgiving as a family, first, in the dining room at 59 Cooper Street, and then in Elsie & Bob Werner's basement on Woodland Street, following their wedding in 1940. Finally we moved to Mom & Dad's half-finished attic, after they moved to Woodland Street in 1960, following the death of Grandma Roth in 1959. Uncle Al was designated to take Dick and me on long hikes before dinner, to keep us from interfering with the food preparations, and spoiling our appetites by snitching too many goodies.

Our Christmas celebrations started with the 5:00 PM Christmas Eve Pageant at the Concordia Lutheran Church. It was written by the Minister's wife (Mrs. Richter), and starred every member of the Sunday School, including in 1939, the three Schubert boys, Richard, Roger, and Allan. As soon as the pageant finished, we rushed directly home, because at 7:00 PM, all the Schuberts gathered at 54 Cooper Street, for a visit from Santa Claus, and the exchange of presents. One of the neighbors played Santa, and gave each child a gift (from our Grandparents). All the kids tried to guess which neighbor was Santa, while he joined the adults in a season's toast with a glass of Grandpa's Homemade Schnapps. After Santa left, we exchanged presents between cousins and aunts & uncles. To this day, I remove the tag from the outside of my presents, and place it inside the gift box, because one year, Aunt Jenny accused Dick & me of taking one of Cousin Walter's presents. From then on, we had strict orders from Mom to never, never, never discard the tags.

The gift exchange was really a minor preliminary to the devouring of Aunt Fanny's Famous "Kuchen", the most scrumptious coffee cake with the world's thinnest crust, stuffed with sweet apricots, prunes, or poppy seeds, and covered in icing. Aunt Fanny started baking the day after Thanksgiving, and the supply of kuchen, cinnamon stars, and date squares (liebe kuchen) was unending. During World War II, we all had to contribute ration stamps for butter and sugar, so that Aunt Fanny could maintain the quality and quantity of the Christmas Eve feast.

Our double helping of family Christmas occurred while we were at church, or at Grampa Schubert's, when presents from all the Roth Aunts and Uncle Al mysteriously appeared beneath our own Christmas tree. Until his marriage in 1939, the best presents always came from Uncle Al, who knew just what little boys wanted. One year he gave us each a pair of skis! They were really "play" skis with toe loops through which you stuck the toes of your arctics. (For you youngsters, we did not have boots in those days. Arctics were rubber overshoes that buckled over your regular shoes.) We used the skis in the back yard, and Dick was courageous enough to ski off Mr. Schutz's hill on Summer Street. Every Christmas, Grandma Roth gave us each \$5.00 with which to buy a new pair of shoes. These were saved for Sunday School only, while last year's Christmas shoes were demoted to every day wear.

Figure I - 1 shows the layout of our 600 square-foot "house" at 57 1/2 Cooper Street. When I was born, Mom and Dad slept in the larger of the two bedrooms, and Dick and I shared the smaller one. There was no door between the two rooms, only a heavy drape that hung from a wooden rod. While it blocked the line of sight, it only muffled sound, and on sleepless nights we would be serenaded by Mom and Dad's snoring duet. Allan was born in October 1934, and shared the back bedroom with our parents, until he outgrew his crib. In 1936, we switched bedrooms. The double bed that Dick and I shared for twenty years from 1932 to 1952 was moved into the larger bedroom, and swapped with Mom and Dad's. There was not enough room for a full-sized single bed for Allan, so he spent the next ten years on a 3/4 size roll-out bed. The closet in the back bedroom was known as "Mom's Closet", even after she moved her clothes to a wardrobe in the small bedroom, to make room for the clothes of three growing boys. "Dad's Closet" was off the living room, and he shared it with no one, (except the Hoover "beats as it sweeps as it cleans" upright vacuum cleaner).

The living room, which overlooked Cooper Street, had two doors opening into it from the kitchen, because it had originally been two separate rooms. The center of the dividing wall had been removed, leaving an archway that boxed in the supporting ceiling truss. The street end of the wall had been shortened to one foot, while four feet was left between the two doors. The archway hung down twelve inches, which was just enough space for the eight inch by forty-eight inch framed photograph of the crew of the US Battleship New Mexico, arrayed on its forward deck and sitting on the barrels of its sixteen inch guns. Dad would, on request, point out himself, but I'm not sure it was the same miniscule figure each time.

There were six windows in the living room giving a panoramic view of Cooper Street. Cooper Street ran south from Center Street to Cooper Hill Street. From Center, it ran down hill for a short block to West Center Street, which was its lowest point. It then proceeded uphill, past Ridge Street, past Summer Street, past Walnut Street, and crested at High Street. From High Street it ran downhill to Pleasant Street, and then on a level past the "Four Acres" to Cooper Hill Street. The "Four Acres" was the site of Washington Elementary School, the West Side "Rec", two tennis courts, a playground, a baseball diamond, and a 1/5 of a mile oval cinder track.

From the northern window, next to "Dad's Closet", you could see the front porch of Grandpa Schubert's house, and the Nelson house next door to it. Mr. and Mrs. Nelson occupied the bottom floor, and they had fixed the second story into an apartment for their widowed daughter, Louise Sullivan, and their grandson, Francis Harvey Sullivan. "Sully" was born in February 1928, and was the first non-family person to impact the lives of my brother Dick and myself. You could also see the bottom of Ridge Street - just the other side of a huge clump of Forsythia in the corner of the Kellom's front lawn next door, on our side of the street. The two western windows looked down on the sidewalk in front of the stores below. You could see directly into the apartment across the way, and into the front of the two Donnelly shops. From the northern most of these windows, you could see partway down Summer Street, past Grandpa Schubert's Shoemakers Shop, into his back yard. The southern wall was almost all glass, with a three section bay window. The left-hand window overlooked the front porch of Grandpa Roth's house, our joint front yard, and the Doelner's house beyond. The right-hand window looked down on Donnelly's front porch, past their huge side lawn, and up to Renn's Tavern at the corner of Walnut Street. From the center window, you could see the huge horse chestnut tree in front of the Kloppenberg's house at the top of the hill.

The kitchen was dominated by a huge black cast iron combination oil stove and gas range with oven, which stood on foot-high legs. The oil stove was the sole heat source for the entire apartment. Its flue pipe fed into an over-sized chimney, which also served the two oil stoves which heated the two downstairs stores. The double oil burner was fed by a gravity-flow glass oil jug which resembled the omni-present bottled water jugs of today. The jug was replenished from an oil tank in the cellar, and had a spring loaded cap, which allowed Dad to upend it into the stanchion which stood between the back end of the stove and the front door. There was never any horse play allowed near this highly flammable glass jug on its movable stand. Since the kitchen sink had only one spigot and it was for cold water, a kettle of water was always kept on the stove. During the winter, it stood atop the oil burner and was always hot and ready for use. During the other three seasons it sat on a back gas burner, and had to be heated on demand.

We didn't have a refrigerator until 1942, when Grandma Roth got a new Frigidaire, and we got her old one. Until then, a wooden ice box kept our viands cold. It had one full size door, and two half size compartments, the top one of which held the cake of ice delivered by L.T. Woods, the local ice man. We hung a sign in the bay window when we needed ice, and us kids would suck on the ice chips from the back of the truck, which were created when the delivery man chipped a block which fit our ice box from the larger blocks which filled the back of his pickup. Beneath the ice box, behind a top hinged swinging door lay a large tin dishpan, into which the water from the melting ice was funneled. Whenever the pan was full, or overflowed onto the floor, it was slid out from under the ice box, and emptied into the sink. The pan, when full, was too heavy for us boys to lift, and when it overflowed when Mom & Dad weren't home, we had to partially drain it with a small pan, until it was light enough for us to carry. We didn't buy ice during the winter, and kept the milk and butter on an outside window sill. Eggs and vegetables remained in the icebox to insulate them from the stove heat. There was a two foot square swing down window over the toilet in the bathroom, and the hinges were moved to the side, to create a winter ice box. A half gallon of milk and a pound of butter fit nicely between the window and the screen.

Until 1942, there was a single floor to ceiling cupboard between the sink and the window on the north wall of the kitchen. The bottom was used for pots & pans, and dry food stuffs filled the top shelves. There was an open shelf over the sink for dishes and glasses. In 1942, Uncle Bob Werner replaced the single varnished tongue & groove wood cupboard with a set of matched pine cabinets on either side of the window, and the whole kitchen was given a new coat of paint to match. There was no space available for storing arctics and rubbers, and the highcuts that were the desire of every red-blooded American youth. (The leather boots that laced up almost to your knees, with a side pocket for your folding jack knife.) Uncle Al and Dad sawed open the bottom step of the attic stairs which were between the ice box and the front door. They built a box below the step, next to the landing of the cellar stairs, and attached the back of the step with a pair of sturdy hinges. There was even room enough for gloves and scarves, and the shoe polish box. Saturday evening, we took turns polishing all the shoes for Sunday School, and lined them up on the top step of the three attic stairs that protruded into the kitchen below the attic door.

The L-shaped bathroom, (or Dad's reading room), contained a toilet, a medicine cabinet, a pull-chain light over the toilet, a gas-fired hot water tank, and a bath tub on legs. It was called Dad's reading room because, every evening after dinner, Dad retired to the bathroom to read the Manchester Evening Herald. We learned very early in life to go directly to the bathroom after dinner, or sit painfully with crossed legs until the paper was read. The hot water heater was connected directly to the bathtub, and was only fired up on Saturday nights. Since its capacity was limited, the tub was never drained between baths. The first one to bathe got only a third of a tub of water, but it was all fresh clean water. More hot water was added for each successive bath, but as the water got deeper, it also got grungier. Depending upon your mood, you claimed either first or last baths. The last one to speak up got the middle bath, which was the least favored, being neither fresh nor full. The tub was drained after the third bath, and Mom & Dad shared clean water after the three of us boys retired. The dirty clothes hamper stood at the rear of the bathroom between the back of the bathtub and the wall. On chilly Saturday nights, a copper reflective electric heater was placed on the hamper to keep our backs warm. On really cold nights in the winter, a kerosene space heater shaped like a fire hydrant was placed between the toilet and the tub to prevent frostbite.

In warm weather, the available room expanded in two directions, up to the attic, and out to the front porch. The porch was just wide enough to accommodate straight-backed folding lawn chairs, and we used to sit and play cards, and other games, or just to watch the world go by. My favorite time was during rainstorms, when the rain drummed on the tin roof, and the world shrunk to a cozy minimum, closed in by raindrops, and muffled by their drumbeats. The attic was unfinished and unheated, with old linoleum laid down the center of the wide pine boards. There were shelves next to the stairs where Mom stored her own canned beans and peaches and grape jam. The two sides were filled with junk and keepsakes, and an old mattress made a reading corner for the old magazines piled nearby. When we reached the model airplane stage, we were given an old card table on which to cut and glue the balsa wood parts. Dick's were examples of perfection, while mine were haphazard at best.

In the winter, on the other hand, our world shrunk to the twelve by fifteen foot kitchen. The stove would not heat either the bedrooms or the living room, so they were closed off. All activities revolved around the stove and the kitchen table. When we awoke in the morning, we carried our clothes from the ice-cold dresser into the kitchen and warmed them on the oven door while we ate breakfast. We washed our faces in a basin of water in the sink which was poured from the kettle on the stove, and dressed in any convenient corner of the kitchen. When we were little we played on the floor behind the stove, and after we started school we did our homework at the kitchen table. The radio was moved from the living room into the kitchen so we could keep current with Jack Armstrong, Dick Tracy, Little Orphan Annie, and Amos & Andy. Mom had her favorite soaps, and we all listened to the Sunday night

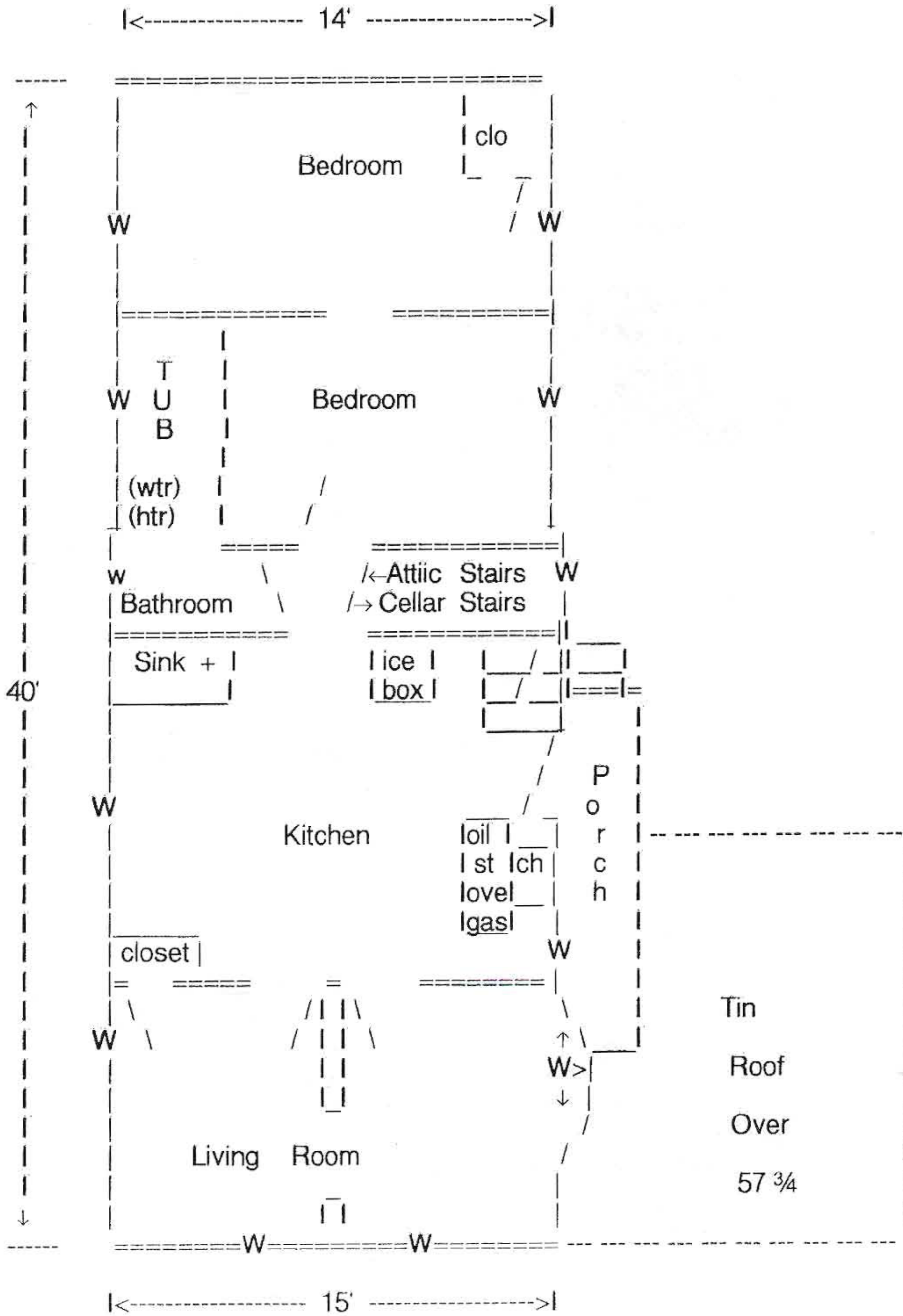
comedy programs. At bedtime, our pillows were warmed on the oven door, and carrying them, and a hot water bottle, we dashed into the bedroom and plunged under the covers, with only our noses sticking out.

I remember the winter of 1933, when the Blue Ribbon Baker used to arrive early in the morning by horse and wagon with donuts and other pastries, while Mom & Dad ate breakfast, and I played on the floor behind the stove. One morning he failed to arrive on schedule, because his horse slipped on the ice at the corner of Walnut Street and broke his leg. I was too young to be allowed out to see the fallen horse, but I do remember not getting my regular chocolate frosted donut. The baker was an unlucky man, the next winter (1934), he showed up one morning with his arm in a sling. He had broken it while cranking his Ford delivery truck which had replaced his (dead) horse and wagon. Although the baker lost his horse in 1933, both the fishman and the ragman plied their trade on Cooper Street by horse and wagon as late as 1940.

In 1934, Mr. Donnelly lured the barber, Bill Pagani across the street, by offering him a lower rent. My Grandfather Roth then moved his grocery store into the larger store. It was really more of a variety store than a grocery store, since other than bread and milk, the bulk of his business was in magazines, cigarettes, cigars, penny and nickel candy, ice cream, and soda. He even installed a table and chairs, and served milk shakes and sundaes. On a weekday morning or afternoon, with nothing to do, I would go in and sit quietly at the table, until he bribed me to leave with a piece of penny candy. When my Grandfather died in 1937, Mom went to work part time each day to give Grandma who was now running the store some time off. A doorway was cut in the wall between our cellar and the backroom of the store, so Mom could get to the store without going outside.

Uncle Albert was married in 1939, Aunt Elsie in 1940, and Aunt Martha in 1941, and they all moved out of Grandma's house. Aunt Frieda got married in February 1946, and moved to Brockton, Massachusetts, leaving Grandma all alone. That summer, we exchanged houses, Grandma moving into the apartment, and the five of us moving into the big house. Dick and I still shared the same bed and bedroom, but Allan got a full-sized bed, and a room of his own. Mom & Dad got a bedroom with a door, and we now had central heat, with an oil furnace in the cellar and hot running water in the kitchen sink.

HOME SWEET HOME 1930 - 1946



57 1/2 Cooper Street

Figure I - 1

NO GUNS ON SUNDAY

Chapter II

Roth's Candy Store

Our home life revolved around the "Wonderland" that was my grandparents store. It was more a "Variety Store" than a grocery store. There was more display space dedicated to candy than any other commodity, and it was known to the youth of the West Side as "Rosses Candy Store", since none of them could pronounce "Roth's". A glass fronted three foot high display case, six feet in length, with glass shelves and a glass top contained the penny candy, (which really sold for a penny). The rear of the eighteen inch deep cabinet was closed by a set of sliding wooden doors. The nickel candy bars were housed in a separate four foot long glass case which sat on top of the penny candy case. It had two glass shelves and it needed no back, since all of the candy bars were wrapped.

A stack of small brown bags was kept behind the counter, and used for any purchase greater than one cent. Most of the penny candy was unwrapped, and except for a single buy, there was a fixed routine for the purchase of penny candy. There was a rubber mat on the top of the counter, onto which each child would first deposit his/her nickel, or three cents, or whatever. A paper bag was opened by Grandpa, (or eventually Grandma, Mom, and even us boys when we were pressed into service), and one of the rear door was slid open. The buyer would wander along in front of the counter, pressing a finger against the glass before each selection, also naming the candy desired. The server, followed along behind the counter, sliding doors open and closed as needed, until the amount of candy in the bag agreed with the change deposited on the counter top.

My Grandfather moved to Manchester from Harwinton Connecticut, and opened the store in the 1920's, at 57 3/4, and moved it next door in 1934 when Billy Pagani moved across the street. Figure III-1 shows the layout of the store, and the type of goods that were sold. In 1925, Grandpa bought an ice cream table and four chairs from Farr's Soda Shop. The round table had an oak top which was two feet in diameter, and stood on twisted wrought iron legs. The four harp backed chairs were entirely of wrought iron, except for circular pine veneer seats. Only two of the chairs fit beside the table, and the other two did service behind the counters.

Milkshakes and ice cream sundaes were served at the table from 1934 through the early 1940's when the demand dropped off, and it was not feasible to stock the syrups and sauces. The sundaes were the first to go and the milkshakes soon followed. Ice cream cones and bulk pints of ice cream were served until Grandma Roth died in 1959. The ice cream was originally purchased from the Royal Dairy, a local firm, who sold only in bulk. Other than popsicles, and fudgsicles, all the ice cream came in two and one half gallon steel tubs. Hand packed ice cream was sold in pints and half-pints, in trapezoid containers such as are now used in Chinese takeout. The cardboard box was placed inside a copper sleeve, which prevented over packing and split seams.

Besides ice cream cones, sandwiches were also created on the spot. A scoop of ice cream was placed between two circular wafers, and carefully squeezed with an instrument that looked like a circular cookie cutter with a wooden handle. The wafers were baked from the same recipe as the cones, and were brittle. The trick to making a perfect sandwich was to place the scoop of ice cream exactly in the center of the bottom wafer and then apply pressure slowly, while the ice cream softened in the warm air. Sometimes two or three top wafers were wasted by pressing too quickly, or when the ice cream was frozen extra hard.

Ice cream cones sold for a nickel a scoop in the thirties, seven cents during the war, and ten cents in the fifties. Ice cream sandwiches were also a nickel, but disappeared in the forties, when Nabisco stopped making the wafers. Milkshakes went from ten cents to twelve and then fifteen, just before their demise. There were two metal ice cream scoops, one larger than the other. A double scoop cone did not have two small scoops piled atop each other, but a single large scoop. Grandpa, Grandma, and Mom always leveled the bottom of the scoop on the edge of the carton, but as we grew older and were allowed to scoop our own cones, we got much more ice cream per scoop.

By 1940, the ice cream was being delivered in pre-packed pint containers, and flavors other than chocolate, vanilla, and strawberry became available. The ice cream freezer was a four-holer, with individual covers for each section, which held two bulk tubs stacked two high. Cones and sandwiches were still only available in the three basic colors, and the fourth compartment was used for pints and popsicles. During the war years from 1942 through 1945 all pre-packed pints came half sherbet and half ice cream to conserve milk. It was also during this period that Grandma changed dairies. Originally Brown's Dairy supplied milk, butter, and eggs, while ice cream came from the Royal Ice Cream Company. When Brown's went out of business, Grandma switched to Sealtest for all her dairy products, including ice cream.

Sealtest provided many more new and exotic flavors of ice cream, but one of the casualties was the "Free" sticks that were found in the Royal fudgsicles. These "Free" sticks were salted randomly in the cartons of fudgsicles, with the free end carefully buried inside the chocolate ice cream. The ratio of free to non-free sticks was about one to two hundred and forty, (or one in every tenth box of twenty four fudgsicles. Anyone finding a "Free" stick in his fudgsicle, was entitled to swap it for free a fudgsicle. When we were young, Grandpa treated everyone to ice cream cones or fudgsicles on summer Sunday afternoons. One Sunday in 1935, my fudgsicle contained a "Free" stick, which I guarded carefully, and even took to bed with me so that it wouldn't get misplaced. Monday morning, at 7:30, I got out of bed got myself dressed and headed downstairs to claim my reward. Grandpa handed over my free fudgsicle, which I proudly carried upstairs. Of course, Mom made me take it back, since we hadn't eaten breakfast. She relented after breakfast, and I was allowed to devour my prize at midmorning.

When I was four years old, I learned how to milk Grandpa for a piece of penny candy. When there was nothing for me to do, because Dick and Sully were in school, I would wander into the store and sit quietly on one of the ice cream chairs, just minding my own business, and watching Grandpa tend store. Most of the neighbors stopped in, but more to gossip than shop. Of course, their gossiping was done in German, and unintelligible to me. I did, however, learn the phrase that they always greeted each other with: "Vee Gehts" or "How's it going". When Grandpa got tired of my presence, he would motion me over to the candy counter, and reward my leaving with a piece of my choice. My favorites were "green leaves" or spearmint flavored gumdrops in the shape of tree leaves. There were also candy orange slices and bananas, and "red hot dollars. Jawbreakers lasted over an hour, as you sucked sequentially down through the multi-colored layers, taking it out of your mouth frequently to assess your progress. One of the best sellers was licorice whips, which both Dick and Sully loved, but which I hated. Trading cards were not sold separately, but came with three sticks of bubble gum to each card. The original baseball series was followed by famous gangsters such as Pretty Boy Floyd and Machine Gun Kelly. War cards made their debut when Japan invaded China, and continued throughout World War II, providing gory scenes of battle, mayhem, and destruction. We used to take our packs of cards to school, for trading, and playing "topsies" or "closest to the wall".

After Grandpa Roth died in 1937, Mom worked several hours each afternoon so that Grandma could have a rest. A doorway was cut through the partition that divided our cellar from the store's back room, so that Mom didn't have to go outside to reach the store. Store hours were from 7:00 A.M. to 9:00 P.M., seven days a week. Manchester is ten miles east of Hartford, on the opposite side of the Connecticut River. Hartford had two newspapers, the Courant in the morning, and the Times in the afternoon. Grandpa sold both papers daily, as well as the afternoon Manchester Evening Herald. On Sundays, he also carried the Boston Sunday Advertiser, the New York Journal American, along with the Sunday Courant. Mom also took over the job of bringing in the Sunday papers, opening the bundles, and arranging them on top of the magazines which filled the store front window counter. She would rise at six o'clock, make a coffee cake for breakfast, open the store, and fix the papers. At eight, grandma would take over, and Mom would return upstairs to get us ready for Sunday School.

In the 1920's, Cheney Brothers was the largest employer in Manchester. Besides their multiple factories, they also owned and rented out half the houses on the West Side. By the time I was born, Dad was a time keeper for one of the mills. Grandpa Schubert had also worked at Cheney's from 1906 until 1917, and had progressed from Weaver's Helper to Superintendent. He was fired in 1917, when he sided with the Textile Workers Union which was trying to unionize the plant. Twenty years later, Dad also lost his job when he spoke against "The Company" at a town meeting. During the height of the Depression, Cheney's asked for tax relief on the machinery that was sitting idle in two of its mills. Dad spoke up and said that if usage was the criteria, then they should pay three times the tax on the two mills that were running three shifts per day. Cheney's did not get their tax break, and Dad did not get another pay check.

When Bill Pagani moved across the street, and Grandpa moved to the larger store, the smaller store was rented out to Tom Cordiner, and his friend Duke, who jointly opened the Cooper Street Package Store, selling beer, wine, and whiskey. The money needed to obtain a liquor license, and purchase the needed inventory was borrowed from Minnie Schiebel, a distant relative of the Schuberts. The package store did only a small neighborhood business, and Tom & Duke spent most of the day drinking in the West Side Tavern on Center Street, while Tom's wife Lil ran the store. Since they drank more than they sold, the store ran at a loss. Several months after Dad lost his job at Cheney's, Minnie Schiebel asked him to take over the package store. She said that she would pay him a weekly salary until she got her lost money back, and then she would turn the business over to him. Dad, who had been helping Grandpa Schubert repair shoes, accepted. The package store hours were even worse than the candy store: 8:00 A.M. to 11:00 P.M. - Monday through Saturday.

In 1939, war broke out in Europe, and the United States started to arm itself in anticipation of its widening. Pratt & Whitney Aircraft expanded production and in 1940 Dad got a job with them, which lasted until his retirement. Dad had been barely eking out a living in the package store, and the milk, butter, eggs, and bread that Mom took as pay for helping Grandma kept us alive. It was really Mom's work day that expanded drastically when Dad started at Pratt & Whitney, first in East Hartford, and then in Manchester in factories abandoned by Cheney Brothers. Mom opened the package store at eight, and ran it until Dad got home from "the Aircraft" at four o'clock. She still spelled Grandma, and ran both stores from one 'til four, locking the door of the package store, and hanging up a sign which read: "Next Door for Service". Dad would take over the package store from four until closing. Mom would make supper for the four of us, and eat on the run while Dad came up and dined with us. In 1942, the package store association lobbied for, and got a statewide earlier closing of 8:00 P.M., which considerably shortened Dad's work day, but not Mom's.

As we got older, we did help Mom and Grandma in the store. Grandma's candy wholesaler, the Capital Candy Company, of Hartford, also furnished her with magazines on consignment. Weekly deliveries of magazines were accompanied by a checklist, showing the quantity of each magazine in the shipment. A duplicate return list was included, for listing the number of unsold copies of each previous issue. Weekly magazines such as Liberty and The Saturday Evening Post appeared in every shipment, while the monthlies, (Esquire, True Detective, Popular Mechanics, Silver Screen ... etc.) were scattered through the month. The comic books came in a separate bundle with their own list. Mom always handled the magazines, but we were allowed to put out the new comic books, check off the delivery list, and prepare the return list.

I developed my reading skills, courtesy Grandma Roth, for one copy of each comic book was extracted for our pleasure. We took them upstairs and read each one, being very careful not to wrinkle or tear or smudge them, for they were always returned to the comic book rack for sale to others. We read and returned to the rack, the "First Issues" of Superman in 1938 and Batman in 1939, as well as the initial offerings of Captain Marvel, The Flash, Wonder Woman, and Spiderman. Little did we realize the future value of our borrowed treasures. (NB: The November 1999 issue of Southwest Air's magazine, "Spirit", listed the current values of mint condition first issues as \$185,000 for Superman and \$165,000 for Batman, SHAZAM!) When we outgrew the comics, we raided the "Adult" magazines, sneaking copies of Esquire, Army Laughs, and Coronet (with its nude art photos) upstairs for salacious perusal.

Besides magazines for sale, there was also a lending library with four shelves full of hard-back romance novels, and mysteries. These books were rented out to the neighbors for three cents a day. A clipboard hung on the side of the cigarette case, listing the name of the borrower, the name of the book, two columns for the dates the book was taken out and returned, and the total amount of the rental. The Capital Candy Company got two cents for each day, and Grandma got one. I received my first lesson in creative accounting, one day when I was helping out in the store. Some lady had returned a book after six days, and I had entered that day's date, and the rental amount of eighteen cents. Mom watched me do it, and after the store was empty, changed the date to three days previous, and the amount due to nine cents, saying that Grandma needed the pennies more than Capital Candy.

One of the lending library's best customers was Sully's mother, Louise Sullivan. She was a voracious reader, and also made weekly trips to the branch library that was in the West Side Rec, just up the street in the Four Acres Lot. She had a major influence on the learning skills of us three boys, frequently bringing us to the library on a summer's morning, and insisting that we spend the afternoon reading quietly, instead of playing cops and robbers. By the time I reached the second grade, I was reading fourth grade books in the library, and in the sixth grade, I was allowed to take books from the "Adult" side of the library. The three of us were well known to the librarian, mainly because of Louise Sullivan, and our early reading start.

The glass fronted cigarette case was two feet long and eighteen inches high, with wooden sides, top, and a hinged back door, that opened from the top. Cigarette packs were lined up on its three glass eighteen inch deep shelves, with their fronts facing forward. It sat atop the five foot long by two feet deep glass fronted cigar and tobacco case. The three and a half foot high tobacco case had a glass top, upon which the cigarette case was positioned in the right-hand rear quadrant. This was the command post of the store. Grandpa, and then Grandma, either sat on the chair, hidden behind the cigarette case, or stood behind the cigar counter, surveying their domain. All transactions were initiated from this position, handy to both the tobacco and candy cases and the wooden cash drawer which was hung on sliders below the waist-level grocery shelf against the side wall of the store. The cash drawer had compartments for bills, nickels, dimes, quarters and half dollars. Pennies were kept in a short glass ice cream sundae dish, on the shelf directly above the cash drawer.

The tobacco case had a pair of sliding wooden rear doors and three shelves. The top shelf held boxes of cigars, their tops propped open with metal clips designed to hold them in a vertical position. The second shelf was devoted to tin cans of pipe tobacco, and extra cigarette cartons, and unopened cigar boxes were stored on the bottom shelf. Cigarette rolling papers, cartons of matches, (both the wooden box and paper book variety) and cans of snuff were tucked into the odd corners of the case. A metal hinged cigar cutter and an ash tray holding a half open box of wooden matches always stood atop the cigar case, ready for use. Hugo Krause, who lived up the street, stopped in every morning at ten o'clock, purchased a five cent White Owl, clipped the end in the cigar cutter, and lit up, using the counter top match box, with its striker on the side. He would chat awhile, and then wend his way to the tavern of his choice for that day, either Renns, back up the street, or the West Side Tavern on Center Street. Dad was one of the better cigarette customers, smoking at least a pack of Chesterfields, every day of his life.

The northern side wall of the store was lined with floor to ceiling foot wide shelves, on which Grandpa stocked dry groceries and canned goods. Besides Campbell's Soups, Heinz 57 relishes, and Gulden's Mustard, he carried both hot and cold cereal and Libby's canned vegetables. He never carried any fresh vegetables or meats. The neighbors never really shopped here for groceries, but used to pick up emergency food when they had run out, and the First National was closed. Then came World War II and food rationing! Since Grandma had to buy by the case, and turn in the required food stamps on delivery, she had to cancel all grocery shipments, because of insufficient turn over. Except for paper products and other non-rationed goods, her shelves were almost bare.

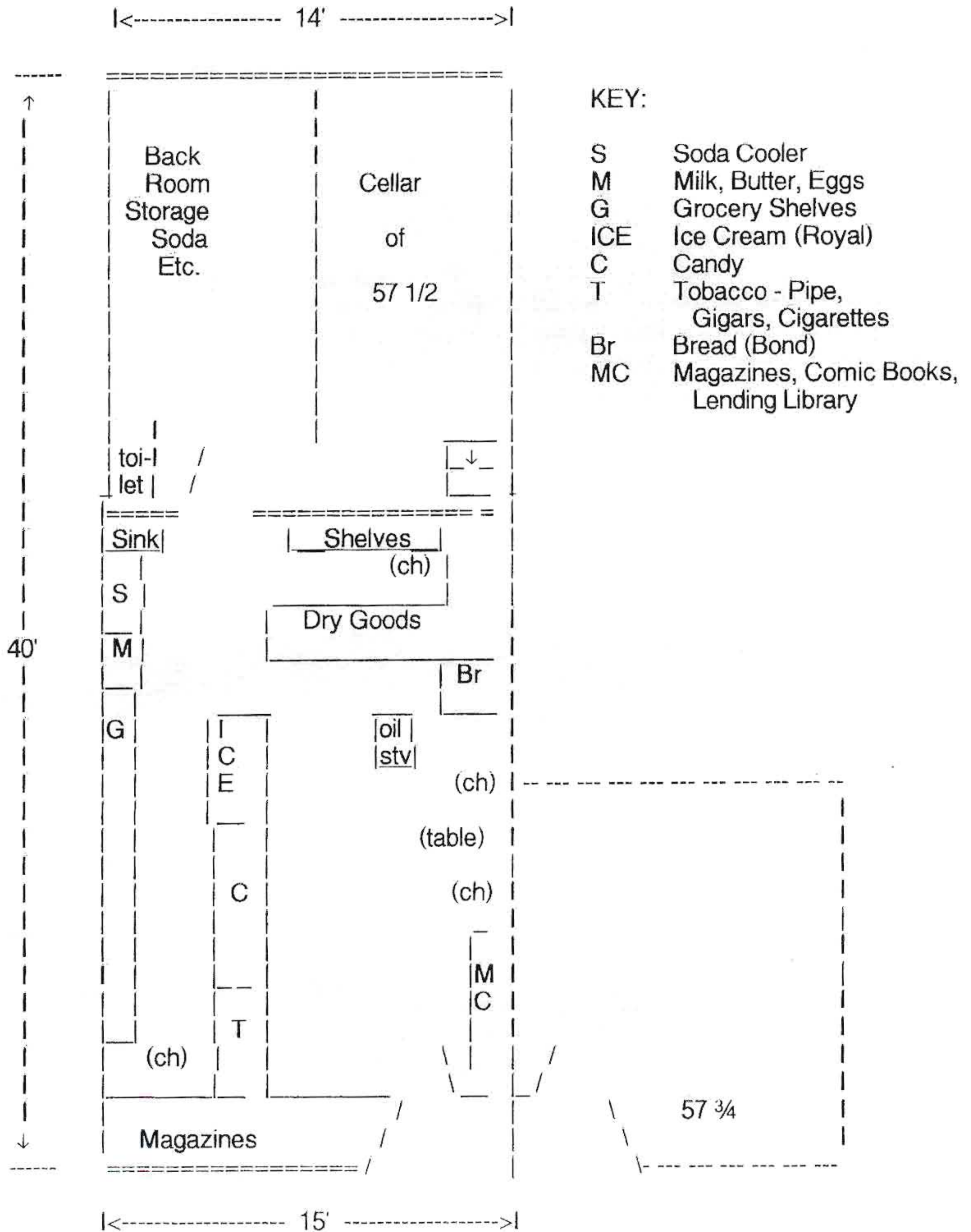
But neighbors still stopped in on Sunday afternoons looking for a can of soup for supper. After disappointing several of them, Grandma found a solution. She purchased cans of the necessities from the First National across the street during the week, and resold them on Sunday. She resold them at the same price at which she had purchased them. Mom tried to convince her that she should make a few cents profit on each can, but she steadfastly refused, saying that she couldn't charge more than they did across the street. She continued this practice for several years, until the first National closed, never making a penny on any resale, Good Samaritan that she was.

Like our apartment upstairs, the store was heated by an oil stove, and had only cold running water. During the winter, Grandma kept a kettle of water on the oil stove, and used the hot water to wash the ice cream utensils and milk shake glasses in the sink. During the summer, she carried them to her house when they became too soiled. The store had a dirt-floored sub basement, which was accessed through a trap door in the center of the floor. The water meter was in the sub basement and the pipe which fed both the store and the upstairs apartment came through the floor against the wall behind the ice cream freezer. The pipe ran straight up the wall, entering our apartment in the bottom of the sink side cupboard. Grandpa had a steel forked handle to lift and move the ice cream buckets in the freezer. This handle was kept on the grocery shelf, next to the vertical water pipe. Whenever my brothers and I made too much noise roughhousing, Grandpa (and subsequently Grandma and Mom) would rap on the water pipe with the ice cream lifter. It echoed throughout the apartment, and we soon learned to obey "or else!" Later on, it became a signaling device that Grandma used when she needed Mom downstairs. Of course, the raps were fewer in number, and more gently applied.

As we grew older, we graduated from penny candy and ice cream to soda and potato chips. Grandma carried State Line Potato Chips in nickel bags that hung on a rack that stood atop the dry goods counter, right next to the soda cooler. We could carry candy and ice cream out of the store, but the soda bottles carried a two cents deposit fee if you removed it from the store. Sully, Dick, and I now took to hanging around inside the store, leaning back against the wall in the ice cream chairs, drinking a bottle of soda, and flipping through the adjacent magazines. Grandma got her soda from the Manchester Bottling Company, which made cream soda, orange soda, and birch beer. Coke and Pepsi had their own delivery trucks, which stopped and serviced all three stores on the corners of Cooper & Summer Street.

Yes, for the first sixteen years of my life, both my mind and my body were widened in the "Wonderland" of Grandma Roth's Candy Store. After we swapped residences with her, and we found outside jobs, we had less contact with Grandma, and spent less time inhaling the delights of her larder, but whenever anything significant occurred, we always stood front and center before her command post to report on our activities and status. Grandma did not believe in banks, and kept her resources hidden in various places out of sight. In my senior year at Wesleyan, when I wanted to buy a car, Grandma called me in and asked if I need a loan. When I said yes, she presented me with a Hershey's Candy Carton containing three hundred one dollar bills, saying that I could pay it back whenever I could. The purchase of the car was followed rapidly by marriage, army service, and the birth of three children. Every time that I returned to Manchester for the next seven years, I reported to Grandma that I would soon be able to repay the loan. Unfortunately, on the afternoon of April 6, 1959, after working the morning in her store, she passed away in her sleep, with the loan still outstanding. Her recycled loan, however, has provided cars and other necessities for her great grandchildren.

ROTH'S CANDY STORE



57 Cooper Street

Figure II - 1

NO GUNS ON SUNDAY

Chapter III

The Schuberts

My Grandfather, Robert Schubert, was born in Bechau, Germany on September 5, 1876. In 1889, he married my Grandmother, Anna Scheibenflug, who was born in St. Polten (Paudorf) Austria. They settled in Gros Neundorf, Germany, where Anna gave birth to their first three children, Bernard in 1900, Elizabeth in 1901, and Robert Jr. in February of 1903.

On June 17, 1903, the five of them, (3-month old Bobby in his Mother's arms), set sail from Hamburg, Germany aboard the liner SS Deutschland, arriving nine days later on June 26th in New York City. The ship's manifest states that Grandpa was in possession of \$35.00, and their destination was South Manchester, Connecticut. It includes the information that they were going to join Anna's father, Ferdinand Scheibenflug, who was a tailor, and resided at 61 Olcott Street.

Nine months and one day after their arrival in the United States, Grandma gave birth to my Father, Max Joseph Schubert on March 27, 1904. He must have been conceived on the "high seas", which probably accounts for his joining the Navy at the age of seventeen. Grandpa got a job as a mill hand at Cheney Brothers silk mills, and moved across the street to number 58 Olcott.

On July 29, 1910, Grandpa declared on oath that he absolutely and entirely renounced and abjured all allegiance and fidelity to any foreign prince or potentate, and particularly to William the II, the German Emperor, and petitioned for naturalization. A silk-spinner, and a velvet-weaver from Cheney's swore and deposed that they knew Grandpa, and that he was a person of good moral character and in every way qualified to be admitted a citizen of the United States. Certificate of Naturalization No. 173131 was issued on the 30th day of December A.D. 1910, admitting the Schuberts to become citizens on that day.

Two years later, their fifth and last child, Margaret was born in December 1912. My Grandmother died in 1927, and in 1928, Grandpa married her younger sister, Francesca (known throughout her life to all the Schuberts as "Aunt Fannie"). By the time that I was born in 1930, Grandpa had moved to 54 Cooper Street, and was living there with Aunt Fannie, Margaret, and Elizabeth's daughter, my cousin Betty. Elizabeth had married James Grimason in 1922, and divorced him shortly thereafter. Betty was born in 1923, and was stashed with her grandparents, when Elizabeth remarried Harold "Cutie" Hall, and moved to East Hartford.

Cutie Hall owned a diner on East Hartford Main Street, and Mom used to take my brothers and me on the bus for visits. We got to eat lunch in the diner, and there I saw my first juke box. Cutie would give us nickel sized slugs to play our favorite songs with. Aunt Elizabeth and Cutie had three daughters: Barbara Hall, Mildred Hall, and Nancy Hall. By some strange coincidence, I married Barbara Hall, whose mother was Mildred Hall, and our only daughter is named Nancy!

In 1917, when Grandpa lost his job as plant superintendent at Cheney's, for siding with the union, he went into business for himself, and opened a shoe repair shop on Summer Street. Grandpa acquired the northwest corner of Summer and Cooper Streets. A one-story brick building occupied the corner, fronting on Cooper Street, and he leased it to The First National Stores. His shoe repair shop was in an extension at the rear of the First National. Since Summer Street sloped down hill, his shop was on the same level as the basement of the grocery store, and they shared toilet facilities.

Grandpa's two story house, also faced Cooper Street, and was separated from the stores by a narrow cement alley way. Immediately west of Grandpa's shop, a gravel drive gave access to the basement of the house, where Grandpa had his winery, and stored his homemade wine. Next to the driveway, came the back yard, with a large shaded lawn, a grape arbor, and a flower garden. The two-car garage was behind the grape arbor, at the end of another gravel driveway. The garage had a full basement below it, where Grandpa's still for making "Schnapps" was stashed.

The land continued down hill, and below the garage was the chicken coop, and a vegetable garden. Between the chicken coop and Summer Street was Grandpa's dump. The grassy bank next to the street fell off sharply, and the neighborhood stores dumped their excess wooden crates and cardboard boxes over the edge, where they were burned. While no burning took place on the weekends, the fire smoldered all week long, with billows of smoke when new trash was added. John Hurley managed the First National Store, and his delivery boy, "Skeezix", made several trips a day to the dump. The dump was always kept smoldering, when Grandpa was making "Schnapps" beneath the garage.

Oscar Schutz lived at the bottom of the hill on Summer Street, just west of Grandpa's Dump. The Reichenbachs lived across from the dump. Other Schutzes, Helms, and Doelners lived on Cooper Street, and the German greeting "Wie gehts?", which means "How goes it?" was heard frequently in the neighborhood. The other German phrase that I learned at an early age was "hosen-scheisser", which is how Grandpa referred to my brothers, my cousins and me, when we were very young. The translation is left to the reader, although hosen means pants!

In the early 1930's, my Father and both his brothers worked for Cheney Brothers, Dad as a timekeeper. On Saturdays, the three sons took turns helping their Father repair shoes. When it was Dad's turn, we used to sit in the bay window and watch grandpa and him resole and reheel the neighbor's shoes. Grandpa would sit at his work stand, the top of which had replaceable metal shoe inserts of every size from baby to large. After removing the worn soles and/or heels, with a huge pair of pincers; Grandpa would place the shoe over the steel insert, and add the new. The soles were hand-cut slightly oversize from large sheets of cowhide, glued to the innersole, tacked in the instep, and then sewed around the edge on the electric motor driven sewing machine. Grandpa then held the shoe against his chest and pared the sole down to size, with his handmade razor-sharp knife. Heels were pre-made and pre-sized by Goodyear, and each pair came in its own cardboard box. These were nailed directly into the heel base on each shoe, using nails that Grandpa kept in his mouth.

Along the back wall of the shop, was a ten-foot long combination grinder and polisher. Dad's job was finishing the newly repaired shoes. The edges of the new soles had to be ground smooth, and then dyed and polished. Those shoes with only new heels had to have the heel base dyed and polished. A huge electric motor drove a floor level shaft which was connected to the chest level grinding wheels and polishing brushes by leather pulley belts. When the machine was in use, you could hardly hear yourself think. To keep us children quiet, Grandpa would give us empty Goodyear heel boxes, nails, and a spare hammer, and we would pretend to be assistant "shoemakers". Grandpa did not give out receipts. On the day that he told you that your shoes would be ready, you had to describe them, or fetch them from the front window shelf yourself. All sales were cash and carry.

My cousin Carol was born to my uncle Bobby and Aunt Gladys just thirteen days after I was born. They lived in one quarter of a "four tenement" on West Center Street, until 1940, when my Grandfather closed his dump, and gave the property to Uncle Bobby for their new house. Carol and I attended school together for twelve years, and I sat directly behind her in "home room" all four years of high school. Whenever we met any new school mates, we had to explain that we were not brother and sister, just first cousins. Aunt Gladys was a Methodist, and Carol sporadically attended Sunday School at the South Methodist Church. On her own, she switched to Concordia Lutheran, and was confirmed in

1944 along with me. She is still, to this day an active member of Concordia. Once they moved into their new house, Bobby and Gladys started a "second" family, with Alice being born in 1941, and Robert Schubert III, (who was promptly christened "Bobby the Turd" by Aunt Margaret), in 1943.

Cousin Walter was born in 1932 to Uncle Benny and Aunt Jenny, and they lived in the lower half of a "two tenement" on Cooper Street. When Cheney Brothers sold off all the company houses on the West Side, they moved next door to a single family house. At first, I would have nothing to do with Walter, because he was low man on the neighborhood totem pole. But then one day, I found out that Benny and Jenny and Walter always took Sunday drives in the summer, which invariably ended at an ice cream parlor. Since my Father didn't have a car, I just happened to stop in on Sunday afternoons to see if Walter wanted to "play".

My Father did not own a car until 1939, when he bought a 1936 Dodge sedan, to make deliveries from the package store to the local beer drinkers. Grandpa, Uncle Benny and Uncle Bobby all had automobiles, and once every summer, there would be an all-day Schubert Convoy to Rocky Neck Beach on the Connecticut Shore. Everyone packed a picnic lunch, and their bathing suits (wool in those days), and we headed south through Glastonbury in a line. We drove through Marlborough, where the road had seven curves, and someone had painted a fish's face on a fish-head shaped rock, to Niantic, where we turned west to Rocky Neck State Park. Since the railroad ran right along the beach, our favorite sport, (besides splashing in the water and digging in the sand), was counting the freight cars attached to the long trains that roared by throughout the afternoon.

One year, the convoy traveled to Nashua New Hampshire, to visit Benson's Wild Animal Farm. Major attractions were a baby elephant that Walter was invited to try and jump up on, and a boxwood maze. The bushes in the maze were too tall to see over, but there was an attendant stationed in a tower, who gave directions through a bull horn when you were obviously lost, (as we were!). The only other animals that I remember were the monkeys. The trip was so long, that we had to pack two meals, one for lunch at the zoo, and one for supper at a roadside rest area on the way home.

Grandpa loved to play Pinochle, and every Wednesday evening he would walk up Cooper Street to Renn's tavern, for the weekly neighborhood game. He taught his three sons to play, and the four of them played Pinochle at every family gathering. They played to a game of 100 points, for quarters. However, if you didn't make at least 50 points (or Schneider"), it cost you double. Dad taught my brothers and me, and we carried the tradition into the next generation. Alas, my three sons were not interested in carrying on the tradition.

My Aunt Margaret married Joe Wright in 1937, but they did not have any children until after Uncle Joe was discharged from the US Army. Tommy was born in 1945, and Dougie in 1950. Before then, Margaret acted as a sort of second Mother on family trips. My Uncle Joe was the only family member in the service in the Second World War, serving in the Army and returning home with shrapnel in his arm. Uncle Joe was the family comedian, and livened up our gatherings with his rapier wit. As we grew older, we were allowed to celebrate New Years Eve at Grandpa's house. Joe would invariably "insult" Aunt Fannie by asking to have the "oleo" passed, knowing full well that she served only butter. Besides his home-made schnapps, my Grandfather had to have both smoked eel and pickled herring to properly ring in the New Year!

Grandpa worked until he was past seventy, even though he suffered from rheumatism in both legs. He finally retired to one half of the duplex that my cousin Walter bought, and passed away in 1960. My favorite remembrance is one day when he was sitting in his back yard and it started to rain. I said: "Grampa, it is raining, you'd better go inside". He said to me: "I am not sugar, I won't melt!"

My Father was not a scholar. He started his education in the one-room Bunce School on Love Lane which ran between West Center Street and Center Street, almost at the East Hartford town line. He says that he was a student in the ninth district's school at the corner of Main and School Streets when it burned down in 1913. The Heroine of the day was Elizabeth Bennett, who made sure that every student had left the building before she herself fled to safety. She later became the principal of the Barnard and Nathan Hale Junior High Schools. When I attended Barnard from 1942 to 1944, she wore a wig, and the rumor was that she had lost her hair during the school fire of 1913.

When Dad was sixteen, he and Tommy Kearns, and a third Manchester teenager ran away from home when PT Barnum's Circus left town by train, with the three boys as either newly hired hands or stowaways. Tommy and Dad were sent home a week later, when their companion was killed when he slipped between railroad cars. Dad and Tommy spent one more year in school, and then in 1921, at the age of 17, they joined the US Navy. Since they were under age, they needed parental permission, and Dad claims Grandma signed for him, realizing that he and school would never be friends.

Four years later, they returned to Manchester, and Dad got a job at Cheney Brothers as a mail boy. He went to night classes at Manchester Business College, and learned enough bookkeeping, to be promoted to a time keeper in Cheney's finance department. In the meantime, Grandpa Roth had moved his family to Manchester from the Harwinton Farm. Mom left her job in Hartford, moved back home with her folks, and also got a job with Cheney Brothers as a key punch operator in the IBM department. Dad courted Mom with anonymous boxes of candy and other gifts, and finally admitted that he was her secret admirer. They were married in 1928, and Tommy Kearns was the Best Man.

My Father was an inveterate story teller. To this day, I am not sure which tales were true, and which were products of his fertile imagination. Dinner time was always accompanied by sea stories or youthful remembrances. I am sure that the tall stories that he entertained his grandchildren with were pure fiction, especially those wherein he was a cowboy and fought with the Indians. He had an old felt hat with two holes in it, front and back, which he claimed were made by an Indian arrow.

The one story that I cannot confirm or dispute, involves Naval Maneuvers in 1923 off the coast of California. My Father spent most of his four navy years aboard the Battleship New Mexico. On this occasion, the entire Pacific Fleet was engaged in War Games, including the firing of live ammunition. Every Battleship had turrets, each of which held three sixteen inch guns. Each gun had its own crew, responsible for loading their gun, first with the metal projectile, and then with silken bags filled with gunpowder. These shells and powder bags were hoisted into the turret by elevators coming up from the munitions dump below decks. Each gun crew was commanded by an officer, whose jobs included firing the gun, and clearing out the barrel for the next round.

Instructions for loading and firing were generated in the control tower, and passed down to the gunnery officers through a speaking tube. On this occasion, Dad was relaying the instructions to the turret, with his lower face inside a speaking tube. While the rear of the turret was open between the three powder hoists, the guns at the front were separated by thin steel partitions. After each round was fired, the gunnery officer depressed a button which forced compressed air into the breech of the gun to blow any powder bag remnants or flames out of the barrel before the breech was opened for the next round.

After one of the rounds, one of the officers put his finger on the blowout button, but didn't fully depress it. He heard the gun next door being blown out, and thought that it was his gun. When he opened the breech, flames shot back into the turret, and ignited the powder bags waiting for the next round, and blew up the turret. Several lives were lost, and several men were severely burned. The flames shot up the speaking tube, and burned my Father's face. Fortunately, the country's foremost plastic surgeon was with the fleet, and he grafted skin from my Father's thigh onto his face.

I don't know how true this story is, but I do know that Dad only needed to shave once a week, (Thigh skin hair does not have the same properties as facial skin hair.) As Dad got older, a bump appeared on his cheek, and each year got slightly larger. Finally in 1946, he saw a doctor about the bump. The doctor sliced it open and extracted a whisker which had been growing between the layers of skin for 23 years, and was over a foot long!

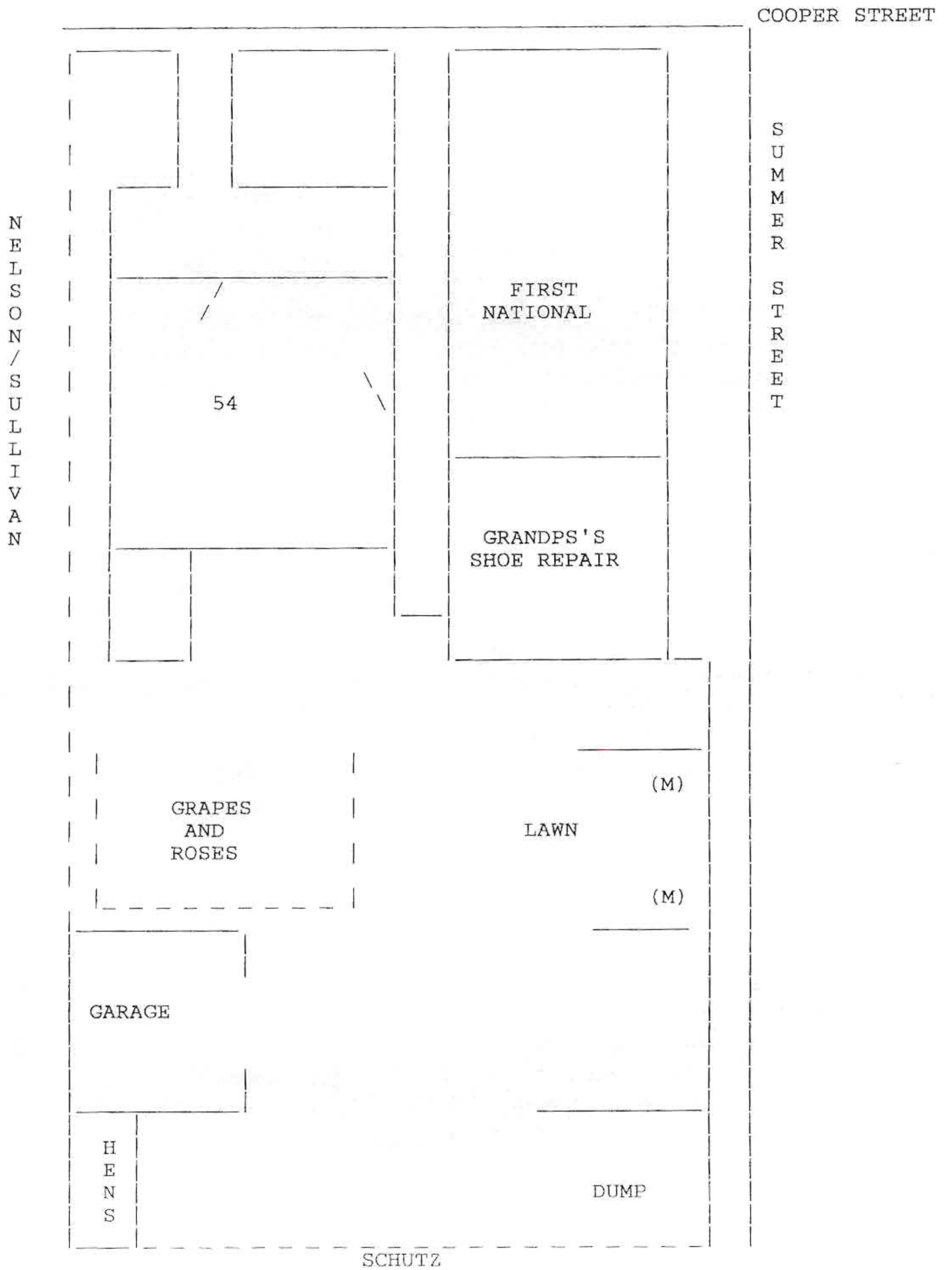
While Mom would read us bedtime stories from "Mother Goose" and "A Child's Garden of Verses", Dad preferred to tell us stories. His favorite and ours too, I guess, was "The Boy Who Cried Wolf". It was about a boy, who was bored while tending sheep all day, and cried "wolf" to get some attention and company. He did it so often, that when the wolf did come, no one responded, and he and his sheep were eaten! I can repeat the story, word for word, because I heard it 1,273 times during the first six years of my life.

Besides telling tales, dad was a compulsive game player. As I mentioned, he played Pinochle with his Father and Brothers, and taught my Brothers and I to play. He played cribbage during lunch breaks, and taught us the finer points of the game. In the 1930's, the empty lots between Summer Street and Hartford Road, west of Campfield Road were known as the "Bluefields". A group of West-side neighbors formed the Bluefields Poker & Pinochle Club, and their clubhouse was located on the second floor of Jack Straugh's four car garage on Summer Street. Dad was a member in good standing until the demise of the club in 1940. The club sponsored a baseball team in the semi-pro Twilight League that held its games every summer at the four-acre lots during the 30's and 40's. Dad was the score keeper for the team, and we got to sit on the team bench when the Bluefields were playing.

Dad was always athletic, and put me to shame when he would hang by his heels on my children's swing set, when he came to visit during the 1950's. He played tennis with my Aunt Martha in the 30's and my brothers and I used to shag "over-the-fence" balls for them. In the 40's, he took up golf, joined the Manchester Country Club, where he carried a 12-15 handicap, until he retired. He was deadly with his short irons and was a member of the "Dawn Patrol" which was the first foursome to tee off every Sunday morning for over twenty years. (The other members were Ricky Anderson, Bobby Noren, and Billy Stevenson.) He spent every Friday night of the rest of his life playing poker in the club lounge after playing in the weekly "Best-ball" tournament.

In 1946, dad had the club pro give my Brothers and I golf lessons, and gave us his old set of clubs to play around with. He always supported any activities that we wanted to engage in, and if we needed a few dollars for a date, all we had to do was ask. He saw all three of us through school, and into our marriages. I love him.

THE SCHUBERT PROPERTY



54 Cooper Street

Figure III - 1

NO GUNS ON SUNDAY

Chapter IV

The Roths

My Maternal Grandparents, John Roth and Katherine Thuck, were both born in Tuppertz, Austria. They were married on June 25, 1904, and settled on a farm in Harwinton, a small town near Torrington Connecticut, which is in the northwestern part of the state. In 1905, their firstborn, William, was born prematurely, and lived for only two and a half months. My Mother, Lena Margaret Roth, was born on May 12, 1906, and fortunately for me, she lived to the ripe old age of 85.

Five more healthy children were produced on "the farm", Louise in 1907, Albert in 1909, Elsie in 1912, Frieda in 1916, and Martha in 1917. Life was hard on the farm, and more attention was given to chores than to education. My Mother only finished the eighth grade, and then was sent to Hartford to work as a maid and cook in some well-to-do family's house. Since the English-born lady of the house taught Mom to cook, we never got any German food at home, only when we ate at Grandma Roth's or Aunt Fannie Schubert's house.

Mom had her own unique way of cooking. She used so much Crisco to make pancakes, in her cast-iron frying pan, that we were served hot coffee, (with lots of milk and sugar), instead of a glass of cold milk, which Mom believed would cause the Crisco to solidify in our stomachs. Mom always burned omelets when she fried them, and when we complained, she said that they were not burned, only "browned". They were always black, and we liberally doused them with grape jelly to mask the burnt flavor. There was always a jar of grape jelly on the table, which we spread on Bond white bread when we didn't like the meat or vegetables that were served.

A frequent depression meal was liver and onions for Dick and me, and boiled kidneys for Dad and Allan, both of which could be bought cheaply. Mom didn't eat either, because the odor of boiling kidneys killed her appetite. Many nights, our dinner consisted solely of a bowl of boiled white rice, milk, butter, and sugar. Mom did a lot of canning, and her peaches, tomatoes and yellow string beans were delicious. Her one big flop was grape jam with the skins in it, which was inedible.

Sometime during the 1920's, my Grandfather sold the farm, and bought the two buildings numbered 57 and 59 Cooper Street. (See figure IV-1). Cooper Street runs uphill from West Center Street to High Street, and Grandpa's lot also sloped uphill from front to back. There were cement walls along the sidewalk, except in front of the two stores. A four-foot high "L"-shaped wall indented the storefronts three additional feet from the curbstone, making the sidewalk six feet wide in front of the larger store. The other leg of the "L" is four feet long, and provided a buffer between our house and the Kellom's yard. There were two tall maple trees planted along the property line.

A US Mail box occupied the sidewalk in the "L". Large letters and small packages could be posted there. It was also used to distribute mail for our local postman, Evan Nyquist, who delivered our mail well into the 1940's. Regular letters were posted in the small box affixed to the telephone pole next to the curb. A streetlight attached to this same pole provided storefront illumination after dark.

The sidewalk tapered back to the normal three feet, due to street curvature, and continued at this width to the southern end of the property, which adjoined the double tenement occupied by the Doelners and the Shields, who were related by marriage. The wall extending southward from the smaller store tapered from three feet to eighteen inches as the street went uphill. The wall was broken in two places for the sidewalk to the two houses, and the driveway to the stand-alone garage at the rear of the property.

Two majestic maple trees also fronted the lot, with a rock garden around the tree between the sidewalk steps and the driveway. The driveway climbed steeply up for twenty feet, and the leveled out as it continued past both houses, and then resumed its upward climb to the level of the one -car garage. This structure became a one and a half car garage, when my Uncle Al bought a Model A Ford convertible. Al extended the garage just wide enough, and just tall enough to accept his car with the top down. In the 1940's, this became a storage room for extra cases of beer and cases of empty beer bottles for the package store, which Mom and Dad ran until 1959.

Uncle Al also added a tool shed behind the garage, and, when he got tired of sharing the bathtub with his three sisters, he added an outdoor cold water shower, which he attached to the west wall of the garage. This doubled as a backstop for Al's 22 and our BB gun target practice. Three clothes lines, which Mom and Grandma shared, ran from the back of Grandma's house to the side of the garage. Every Halloween, Dad unhooked the lines from the house and stored them on the garage roof to keep them from being cut by our local pranksters.

There were two apple trees on the property, and my Grandfather brought cuttings from his apple orchard in Harwinton, and grafted them onto the smaller tree, which stood near the top of the driveway. This tree bore six different kinds of apples each year, including Macintoshes and Golden Russets (my favorite). Both trees, and Grandpa's Linden tree, were lost in the '38 hurricane, but Grandpa was no longer alive to mourn their passing. He also transplanted a grape arbor along the rear property line, which had been fenced off by the Olanders. They had a huge vegetable garden which stretched across our entire back yard. The grape arbor died with Grandpa, and we planted a "Victory Garden there during World War II.

Not to be outdone, Grandma, had six gardens of her own, the largest of which was devoted to vegetables. I can still taste the chives, which we filched from the permanent clumps just off the back porch steps. Grandma grew hollyhocks along Mr. Carson's fence, lily of the valley in front of the garage, roses in front of the upper driveway, and iris along Mr. Shields' fence. She grew flowers between the south side of her house and the sidewalk, and among the Rose of Sharon bushes before the front porch. There were hydrangea bushes in the center of the front lawn, and morning glories on both our front porch and Grandma's back porch

Uncle Al had built a horseshoe court along side the north wall of Grandpa's house, but it soon fell into disuse, and Dick and I, and Allan used the pits for sandboxes. Our cat, Squeaky, also used the pits for toilets, and we had to be careful where we dug. There was a six-foot wide sidewalk behind Grandpa's house that was ideal for riding tricycles and scooters, and learning to roller-skate. The walk was divided into six-foot sections, and as we grew older, two of them became a court for "sidewalk tennis", which Sully taught us to play. A tennis ball was used, and your bare hands were the rackets. It was played and scored like netless Ping-Pong, with the players standing on the table.

When I was born in 1930, my Grandfather and Grandmother, my Uncle Albert, and my Aunts Elsie, Frieda, and Martha all lived in number 59. Billy Pagani's barbershop was located in number 57, and we lived upstairs over the barbershop in number 57½. My Grandfather's neighborhood variety store occupied number 57*. My Aunt Louise had married Carl Wiganoski, and lived on the East Side, (i.e.: east of Main Street). I don't have any dates for when the various moves took place, but in 1928 when Mom and Dad were married, they moved into my Grandfather's rental apartment. Mom, of course left work to give birth to my Brother Richard in 1929, and devoted the next eight years to raising me and my two brothers. Except for weekly church attendance on Sunday, and shopping trips to Main Street every Saturday, she was a constant presence in our lives, nurturing our mental, physical, and spiritual development. She made me what I am today.

I never really knew my Grandfather Roth, as he died when I was seven years old. And, when he was alive, he worked in his variety store seven days a week from seven AM until nine PM. To me, he was that imposing figure behind the cigar counter, who bribed me with penny candy to leave when he tired of my presence. I do, however, remember the day he chased my brother Dick around the yard, after Dick had broken the cellar window to the back room of the store with a ball or stone.

Grandpa owned a huge blue 1928 Willys Knight four-door sedan with a thermometer in the radiator cap, which was clearly visible from the driver's seat. He used it to take Grandma to and from church on Sundays and for shopping trips to Main Street on Thursday nights. When my brother Allan was born, he took Dick and I, and our cousin Betty to the hospital, to see the new arrival through the nursery window. I don't know what Grandpa died from, but the summer before his death he spent two months living in a rooming house near Rocky Neck State Park, treating his ulcerated legs to daily saltwater treatments in the waters of Long Island Sound. My brothers and I did not attend either his funeral or interment, but joined in the "afterwards" in my Grandparents' house.

Grandma, however, lived to the age of 73, dying in 1959. I don't ever remember her being sick or going to a doctor. After Grandpa died, she worked in the store every day of her life, including the morning of her death. At noon, she told Mom that she was tired and had to lie down for a bit, upstairs. She had not returned by the time my Father came home from Pratt & Whitney at four o'clock, and when Mom went upstairs to check on her, she had passed on to the great beyond.

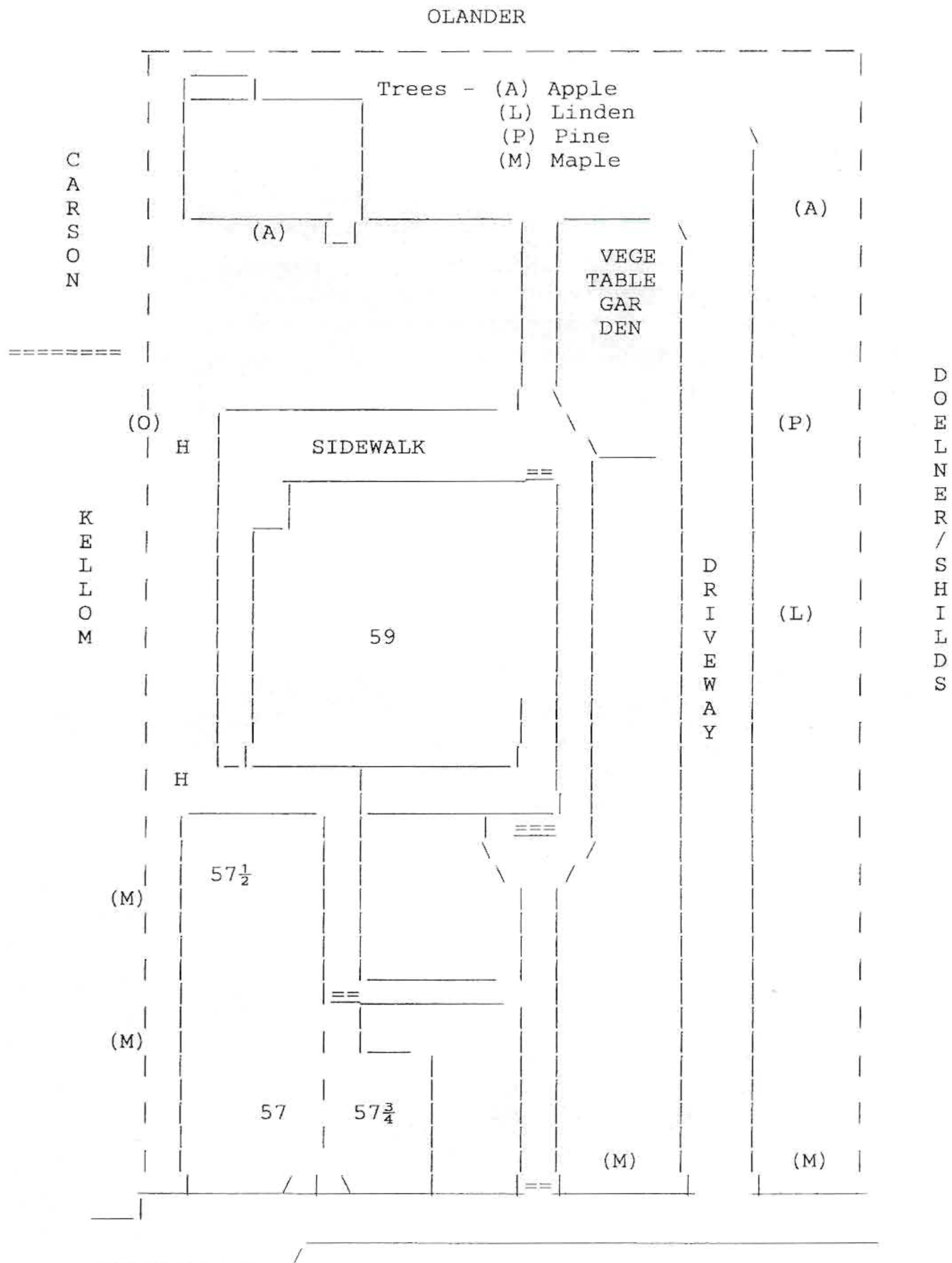
The property including both houses and both stores was sold, and the proceeds split between, Mom, her brother, and her three surviving sisters, (Aunt Louise had died in 1957). Mom and Dad had been renting from her parents since their marriage, and with Mom's share of the inheritance, and the proceeds from the sale of their Package Store, they bought their first house, on Woodland Street. Dad was fifty-five, and the bank would only give him a ten-year mortgage, due to be paid off before he retired from Pratt & Whitney.

Grandma didn't bribe me with penny candy to leave the store, like Grandpa did. Instead, she paid Dick and me to deliver the Manchester Evening Herald to neighboring customers, and we bought our own candy with our weekly paper salaries. The paper sold for three cents a day, of which Grandma got a penny. Since it was issued six days a week, we took turns delivering five papers each day. Grandma paid us each a dime, and she kept the other ten cents. We were only allowed to buy five cents worth of candy each week. My choices only lasted about an hour, while Dick stretched his over several days.

In December of 1939, Uncle Al got married and moved to Hartford, where he and Ella lived with Ella's mother, in a second floor apartment. We visited them once on one of their daughter Alice's early birthdays. Other than that we only saw them and their other children for Thanksgiving Dinner, or when one of my Aunts got married. Al taught metal shops at Hartford Trade School, until he retired to his farm in Newington. Al and Ella were both accomplished musicians, Al on the guitar and violin, and Ella on the piano and organ. Ella passed away two days after Al, in November 1999, a month short of their sixtieth wedding anniversary.

Elsie, Frieda, and Martha all graduated from Manchester High and started their daily bus commuting to various Hartford insurance companies. They were all rescued from a lifetime of low-paid slavery in the actuarial dungeons of the Insurance Capitol of America, by courtship and marriage. Elsie was rescued by Bob Werner, Martha by Richard Reichenbach, and Frieda by Stanley Horsman. Frieda was whisked away to Brockton, Massachusetts, but Elsie and Martha both settled on Woodland Street, and we saw them every Sunday at Concordia Lutheran, where they are still members. All three ladies outlived their husbands, and as I write this in 2006, Elsie, 93, is still in Manchester, and Frieda, 90, resides in Sherborn, Massachusetts. Martha passed away in 2005.

THE ROTH PROPERTY - MY PLAYGROUND



57 - 59 Cooper Street

Figure IV - 1

NO GUNS ON SUNDAY

Chapter V

Concordia Lutheran Church

The Roths were active Lutherans but, by the time I was born, the Schuberts were all lapsed Catholics. Mom and Dad were married in 1928, in Concordia Evangelical Lutheran Church, and the wedding reception was held in the basement activities room. At the reception, Pastor Weber remarked to Dad, that he could not remember ever seeing him in church. Dad replied that he had never been in church, since he was Catholic. The Pastor Weber then said, "If I had known that you were Catholic, I would not have performed the ceremony!"

While open warfare never broke out between Catholics and Lutherans in Manchester, like it did in Ireland, they really did not support each others beliefs, and each considered the other to be heretics. There were three Lutheran Churches in Manchester, each belonging to a different Synod, and they were also intolerant of each other's tenets, and accused each other of being "too much like the Catholics".

Mom became responsible for our religious education, and Dick and I were baptized by Pastor Weber. We both had Godparents chosen from friends who were also Lutheran, and I don't believe that Dad even attended. By the time Allan was born, the minister had been replaced by Pastor Richter, but Dad still kept his distance. Finally, on Christmas Eve in 1939, Dad was persuaded to attend the pageant, since all three of his sons were performing. When Oscar Anderson, who worked with Dad, and was my Godfather, saw Dad enter the vestibule, he pointed at the steeple, and vowed that it was about to fall. The steeple didn't fall, but Dad sat in the over-heated church, bundled up in his woolen overcoat, and passed out in the middle of the performance. They had to carry him out into the wintry air of the vestibule to revive him. His next appearance in church was not until thirteen years later, when I was married in the South Methodist Church in 1952.

We walked to Sunday School each Sunday morning accompanied by one or more of our aunts. Sunday School started at 9:15 and lasted an hour, ending just fifteen minutes before the 10:30 English language church service. There was a German language service at 9:15 which was discontinued in 1940. Sometimes, when Grandma went to the German service, we got to ride to Sunday School in Grandpa's Willys Knight sedan. Grandpa did not go to church because he had to tend store, but he did provide transportation on some Sundays, when Uncle Al minded the store. When he took Grandma to the English service at 10:30, we would get a ride home from Sunday School.

We never dawdled when we walked to Sunday School, both Elsie and Frieda set a rapid pace, and we were expected to keep up. The route that we followed was north on Cooper Street to West Center Street, and then east on West Center past its "Y" intersection with Center Street. We walked on the south side of the street (past Uncle Bob Schubert's house) until the five way intersection of West Center, Center, Broad, Pine, and Arch Streets. We then crossed over to the north side of Center Street, and continued east, past Moriarity Brothers gas station, which has been on the corner of Center and Broad for ever and ever! Just east of Moriarity Brothers, Center Street dipped to its lowest point, as it passed under the railroad bridge that carried the spur line that served the Cheney Brothers Silk Mills. The New York, New Haven, and Hartford Railroad passed through the north end of Manchester, and the spur line ran south from their freight yards at North Main Street, and terminated at the Cheney's main office on Hartford Road.

As we got older, we were allowed to climb up the graduated stone wall, cross the tracks, and descend once more to street level. Once we were safely past the railroad bridge, we crossed back to the south side of Center Street, and turned south on New Street, which bordered the east side of the Cheney freight yards. After a very short block, we turned east on Garden Street and climbed the hill to Concordia at the intersection of Garden and Winter Streets.

We frequently returned home by a different route, crossing the little park that lay between Garden and Chestnut Street, and headed south on Chestnut Street, and turned west on Park Street. Park Street ran west from Main Street and terminated on the west side of its bridge over the Cheney freight yards. The bridge had two paved lanes for autos, and a wooden plank walkway on its north side. A pipe fence separated the sidewalk from the road way, and a spiked fence guarded the edge which looked down on the tracks forty feet below. I had a morbid fear of heights when I was young, and always hugged the roadside pipe fence, refusing to get close to the edge. The road on the west side of the bridge split into two parts in a "U" shaped intersection, High Street proceeding to the left, and Walnut turning to the right. We followed Walnut Street westward, across Pine Street, past the southern end of Arch Street, across Cedar Street, and down the hill to Cooper Street. We turned north on Cooper Street, passing by Mr. Hyde's four-tenement, the duplex of Mr. and Mrs. Shields, and their daughter and son-in-law the Doelners, arriving home from the opposite direction from which we had departed.

Of course, as we got older, and our aunts got married and left home, we split the difference, and took the short cut that ran almost directly east and west. We went north past the Kelloms house and turned east on Ridge Street. We followed Ridge uphill past Cedar Street to its crest at Arch Street. Then straight downhill, across Pine Street and down the Tobin's driveway to a hole in the chain link fence that guarded the Cheney freight yards. We stumbled down the grass and dirt embankment, and crossed the several sets of railroad tracks that ran north and south, skirting freight cars and coal cars when we had to. There was a very wide gateway on the east side of the yard which fronted on New Street at the foot of Garden Street. The gateway was for the coal company delivery trucks, which backed up below the coal cars sitting on the elevated tracks on the south side of Center Street.

Sunday School started the first Sunday after Labor Day and continued nonstop until the last Sunday in June. Attendance was taken, and ornate enameled perfect attendance pins were awarded each year. The first year's pin was circular, and subsequent year bars were hung below on little gold chains. My keepsake box still contains my pin which I had managed to extend to five consecutive years. The church basement was one large hall with a raised stage at the end which was beneath the upstairs altar. The stage had a full dark green curtain which opened from the middle, and it was up there that I attended Erna Suchy's kindergarten class. She read bible stories to us, and passed out pictures and crayons for us to color them with. She always rejected my coloring efforts, saying that I could certainly do a better job. I was born extremely nearsighted, and had no idea that I was missing the lines. When my eyes were finally tested in the first grade, and my vision was corrected from 20/400 to 20/30, I finally realized what she was complaining about.

Sunday School began with a prayer and then a hymn sing led by The Superintendent, Al Lang, who's loud bass voice rocked the rafters. The curtain was then closed on the kindergarten class, and grades one through six grouped their metal folding chairs around their respective teachers. Grades seven and eight met upstairs in the last row of the sanctuary pews, and were led by the minister's wife, Mrs. Richter, and the church organist, Fred Werner. Pastor Richter conducted an adult class in the front pews. This was attended mostly by those high school students, who were not teaching Sunday School.

During the seventh and eighth grades, we all took two years of confirmation classes. They were held every Monday and Friday afternoon, following dismissal from our regular Junior High secular classes. Mrs. Richter taught the first year, and Pastor Richter the second. We used Luther's Small Catechism as a work book, and had to memorize practically all of it. We were also drilled in the Ten Commandments and Luther's explanation of each of them. On Palm Sunday of our fourteenth year, we all were confirmed during the regular church service. However, the preceding Sunday was known as Examination Sunday, and the whole class sat on the altar and recited answers to questions fired at each of us by Pastor Richter. No one ever flunked, because it was really a demonstration to prove that the Pastor was doing his job. For weeks prior to the examination, we were each assigned specific questions and rehearsed in our answers until we were all letter perfect. Every boy was dressed in his first new suit, and all the girls wore white dresses and stockings. We all became church members, and were rewarded with pen and pencil sets to kick off our entry that fall into high school.

I did not either teach Sunday School, or go to the Pastor's adult class, after I was confirmed. However, in the fall of my freshman year in high school, the Pastor called on me one Saturday, and asked me to take over the job of collecting and counting the Sunday School offering envelopes. I agreed to accept this job which had been done by our church Sexton, Ray Kulpinski, and for the next four years, I passed the collection plate to each class. I then retired to the church kitchen, where I opened the envelopes, and counted the pennies. There was a smattering of nickels and dimes, but the bulk of the contributions were pennies. At that time, Dad was running the package store, and had a coin collection, which he had amassed from the store change. I filled almost every empty slot in his penny folder from the Sunday School offering, trading duplicate nickels for needed pennies.

While I forsook Sunday School itself, I did attend church regularly, and even sang in the choir for four years. Although, to this day, I cannot "carry a tune in a bucket", there was a serious shortage of male singers at Concordia Lutheran. My brother Dick, inherited Mom's ear and voice, and sang in one capacity or another, all his life - church choirs, high school choirs, and barbershop. In 1944, the World War II draft had depleted the youth of Concordia, and Dick's was the sole tenor voice left in the church choir, so I was recruited to add body. I stood right next to Dick, and echoed the notes sung into my right ear. This was fine as long as the song was only four part harmony. One Sunday, Fred Werner picked and eight part oratorio which called for both a first and a second tenor. During rehearsals, I managed to give a semblance of harmonic second tenor tones, but come Sunday, the first tenor notes led directly from Dick's mouth to my ear and out my mouth also. I don't believe that anyone except Freddy Werner and I knew the difference.

Besides seeing to our religious education, Mom became a stalwart of Concordia Lutheran. She joined the Ladies Aid Society, and soon became their President. Next, she took over the Altar Guild, and prepared the wine (supplied by Schubert's Package Store, naturally) and the communion wafers for each and every Communion Service. She then was the first woman elected to the Lutheran Brotherhood, which was the governing body of each Lutheran congregation. When Pastor Richter resigned, she helped select the new Minister, (and every other one after that). After the church moved to new quarters on Parker Street, (after I had left home), she not only became Sexton, but got Dad to join the church, and become head usher! When we were young, Oscar Anderson would take my brothers and I to the annual Father and Son Banquet

The first non-relative that I met was Francis Harvey Sullivan, who lived across Cooper Street at number 46 with his widowed mother, Louise, and his grandparents Mr. and Mrs. Nelson. He was born in February 1928, and was never known as "Francis". During our years together his nickname went from "Sonny" to "Franny" to "Sully". Franny became the leader of a three member gang, and taught Dick and I everything we knew. I first remember playing with his oversize building blocks in his grandparents' living room. He subsequently taught us to build forts with toy blocks in our living room, or on our front porch, and play "war" with our lead soldiers. As we grew older, he taught us to play "cops and robbers" and "cowboys and indians" using toy pistols and the appropriate mouth-noises that represented the firing of guns. We played behind Grandpa Roth's garage, or in Mr. Nelson's chicken yard.

Every Saturday afternoon, we had to polish our shoes for Sunday School, and every Saturday night we took our weekly bath. On Sunday morning we donned our best clothes and our shined shoes and set off to Sunday School. On our return, we remained indoors, quietly reading the funny papers, and waiting for our Sunday Dinner, which cooked while Mom was in church, and was served at noon. After dinner, we were allowed to change into "play" clothes and go out to play quiet games in the yard. But we had to obey Mom's 11th Commandment: "NO GUNS ON SUNDAY". We could not play "war", we could not play "cops and robbers", and we could not play "cowboys and indians". Sunday was reserved for Church in the morning and "Quiet" in the afternoon.

NO GUNS ON SUNDAY

Chapter VI

The Neighborhood

Dick and Allan and I were the only children on our block on Cooper Street, between Walnut Street and Ridge Street. Mr. Hyde's huge four-tenement, rented only to adults, was on the corner of Walnut Street. Next door, Mr. & Mrs. Doelner, and Mr. & Mrs. Shields lived side by side in a double tenement owned by Mr. Shields, Mrs. Doelner's father. On the other side of us, Mrs. Kellom and her two "twenty-something" daughters, Evelyn and Marian, occupied the lot on the corner of Ridge Street. In 1936, Markie Moriarty married Marian, and moved in with the ladies.

Across Ridge Street, the corner lot was occupied by my sixth grade teacher, Helena Booth, and her brother, who was a ranger at Highland Park. Their house was on Ridge Street, and their large side lawn sloped upwards from a cement wall running along Cooper Street. Next came the two story tenement where my Cousin Walter lived until they moved next door into a single house. The two lots from there to West Center Street contained tenements occupied by the Surowics and the Kurliwitzs. Al and Irene and Chet were all older than we were.

Across the street, the block from Walnut Street to Summer Street was occupied by Renn's Tavern and house, and Donnely's two stores, their house and apartment. There were no children in either complex. Sully Sullivan lived across the street, at the foot of Ridge Street, next door to Grandpa Schubert's house. Then came two houses owned by Schutz cousins, and then the tenement owned by the Helms. Roy was the oldest child on the street, and served in the army during World War II.

Allan and Walter were too young for us to allow them in our group, and Al, Chet, and Roy wouldn't allow us in theirs, so Sully and Dick and I became a gang of three. Sully, of course, being the oldest, was the leader. At first we only played in each other's house and yard. We spent more time at Sully's house than ours because in addition to a much larger front porch, we had the use of the Nelson's sun porch and living room, the Sullivan's living room, and Sully's bedroom. Outdoor space was more ample also, since Sully's grandfather's house had two large side lawns, a lilac bordered back yard, and a fenced in chicken house and yard, Mr. Nelson also had a huge vegetable garden, with all the standards and some exotics. I saw my first huge purple eggplant in his garden.

When we went across the street to play, for some reason, we did not use the door bell, but sat on the front steps, calling out "Sully" at intervals until he appeared from upstairs. Sully, being more sophisticated, would give a piercing whistle in front of our house until one of us responded. Indoors, we played whatever board game was in fashion. Sully had a Monopoly Game, and we had "Easy Money". We always played by the "leaders" rules. Monopoly took all day to play, because by Sully's reckoning, monopolies played no part in improving a property. You could improve any lot, even if you only owned one of a color. However, you had to land on it five times to get a hotel. I don't think we finished more than one game each year. Sully also introduced us to several card games, hearts, rummy, fan-tan, and blackjack

Out doors, we played with toy guns, (except on Sundays!) and played "catch" with whatever ball was in season. With a tennis ball, we played "Sidewalk Tennis" or "Nigger Babies". I know that this phrase is racist, but that is what called in the 1930's. Whoever was "It" threw the ball up on the roof of Grandpa Roth's house, and called out someone's name. That person tried to catch the ball before it hit the ground. The others ran, but not too far. If the ball was caught, the catcher threw it back up, and called another name. You had to be close enough to run back if your name was called.

If the ball hit the ground first, you kept running until the person whose name had been called last had gotten the ball and yelled, "1, 2, 3, Stop!" He then took three steps toward someone, and tried to hit him with the ball. If the target was hit, he got a "baby". If the target was missed, the thrower got a "baby". Whoever got the "baby" was then "It" and threw the ball back up on the roof. When anyone had gotten three babies, the game took a sadistic interlude. He had to stand against the garage door with his back to the others, who took turns pelting him with the tennis ball. Each player got three shots, including misses. If the target yelled "Heads" and you hit him in the head, he got to peg the ball at you. When everyone had their turn, the game started over again from scratch.

When we played at Sully's, the roof was too high for us to reach, so we tossed the ball against the back wall of the Sullivan's dining room on the second floor. Since there was a walk-in basement at the rear of the house, the wall was really three stories up. The ball rebounded faster off the wall and was harder to catch. The game ended for good at Sully's house the day that I made a brilliant one-handed catch, and pegged it through the kitchen window, I ran home and hid, but was sent back later with the cash for glass replacement. From then on, we only played the game at our house.

As we grew older, we widened our horizons, and our circle of friends. We were only three short blocks from the Washington School with its playground equipment. There were swings, seesaws, and climbing bars. The West Side Branch of the Mary Cheney Library, that we were introduced to at an early age by Sully' mother, was housed in the West Side Recreation building, adjacent to the school. The Twilight League played all its semi-pro baseball games on summer weekday evenings. The teams were sponsored by local clubs and businesses, such as the Bluefields Club, the British American Club, Moriarity Brothers Gas Station, and the North End Fire Chiefs. Our favorite game-time snack was a frozen Milky Way or Jolly Jack candy bar from Nick's refreshment stand, which was only open during league games.

The Zion Lutheran Church stood at the top of Cooper Street on the southwest corner of High Street. High Street went steeply down hill beside the church, and there was only a large sand bank behind the church, which was topped by a wooded area. These woods extended southward behind the houses on Cooper Street, and emerged on Cooper Street across from the end of Pleasant Street. These woods were crisscrossed by well worn dirt paths, where we built ground level huts from tree branches. One path led beside a huge walnut tree, whose nuts we feasted on in season.

In the opposite direction, we would cross West Center Street and Center Street, and follow the short street next to the Red & White Store northward to the St. James Cemetery. We cut across the cemetery, and followed the path into Hilliard's Woods. The path met the babbling brook which was the outflow from Center Springs Pond. At first we only played in and around the brook, but eventually we followed it all the way to Hilliard's Pond. We used to pick Lady Slippers in these woods, and Uncle Benny used to harvest Water Cress from the brook. The woods extended northward to Middle Turnpike, and our forested playground is now the Manchester Parkade shopping center.

In the summer of 1936, the three of us were allowed to go to Globe Hollow to swim. We would go up Cooper Street to the four acre lots, cut across them and go down Cooper Hill Street to Pine Street. We would follow Pine Street south, past Dad's timekeeping office in Cheney's Pine Street Plant, to Hartford Road. We would cross the street, and duck behind Cheney's main office and follow Tar Brook through "Mary Cheney's Garden" to South Main Street. We would then climb a fence and cross some farmer's cow pasture to Mt. Nebo Street and the rear entrance to Globe Hollow. The cow pasture was in active use, and we used to throw rocks into fresh "cow flops" to see them splatter. We wore our swim trunks under our shorts, and carried our towels. On the way home we carried our wet trunks wrapped in our wet towels. This was a comforting bundle to carry on hot days, as we could wipe the sweat off our foreheads and out of our eyes.

One Fourth of July, we went swimming in the afternoon, and then went to the fireworks display at the old golf lots on East Center Street. I forgot that I didn't have any underwear on, and froze my butt! One hot summer day, Dad saw us passing by, and he and Bobby Noren, his fellow timekeeper played hooky and went with us.

In Winter, we stayed close to home, because the best sledding hill in the whole world was Summer Street! As soon as the snow plows cleared the hill after the season's first snow fall, every kid on the West Side got out his sled, waxed the steel runners, and put "Three-in-One" oil on the bolt holding the steering bar. Sitting on the sled, and steering with your feet was for sissies. You had to get a running start, and dive headfirst to the roadbed, lying prone with the sled beneath you, and your hands moved quickly to the steering bar. This was called a "Belly Whopper", and enabled you to get up enough speed to reach the bottom of the hill

As long as there was snow on the hill, someone was out "sliding". After the snow plows had finished every street in town, they would become sand trucks and retrace their route, sanding the hills to allow cars to climb them. There were no automatic sanders in those days. Two men with shovels stood on the sand in the back of the truck, and alternated flinging a shovel full of sand across the roadbed. Of course, sleds do not slide well on sand, so as soon as the truck left, we all got out our snow shovels, and shoveled snow from the snow banks the plows had created, back into the road on top of the sand. All motorists soon learned to avoid Summer Street hill.

In 1935, Roosevelt created the WPA or Works Projects Administration, which funneled money to local governments to hire the unemployed for public-works projects, such as road building and repair. Manchester was the recipient of funds for several projects. Every project that used WPA funds, advertised that fact with sawhorse signs emblazoned with WPA in big letters. Most workers were unskilled, and as many as possible were put on jobs, resulting in a lot of stand-around straw bosses. Projects moved so slowly that everyone said the WPA stood for We Poke Along! In the Winter of 1938, after the first snow storm, two men showed up on Summer Street with WPA signs. One stood at the top of the hill, and one at the bottom, and directed traffic. Cars were held up until the sledders had cleared the hill, and then allowed to proceed. There had never been an accident on the hill since the turn of the century, because both sledders and drivers knew enough to watch out. However, two local families ate for several weeks on WPA money.

The other outdoor winter activity was ice skating. One block north of Center Street was Center Springs Park, and Center Spring Pond. The Town maintained a skating lodge, with huge log-burning fireplaces on the north shore of the pond. As soon as the ice was thick enough, the lodge was opened and the skating flag was raised. Whenever it snowed, the town snow plows would clear the ice so skating could resume. The lodge had a hot-line phone, so you could check on the status. Dick and Sully enjoyed skating, but I had weak ankles, and no sense of balance, and spent more time in front of the fireplace than on the ice.

Any Saturday of any month of the year, might find us at the movies. There were two theaters in Manchester, the State on main Street, and the Circle on Oak Street. The State carried all the first-run movies, and even though admission was only 10 cents, dimes were hard to come by in the 1930's, and we only saw the "biggies". The first movie that I remember seeing in 1936 was Captains Courageous, starring Spencer Tracey. We saw him again in 1937 in Boys Town, the same year that we saw Snow White. By the time the Wizard of Oz came out in 1939, money was more plentiful, and we were seasoned movie goers.

After an early lunch, we headed up Walnut Street to Park Street, crossing the bridge over Cheney's railroad tracks, and turned northward when we reached Main Street. The movie started at one o'clock, but you had to be in line by 12:30. The line stretched from the box office southward past the Five and Ten Cent Store and around the corner. The 5&10 candy counter was the closest counter to the front door, and anyone with a spare dime carried a bagful of candy into the theater, which in those days had no candy counter of its own and NO popcorn. Besides the feature attraction, we also saw a "B" movie, a cartoon, and a newsreel. In 1940, the Circle started Saturday afternoon serials like Flash Gordon and Roy Rogers, to woo and keep the patronage of the teenage set.

Besides 10 cent movies, other "depression" prices were also low. Bread was 10 cents a loaf, and you could get a full dozen donuts at the first National for 13 cents. Even after Billy Pagani deserted Grandpa Roth for Donnelly's side of the street, we still got our 25 cent haircuts from him. However, when he raised his price to 35 cents in 1936, we switched to the Walnut Street barber for two months, until Billy agreed to cut our hair for the old price, if Dad paid him on the sly, and we didn't tell anyone else. It was during those two months that my life-long aversion to coconut had its inception. As a reward for sitting still, I received an orange, coconut-filled lollipop, which I ate in the hot sun on the three-block journey home. I arrived home with an upset stomach, a splitting headache, and a psychosomatic allergy to coconut.

As we got older, our gang of three grew in numbers children our age moved onto the West Side. The Hodge family arrived on Summer Street, with Harold, who was Sully's age, and Marshall, who was mine. In 1937, Sully joined cub scouts, and met Buddy Chips, who also lived on Summer Street, and whose father was cub scoutmaster. The cub scouts met at the South Methodist Church, on the corner of Main Street and Hartford Road. Dick joined the following year, and I joined the year after, a pattern that repeated itself with the boy scouts in 1940, and DeMolay in 1943.

In 1940, George and Lois Bonnet moved into the tenement vacated by Uncle Benny four years earlier. George was Sully's age and Lois was my age, and object of my first, unrequited, "puppy love crush". They stayed until George graduated in 1946, and then moved back to Pennsylvania. During the war years, George worked at Jones & Hurley, and Sully and Dick worked at the First National. The five of us, and Mary Condon, from Walnut Street, would hang out evenings on the Booth's wall, on the corner of Ridge Street. We used to play "Truth, Dare, Consequences, Promise, or Repeat". Each of us sequentially chose one of the five categories, and had to follow the instructions of whoever was "It". Since we were all maturing teenagers, Dare and Consequences, usually involved kissing.

Bobby Donnelly, who was Dick's age, used to spend summers living with his grandmother and aunts, across the street from us. We used to play on Donnelly's front porch, where Bobby would regale us with stories that he made up about a fictitious character named McGinty. Every story ended with the accusation: "You're impossible!" and the response: "No sir, I'm McGinty!" Bobby contacted Polio when he was fourteen, and after two years on crutches, walked with a limp. Charlie Trotter, who lived on the corner of Cedar Street and Ridge Street, also had a polio attack, and spent the remainder of his life wearing a leg brace.

We had our share of misfits on the West Side. The Carson's two story tenement on Ridge Street backed up to our northern property line. The Carsons lived upstairs and rented the lower to a succession of short-term families. The Spencers, whose son Frankie would take off his sun suit and walk home naked, lived there for a few years, followed by a family whose son "Red" had the foulest mouth in town. Their most notorious tenant was "Jackie Bumblesauce", who was born with a harelip and a cleft palate. His rejection because of his speech problems, warped his personality, and he turned to petty crimes in the neighborhood and Main Street stores. The last I heard of him, he was in jail for grand theft auto. His real name will be kept confidential.

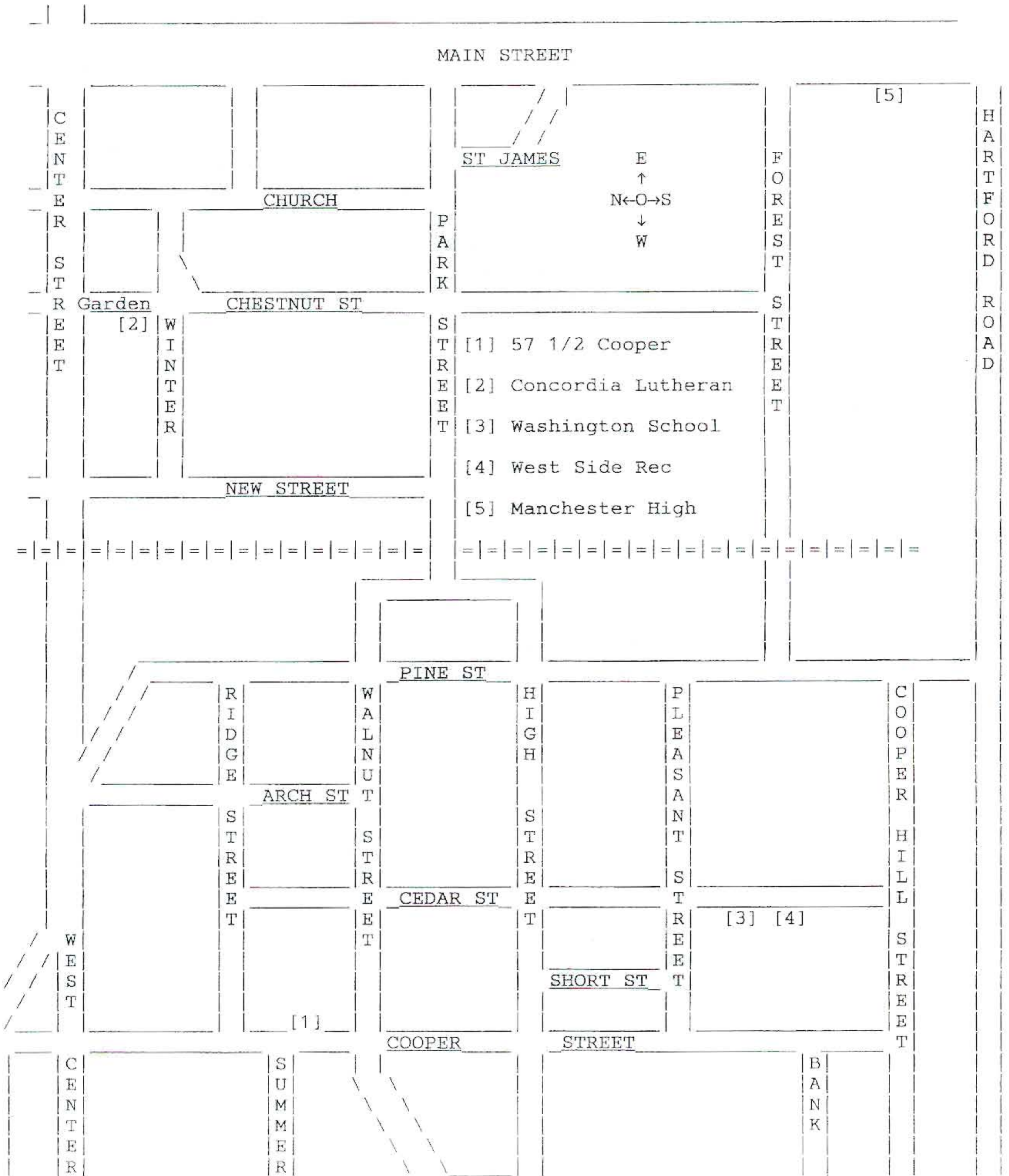
Harold Binks, the village idiot, lived on the corner of Cooper and Pleasant Streets. He never went to school, but hung around the four acre lots; cheer leading for whatever baseball team took his fancy, and applauding with flat palms and splayed fingers. A common joke, in those days, was to ask someone to spell "ipso". When they did, you would say "Then, why don't you open a gas station?" For those of you who are too young to remember, "Exxon", in those days was "ESSO". If, you asked Harold where the nearest gas station was, he would open his fly, and show you. He finally ended up in the Mansfield Training School for the dysfunctional.

Cozy Coles, who lived on Bank Street, was the handyman and delivery boy for John Hurley, first at the First National, and then at Jones & Hurley. When neighborhood ladies bought more groceries than they could carry, he would accompany them to their home with their groceries in his little red wagon. His ordinary tasks were taking empty boxes, first to Grandpa's dump, and then to a dumpster, and sweeping the side walk. He would whistle while he worked. A monotonous four note sequence, consisting of three high notes followed by one low note, which every kid on the West Side could imitate perfectly. (It will be demonstrated only on request.)

Billy Pagani outlived all the other store owners and storekeepers in our neighborhood. When Mr. Donnelly died, his store became Jones' Market, and in 1942 became Jones and Hurley, when John Hurley quit as manager of the First National. After two interim managers, my uncle, Joe Wright took over the First National on his return from army service in WW II. When First National pulled the plug two years later, Joe opened his own store. Joe only managed to survive a few years on his own, and the store was rented to a used furniture dealer. Grandpa Schubert retired in 1955, Grandma Roth died in 1959, and my folks sold the package store. Jones and Hurley both died, but Billy moved his barber shop into Grandpa Schubert's shoe shop, where he remained far into the 1980's.

In September 2003, I returned to Manchester for my 55th high school reunion. Jones & Hurley was a police substation, the First National was a tattoo parlor, and the occupants of Grandpa Schubert's house were arrested for growing marijuana in their cellar. We drove down Cooper Street with the windows closed and the doors locked!

THE NEIGHBORHOOD



From Cooper Street to Main Street

Figure VI - 1

NO GUNS ON SUNDAY

Chapter VII

The Town of Manchester

The Connecticut River rises in the northern region of New Hampshire and flows southward, forming the boundary between New Hampshire and Vermont. It separates the rural western one third of Massachusetts from the industrial eastern two thirds, and the seat of state political power. When we lived in Pittsfield, from 1954 to 1959, there was a movement afoot to secede from Massachusetts and join upstate New York as the fifty first state. Massachusetts had just passed a state income tax law, and New Yorkers working at General Electric in Pittsfield complained about "taxation without representation".

Leaving Massachusetts at Springfield, the River bisects the state of Connecticut, entering Long Island Sound at Saybrook. Hartford, the State Capital, occupies the western bank of the river, twenty miles south of the state line, almost dead center in the state. The city was founded in 1635 by English settlers, who purchased the land from the local Indians. Hartford was governed by a General Assembly, created and staffed by the Congregational Church. In 1640 the Assembly bought three miles on the east side of the river from the Podunk Indians, which became East Hartford Parish. In 1672, twenty-five square miles to the east were also bought from Chief Joshua, and added to East Hartford, which had become self-governing because there were no bridges across the Connecticut River. This five mile by five mile square area was incorporated in 1772 as Orford Parish, (within East Hartford), and in 1823 became the Town of Manchester.

The first Manchester homesteaders settled in three different locations around several brooks and rivers, all of which flow from East to West, and meet at Laurel Lake on the East Hartford line. Three distinct communities evolved: "The North End" along the Hockanum River; Manchester Green along the Lydall Brook in the East; and the "South End, or "Cheneyville" along the Hop Brook in the South. The first industries used the water power from these streams to drive their sawmills, gristmills, paper mills, and various machine shops.

When Manchester became a town in 1823, it had a population of 1,400 people. There were 22,000 inhabitants in 1930, when I was born, and 34,000 in 1952, when I left town, to seek my fortune elsewhere. The Hilliards in the North, and the Pitkins and Woodbridges in the East built factories which helped Manchester to grow, but the establishment of a silk factory in the South by the Cheney Brothers was the main reason for the growth and expansion of Manchester.

Manchester is bounded on all four sides by much smaller towns, East Hartford to the West, South Windsor and Vernon to the North, Bolton to the East, and Glastonbury to the South. The town is bisected from North to South by Main Street, dividing the town into the East and West Sides. Center Street meets East Center Street at Main Street's highest point, and divides the town into the North End, and the South End. The North End appropriated the name "Manchester" and the South End went by the name of South Manchester until 1927. In that year, South Manchester High School, became Manchester High, yet, to this day their annual graduation yearbook is still called the "SOMANHIS".

The Cheney Silk Dynasty was created at the south end of Main Street and ran to the West along both sides of Hartford Road. Closest to Main Street, were the mansions surrounded by immense green lawns which were constructed for all the Cheney Brothers and their descendants. Hop Brook ran along the south side of Hartford Road, and all the first silk mills were along the brook, utilizing the water power to drive their machinery. With the invention of electric generators, the factories expanded to the north, encompassing several city blocks.

In 1920, Cheney Brothers employed 4,670 workers, out of a population of 18,370. Sales in 1923, the year of Manchester's Centennial Celebration, were \$23,000,000. In order to support the growth of their silk business, Cheney's had to develop all the necessary utilities, as there was no government infrastructure to develop them. They built "cottages" and dormitories for their employees. They created an electric company, a water company, and a gas company to deliver these services to their factories and their employee's homes. They also built every school in the ninth school district to educate, first their own children, and then the children of every citizen in that district. This included Washington Elementary School, Barnard Junior High School, and Manchester High School, all of which I attended.

In their heydays, Cheney's had a New York City Salesroom and staff, and they even had an exhibit in the Louvre in Paris. My Grandfather, my Father, my Mother, and several uncles all worked for Cheney's at one time or another. The high point of Cheney's empire was 1923, and then several factors caused the decline in profits, and eventual demise of Cheney Brothers. In the twenties, while the dress industry was overproducing, the bottom dropped out of the silk market, and rayon was introduced as a substitute. Then the Depression struck all businesses, and in 1934 Cheney had to file for bankruptcy reorganization.

They had earlier sold all their utility companies to statewide utility companies and all the ninth district schools to the Town of Manchester. In 1937 the Reconstruction Finance Corporation forced them to sell off all their tenant houses. The houses were sold at auction, and the auctioneers went up and down every street on the West Side selling to the highest bidders. Sixty-one of these were sold to their current occupants, several of which were on Cooper Street. Local businessmen with assets took part, Matt Moriarity, the owner of Moriarity Brothers gas station, bought thirty-three; and Bill Pagani, the Cooper Street barber, bought four. In 1938, Cheney's started Pioneer Parachute, with 35 employees. By 1943 over 1,000 people were employed making parachutes for the US Air Force. My Uncle Benny was President of Pioneer, when he retired in 1965.

Railroad service between Hartford and the North End of Manchester began in 1849, and in 1851, the tracks were extended eastward to Willimantic. Ten years later, the South Manchester Railroad was built to extend rail service from the main line in the North End, two miles southward to the Cheney silk mills. The line not only supplied raw materials for the mills, and delivered finished goods to Hartford and New York, but also carried passengers. The South Manchester station was located on Cheney property, at Elm and Forest Streets, allowing Cheney employees from the North End to commute to and from work. Prior to the construction of South Manchester High School, students from South Manchester were transported round trip to Hartford Public High School each school day.

While the North and South stations provided easy rail service to Hartford for those living near them, others had to rely on horse and buggy services to get to the station in Depot Square at the North End. This was especially true of all the Main Street Merchants, since the South Manchester line ran several blocks to the west of the business district. In 1895, an electric trolley line was completed, connecting the center of Manchester to Hartford, with many intermediate stops along the way, (one at the north end of Cooper Street). By 1908, trolley lines radiated from the Center, south to Hartford Road, north to Rockville via Depot Square, and east to Manchester Green. The tracks ran down the center of Main Street, one of the widest streets ever built, with diagonal parking and a travel lane on each side of the tracks. The trolleys continued in service through the 1930's, giving way to busses in the 1940's.

Cheney Brothers was a benevolent monarchy. Emily Cheney Neville wrote and published "Traveler from a Small Kingdom" about her childhood in one of the Cheney mansions on Hartford Road. While they kept wages as low as possible, fighting all attempts at unionizing their plants, they provided the town with recreation facilities. To maintain a constant water supply, Cheney's built four reservoirs,

the last of which was the Globe Hollow Reservoir, to the east of South Main Street. On the western shore of the reservoir they constructed the Manchester Country Club, with its golf course, and tennis courts.

Below the reservoir's dam, on the north side, the Globe Hollow Swimming Pool was built. It had its own dam, and could be drained during the winter months. Bathhouses with changing rooms and showers were provided, along with a wire basket checking system in the pool office, for your shoes, clothes, and towel. There was a small dock on the deep west end, and a permanently anchored raft in the center. The shallow east end had a sandy beach and bottom, and a fountain, and was separated from the deep end by a wire cable. You had to demonstrate to the lifeguards that you could swim to the raft, before you were allowed past the cable. I started going to Globe Hollow with Dick and Sully when I was six years old, but never made it to the raft until the summer between Junior High and High School, when I was fourteen.

Across the street from Globe Hollow was the Mt. Nebo athletic complex, with a football field, a soccer field, and a baseball diamond. There were no changing rooms at Mt. Nebo, so the usage of the fields by the high school varied with the season and the teams. In the fall, the soccer team changed at the East Side Rec, which was part of the high school complex, and practiced and played their home games at Mt. Nebo. Since the football team had to wear their uniforms including helmets and shoulder pads, for daily practice, they practiced at the West Side Four-Acre Lot, and changed at the West Side Rec. For home games, they changed at the East Side Rec, and were bussed to and from Mt. Nebo just like for an away game. In the spring, since the track team practiced and had their meets on the West Side, the baseball team had to practice at Mt. Nebo, but they played their home games at the Four-Acre Lot.

Cheney Brothers built an educational and recreational complex at the southern end of Main Street. On the west side of Main Street was the High School, with two tennis courts. Across Main Street on the east side, between School and Wells Streets they constructed "Education Square", consisting of Barnard Junior High, the Franklin Building, (part of the High School), and the East Side Rec. The Rec contained a swimming pool, a gymnasium, and an indoor track. All of these facilities were used by High School students as part of their classes. Across School Street from the Rec was Howell Cheney Technical School, which was attached to the High School.

On the West Side, the Four-Acre Lot was two blocks south of our house on Cooper Street, which formed the western boundary. Cooper Hill Street, Cedar Street, and Pleasant Street were the other sides of the rectangle. At the southeast corner where Cooper Hill meets Cedar, stands the original Cheney two-room School, built first for their own children and then expanded to include the children of other prominent families. By 1930, it was the McGill Paint Store, in 1970 it became the Lutz Children's Museum, and today, it is the home of the Manchester Historical Society. Farther north, along Cedar Street are the West Side Rec and the Washington Elementary School, the successor to the Cheney School. The complex also included a baseball field, a fifth of a mile cinder track, two tennis courts, and a playground with swings, and seesaws. The first twelve years of my life were spent there, either in school, or on the playground. I also spent three seasons there, butting heads with my teammates on the Manchester High football team.

The North End was supplied with the YMCA, and Union Field, supported by the Hockanum and Hilliard Manufacturers, prominent among whom was the Orford Soap Company, who manufactured Bon Ami Cleanser, and marketed it with a picture of a baby chick and the motto "Hasn't scratched yet!" Other early businesses included the Pitkin Glass Works, and the Spencer Arms, manufacturer of the Spencer Repeating Rifle, developed by Christopher Spencer in Cheney's machine shop. The rifle played a prominent role in the Civil War, after the rifle was test fired by President Lincoln, who had the War Department order 222,000 of them.

In 1890, Manchester' retail district started its move northward along Main Street from the corner of Main and Charter Oak Street, (the eastern extension of Hartford Road). The Watkins Brothers bought the furniture department of Cheney's General store, and moved it to the corner of Main and Oak. House and Hale opened their department store on the other corner of Oak Street. And Cheney Brothers built the Cheney Block, which became the home of both The Manchester Savings Bank and the Manchester Trust Company. All the businesses were on the east side of Main Street, since Cheney Brothers owned the west side of Main Street from Hartford Road to St. James Street.

By the 1930's, Main Street was solid businesses from Charter Oak Street to the "Center". The Odd Fellows Building stood at the southeast corner of Main and East Center. Lefty Bray's pool hall was in the basement, fronting on Main, and the Center Drug Store was upstairs, fronting on East Center Street. Many after school hours were wasted in both these emporiums during our high school years. There were two movie theaters in Manchester, The Globe on Oak Street, who had the monopoly on Saturday afternoon serials, starring Buck Rogers and Roy Rogers, and others; and the State Theater on Main Street. The line for tickets to the State's Saturday movies backed up past the Woolworth's Five & Dime, whose candy counter did a land office business. The State showed all the classics, such as Snow White, The Wizard of Oz, and Boys Town. The State had a stage below the movie screen, and from time to time staged live performances. High School graduation was held in the State, and the graduates marched up Main Street from the High School wearing their caps and gowns.

Every Saturday, my Mother walked to Main Street to Podgrove's Meat Market to buy a roast for Sunday dinner. It was usually a "pot roast" of beef, or a pork roast. Sometimes it was a roasting chicken. Whatever meat was left over on Sunday was supper for the rest of the week. Of course as we got older and bigger, less and less meat was ever left over. She also usually bought hamburger and hot dogs for the end of the week. She also shopped for clothing and other household supplies, and we always greeted her return with "What did you bring me?" All the stores were open on Thursday and Saturday evenings until 9:00 o'clock. Grandpa and Grandma Roth used to do their shopping on Thursday evening, in Grandpa's 1928 Willys Knight. After Grandpa died in 1937, Grandma used to walk to Main Street on Saturday's also, while she and Mom took turns minding the store. We called going to Main Street: "Going Upstreet". Interestingly, Emily Cheney reports in her book that the Cheney's used the same term.

On the west side of Main Street, St. James Catholic Church was between St. James Street and Park Street. There was one block of stores on the west side of Main, just north of Park Street, which included Mom's favorite store; Montgomery Wards. Almost all our clothing came from there, either directly, or from their extensive catalog. The rest of Main Street, all the way to the Center was, and still is Center Park, with manicured lawns, trees, paths, and a water fountain topped by a statue of wrestling bears. In 1937, the Mary Cheney Library was built in the park, fronting on Main Street. It was one of two major libraries serving the town. The other was the Whiton Memorial Library in the North End, founded by the estate of Dr. Whiton, a local doctor.

The northwest corner of the Center contains the Town Hall, the Center Congregational Church, and the Lincoln Elementary School. The Greek revival United States Post Office with its columns and stone steps lords it over the northeast corner of the Center. Main Street slopes downhill from the Center in both the north and south directions. North of the Center, on the west side of Main, just below the hill's crest is beautiful Center Springs Park, with pathways following Bigelow Brook as it winds downhill to Center Springs Pond. The pond had a rustic skating lodge with a huge fire place, and was the ice skating Mecca for the whole town. It used to be a fishing hole, until the laundry on Summit Street polluted it with waste water.

Farther north, also on the west side of Main Street were the Manchester Memorial Hospital, and the State Armory. My brothers and I were all born in the hospital, and I returned there twice, once in 1936 to have my tonsils removed, and then in 1952 for an emergency appendectomy. While the National Guard was billeted in the armory during World War I & II, it was mostly used for high school basketball games, dances, and as the main polling place for the town.

There was a small cluster of stores and businesses where Main Street crossed Middle turnpike, but from there to its termination at Depot Square, Main Street was mostly residential. North of Depot Square, the remainder of Manchester was mostly rural, with dairy farms, tobacco farms, and fruit orchards. The same was true of Manchester south of Hartford Road. Today, Manchester is mostly a bedroom town, with its citizens commuting to Hartford, the "Insurance Capital," or East Hartford and South Windsor, the bailiwick of United Aircraft's Pratt & Whitney and Hamilton Standard.

The Manchester Evening Herald was founded as a Weekly in 1881 and in 1914 became a Monday through Saturday Daily. I don't know who coined it, or if the town ever officially adopted it, but six days a week, the Herald proclaimed, under its front page banner, what many people believed to be an accurate description of "Our Town":

"The Town of Manchester, the City of Village Charm"

NO GUNS ON SUNDAY

Chapter VIII

School Days

I attended Washington Elementary School for seven and one half years. In 1935, children born in the first six months of the year were allowed to start school in January, while those born in the last six months started in September. Therefore, every grade through high school had two sections, labeled 1A, 1B, 2A, 2B ... 12A, 12B. The A sections changed grade every January, and graduated in December. The B sections changed grade in September, and graduated in June. Being born in March, I started school in Miss Johnson's Kindergarten class in January of 1935, and stayed there for a full year.

Washington School had four classrooms on each of two floors, but its eight rooms could not accommodate all the split grades. Kindergarten was located in the adjacent West Side Recreation Building, along with one first grade section, and one third grade section. The "Rec" had three floors. The top floor had two classrooms and a gymnasium with basketball hoops, and a stage. The gym was used by the school as an auditorium for guest speakers, and the annual Christmas Pageant. The main floor was at street level and hosted the Kindergarten, the West Side branch of the town library, the Rec office, a lounge and a pool (billiards) room. The basement level contained a bowling alley, and men's and ladies' locker rooms, with showers and toilets. The lot sloped down an embankment, so that there were windows in the locker rooms, and an outside entrance.

There was only one Kindergarten section, and students came and went every six months. Of course, since all we did was play with blocks or clay, color pictures, and listen to stories, it made no difference. The main functions of Kindergarten were social interface and toilet training. The Kindergarten was at the south end of the building, right above the ladies' locker room, and the men's locker room was at the north end. On my first trip to the boy's room, I descended the stairs, and headed north alongside the bowling alley, which was only lit by window light at each end. The farther north I went, the darker and scarier it got. At the darkest point, I turned around and returned to the classroom, where I flooded the floor. Before Miss Johnson sent me home, she had an older boy show me where the boy's room really was.

In January 1936, I was promoted to Miss Carter's first grade section 1A, on the third floor of the Rec. Here I learned to pledge allegiance to the flag, and I read about Dick and Jane and Spot. This term, I had throat and stomach problems which ended when I had my tonsils removed in the Manchester Memorial Hospital. In March, the Connecticut River flooded East Hartford, and flood refugees were housed in the Rec, sleeping on the floors. We had half days of school, sharing classrooms in the main school building, until the refugees returned to their homes.

In September, my classmates and I moved to the first floor of Washington, to complete the second half of first grade. It was discovered that I couldn't see the blackboard, and at the age of six, I got my first pair of eyeglasses. The first day that I wore my horn-rimmed specs to school, I was called "four-eyes". I immediately took them off, and stashed them in my pocket. My eyesight was 20/400, and when you are that nearsighted, you live in a narrow world of your own making. When I got into class I put the glasses inside my desk, taking them out only to copy the assignment from the blackboard, and immediately returning them. In my myopic naiveté*, I assumed that no one could see me doing this. The teacher asked, "Roger, why don't you wear your glasses?" I said, "I forgot them, I left them home." Miss Carter, being smarter than me said, "Well, then go home and get them."... I reached into my desk, put my glasses on and said, "Oh, they were in my desk, and I didn't know it." From then on I wore my glasses, every day for the rest of my life.

I was born nearsighted, and until my eyes were tested, I didn't see what others saw, and didn't know what I was missing. There was an eclipse of the moon one night in the summer of 1936, just after dark. One of the neighborhood kids said "Look at the moon!" I looked, but it was just the silvery blob that I always saw. On summer evenings, the adults used to sit on the front lawn to stay cool, and we kids would lie on a blanket, stargazing. I had no idea what the Milky Way was, that they all talked about. I could see only the moon and brightest stars. My Father used to tell how he discovered my nearsighted*ness. In 1936, he was helping my Grandfather Roth renovate the small store, so that it could be rented out. The floor had to be replaced, and Dad was pulling the nails out of the old floorboards, with a crowbar. Dick and I were supposed to pick up the nails, but only Dick was working. Dad says he realized that I wasn't picking up any nails, because I couldn't see any. He took me and a handful of nails upstairs to Mom, threw the nails on the kitchen floor, and told me to pick them up. When I just stood there doing nothing, they decided that I just might need glasses.

By the second grade, I had the 1930's version of bifocals. I now had a set of steel rimmed glasses for normal use, with a pair of stronger clip-ons for reading. I was now known as six-eyes. I have worn some form of glasses ever since, except in bed, in swimming, and playing football. Since I couldn't see any faces at ten yards, I learned to recognize my teammates by their size, bulk, and the shape of their heads; a talent which I still employ to distinguish friends and neighbors.

Having received all "Goods" and "Satisfactories" on my first grade report cards, in January of 1937, I was promoted to Miss Benson's second grade class. In 1937, the School Board decided to do away with the overly expensive A and B sections, and start every new student in September, and graduate everyone in June. To do this required some students to take three semesters of their current grade, and others to move ahead after only one semester. Sully got moved ahead, Dick spent three semesters in the third grade, and I spent three semesters in second grade. To top it off, Miss Benson got promoted to third grade when I did, and I spent five terms with her in the same classroom.

There were no lunchrooms in elementary schools in those days, and we walked home for lunch and back again for the afternoon session, each day. Each classroom had a cloakroom, with enough hooks to accommodate everyone's winter coats or rain coats, and enough floor space for arctics and rubbers. Each student had a desk with capacity for all the text books needed for the year. Very little homework, if any, was assigned in the elementary grades, and we didn't have book bags or backpacks. Teachers, not parents, were expected to educate every student in the class.

At the start of each session, we had to line up on the sidewalk in front of the north entrance, boys on one side, and girls on the other. Two sixth grade girls were appointed monitors, and they stood at the top of the outside steps, making sure that we stayed in single file, and didn't crowd onto the steps. When the bell rang, they opened the doors and allowed us to enter. Each session had a fifteen minute recess, which we spent playing outdoors. The teachers took turns supervising the outdoor activity. Sometimes they organized games such as "Red Rover" and "Double Thirty", but mostly we were on our own. They older boys played softball, the younger ones played marbles, and the girls played jacks and jump rope. We had to line up again to reenter the school after recess.

Until 1939, there was a school milk program. Half pint bottles of both white and chocolate milk could be bought for 2*, and had to be ordered by the week. White milk was free to those children below some poverty level. We were too poor to buy milk, but not poor enough to get it free. When extra bottles were delivered, they were offered free to any takers. Chocolate milk was always oversubscribed, and I never got chosen. White milk was always under subscribed, so I could get a free bottle whenever there were extras.

In September 1939, I finally left Miss Benson's first floor room and spent the fourth grade in Mrs. Faulkner's room on the second floor. Here, while rehearsing for the school concert, my ego received a crushing blow. Mrs. Faulkner said that someone was singing off-key. Francis Munson, who was older, and was repeating fourth grade, and whose voice was changing, accused me. When I stopped singing, so did he, and the problem was solved. I was told to "just move your mouth" during rehearsals and the actual concert. Can you imagine how traumatic this was to a ten-year-old?

Once a week, every elementary class in Manchester was visited by either Miss Lutz, the art teacher, or Miss Barton, the singing teacher. Miss Barton let me sing in the sixth grade, as we rehearsed Christmas Carols for the Christmas Pageant. When I was in Mrs. Kenny's fifth grade class, I played a shepherd, and Dick was one of the three kings. Miss Lutz was an institution in Manchester, and to this day the Lutz Children's museum is named after her.

There were so many children born in 1930 on the West Side, there were two sixth grade classes in 1941. My teacher was Miss Booth, who lived on the corner of Ridge Street. Miss Shay, the Washington Principal, taught the other class, but to give us a semblance of Junior High, we would change rooms for one hour each day. We took geography with Miss Shay, while Miss Booth taught some other subject to the other class. The United States went to War in 1941, which affected our learning. (See Chapter X) We had no TV in those days, so we learned about Pearl Harbor on the radio.

Until 1948, the movies and radio were our only entertainment sources. Mom started her day with Ben Hawthorne's early morning variety show, and had her favorite radio "soaps". All through grammar school, we listened to children's five-day-a-week serial adventure stories. No one ever missed "Dick Tracey", "Jack Armstrong" (The All-American Boy!), or "Little Orphan Annie", who was sponsored by Ovaltine, which was a powdered milk additive. Dick and I had to finish one box so we could send in the box-top and get our "Little Orphan Annie Decoder Badge". At the end of each program there would be a coded message previewing the next day's adventure. We joined our parents for "Amos and Andy" every night at seven, and never missed Jack Benny and Edgar Bergen and Charlie McCarthy on Sunday evenings.

Schoolwork came easy to both Dick and I, and any elementary grade lower than "excellent" was unacceptable, and considered to be "flunking". I finished my seven and a half years at Washington School in June of 1942, and headed off to Barnard Junior High School, for grades seven and eight. Barnard had a woodworking shop, and Mr. Miller taught everyone in Junior High how to make a hot dish rack and bookends. Summer sessions were offered between sixth and seventh grade, and again between seventh and eighth. Sully clued in Dick, who clued in me, and I went there in the summer of 1942. Every student got half of a double work bench, with his own vise and plane. There was one taller bench, right next to Mr. Miller's office, which went to me, because I was the tallest. This assured me the most attention, and the opportunity to do advanced projects. In eighth grade, I was one of two students allowed to use the lathe, and made a pair of candlesticks for Mom. The non-summer students were still on their bookends.

Barnard was part of Educational Square, directly across Main Street from Manchester High School, about a mile from our house. Only the first floor was used by the junior high, the second floor was part of the high school, and my freshman homeroom was up there. In 1938, Sully got a brand new Columbia bicycle for his birthday, and that summer Dad scrounged around and obtained two secondhand bikes for Dick and I. Bikes were not allowed at Washington School, but we used them to go to Barnard. Bill Green had a bike shop on Spruce Street and every kid in town went there for parts or repairs. We used our bikes to go to Globe Hollow, and Boy Scout meetings and to Barnard, until one afternoon in the spring of 1944.

We used to go up either Walnut Street or High Street to Pine Street, and then follow Forest Street through Cheney mills, and up over the crest of the hill and then down to Main Street. We returned home by the same route, and one afternoon, I came flying down Forest Street at 3:30 when the shifts were changing at Cheney's. I was watching to see if the pedestrians on the sidewalk were going to cross the street, when a car in front of me stopped short. My bike hit the rear bumper and folded up and I landed on the trunk of the car. I wasn't hurt, but the bike was dead. I half carried the remains home and consigned them to the dump. I finished Junior High on foot, and walked to and from High School for four years.

There were lunchrooms in both the junior and senior high schools, and we were expected to either bring or buy our lunch, and remain on the premises for the whole school day. We almost always brought a sandwich for lunch, and bought a half pint of milk to wash it down. Sully and Dick had made new friends, and I had now to make my own way through junior high, and find my own set of friends. In seventh grade I hung around with Larry McNamara, and in eighth grade George Longtin and I were buddies. George was not a student, and I put him through the eighth grade, by giving him test answers, and letting him copy my homework. He managed to get through high school, and after a stint in the navy, founded Mal Tool, a precision tool company, with two partners. The three of them became millionaires when Texas Instruments bought them out. George Umbehaun found out I was helping George Longtin, and wanted in. I sold him assistance, demanding milk for a week for each paper. He agreed, and then proceeded to steal the milk off the lunchroom counter. The counter was staffed by eighth grade girls, who were afraid of George, and let him get away with it. I guess I was just as guilty, accepting stolen goods.

Sully had skipped a grade at Washington School, and when I entered the seventh grade, he was already a sophomore in high school. He graduated from high school in 1945, at the age of seventeen. He took the accelerated CPA course at Bryant College in Providence, and at twenty was a full-fledged Certified Public Accountant, working in Hartford.

The highlight of junior high was Miss Keith's oil painting club, which both Dick and I joined. For the first time, I came out of his shadow, creating just as good paintings as he did. My favorite painting was a portrait of our cat "Squeaky", who I immortalized in my poem in the "Barnacle", Barnard's literary magazine. My best effort was a portrait of two Boston Bull Terrier puppies, which hangs today in Barbara's laundry room. They remind her of her childhood pet "Snooky"

In Junior High, and Boy Scouts, Dick hung around with the Vetrano brothers, whose father was a civil engineer, and a graduate of MIT. They convinced Dick, who convinced me that engineering was the career we should pursue. Because of our Barnard grades, we had no trouble enrolling in the college preparatory course in High School. The Vetrano's had an MIT catalog, and we knew that we must take Latin, and every math and science course available.

In the summer of 1944, I became friends with Ralph Howard, who lived on the corner of Ridge and Arch Streets. I first met Ralph, aka "Joe Pete" in 1942, when I took over Ricky Morrison's Herald paper route, while Rick and his family spent the summer tenting at Hamonasset State Park, on Long Island Sound. The route was owned by Sam Wilson, who bought up several routes and hired others to deliver the papers. He got 2 cents per paper per week as owner, while the workers got 4 cents. Joe Howard had one of the routes, and coordinated Sam's routes for him. We had to go to the Herald office on the corner of Bissell and Main Streets to get our papers. Papers were handed out according to the size of the route, and since there were five of us working for Sam, we were the first to get our papers. Joe would get the papers in 50 paper stacks, and dole them out to us. Rick's route had 37 papers and stretched from Main Street to Mckee Street. We had to collect 18 cents a week from each customer, and give 14 cents to Sam, for each customer, whether they paid us or not. The Herald got its 12 cents and Sam got his 2 cents, and we had to carry the deadbeats by ourselves. I think that Rick still owes me some of the \$1.48 I was supposed to get each week.

Since I had smashed my bicycle in the spring of 1944, I had no wheels, so I would do the pumping of Joe's bike, while he rode on the crossbar. I was 5' 11" in height and weighed 180 pounds, while Joe was 5' 6" and weighed 120 pounds. Joe's mother was a widow, and ran the office at the West Side Rec. Joe had a .22 rifle, and we would go squirrel hunting on Darling's farm on Keeney Street. I think that he hit only one squirrel all year.

When we started high school, freshmen were assigned homerooms alphabetically starting in the Franklin Building. Joe was assigned to Dave Hartwell's room on the second floor of Franklin. My end of the alphabet had home rooms on the second floor of the Barnard Junior High, while all my classes were on the second floor of Franklin. Joe let me keep my books in his desk, so that I could switch books between classes, and not carry all four textbooks around all day. I had to report to my home room in Barnard every morning, where attendance was taken. At the bell for the first class I headed to Franklin, never to return until the next morning. One morning, the first period bell was delayed, and our home room teacher told us to open a book and study. She didn't believe me when I said that I didn't have any books in my desk!

Dave Hartwell taught freshman algebra, and he made me what I am today. Besides teaching algebra, he and Pete Wigren were responsible for the debating club, of which I was a member in my junior and senior years. Dave had a friend who was an actuary at the Connecticut General Insurance Company in Hartford. In my senior year, knowing that I had gotten all A's in all my math courses, Dave suggested that I ought to consider a career as an actuary. An actuary is responsible for analyzing the operations of an insurance company, and setting premium rates that will result in a profit. He arranged an interview with his friend, who explained the process of becoming an actuary. He suggested that rather than take the actuarial major at a large midwestern university, I should major in math at a small New England College, leaving my future options open. Pete Wigren suggested Wesleyan University in Middletown, Connecticut, of which he was a graduate. I followed the advice of all three men, and majored in math at Wesleyan. I worked in the Connecticut General Actuarial Department during the summer between my junior and senior years, and decided that an actuary's life was not the life for me.

Dave Hartwell's classroom had blackboards on two walls, the front wall, and the side wall opposite the windows overlooking Educational Square. Seating was alphabetical, starting in the row next to the side blackboard. Because of my eyesight, I got to sit in the first row between Dudley Bickford and Miggie Boyd, next to Dave's favorite blackboard. He told us "There are two methods of learning, shock and repetition. If I stood Dudley on the windowsill, and told him that the shortest distance between two points is a straight line, and then pushed him off, he would never forget it! If he lived! However, Mr. Bailey (the principal) will not let me push Dudley out the window, so I have to keep repeating, and repeating, until you learn algebra."

The high school day started at 8:15, and ended at 3:00. It consisted of six hour-long class periods, a half-hour lunch period, and a fifteen minute homeroom period for attendance taking. The half-hour lunch period was included in the 90 minute fourth period, with one third of the students eating each half hour. I had a good schedule, Ancient History, Latin, Study, Lunch, Algebra, English, and Study. By the end of the day, I had finished all the homework assignments, and never took a book home.

The East Side Recreation Building was part of Education Square, and connected to both the Barnard and Franklin Buildings by underground tunnels. The top floor contained the gymnasium and an indoor track, which circled the gym on a balcony. The main floor housed the high school library and the girl's "home-ec" room, and the Rec offices and lounges. The basement contained the men's and ladies' locker rooms and showers. For all four years of high school, every student, boy or girl, used two study hall hours for one gym period and one swimming period each week. The boys swam in the nude, but the school provided one piece woolen suits for the girls.

During the War, it was decided to help senior boys pass their pre-induction physicals, by requiring five periods of phys ed each week, three gym classes and two swimming classes. This practice continued past the end of the War, and I was included in my senior year. Wilfred Clark was the head of the physical education department, and also coached the basketball team. I had him for all four years of phys ed. Every one was expected to shower after every gym and swimming class. Towels were passed out after you showered, and wire baskets for their collection were spotted around the locker room. Mr. Clark monitored the locker room, and repeated the following mantra ad nauseam: "Gentlemen always put their towels in the basket. Others must!"

We had to line up by height at the start of each gym class, and the count off by "fours" for individual exercises and team sports. I was 5' 11" when I started high school, and 6" when I graduated. I was always among the four tallest students, and was always a team captain. After warm-up exercises, we usually played basketball. The session always ended with laps around the indoor track, the fastest runners being the first to get to the showers. I was always among the last! During our senior year, volleyball nets were set up in the spring, and we formed four permanent teams. My team was the first period champs, and we played for the senior class championship against the second period champs at the senior class picnic. (I think that we won!)

I had to play the volleyball match in my bathing suit and bare feet, because all my other clothes, including my shoes and socks, were soaking wet. The senior class picnic was held at Ted Hilton's resort on the Salmon River in Moodus, Connecticut. We went in a convoy of parental cars, driven by those students with licenses. I managed to get my Father's '41 Chevy, and Barbara, Marion Dixon, and Dick Alves rode with me. There was only one minor fender-bender, when Lee Silverstein rear-ended the classmate in front of him while gawking at a sailboat in a lake on the way to the resort. As I pulled into the parking lot, everyone was rushing to the dock to get a canoe, before they were all taken. The four of us managed to get one, and paddled around on the river. We noticed that as soon as someone pulled into the dock, the have-nots were waiting to grab their canoe.

Barbara and Marion had a brilliant idea! We should paddle upstream, and drop the girls off on the riverbank. They would go to the car and get the picnic lunches that we all brought. We could then keep the canoe and eat lunch too. As we nosed into the shore with Dick in the bow and me in the stern, the girls stood up and stepped on the starboard gunwale to reach the higher bank. As the canoe tipped severely to the right, Dick and I leaned as far left as we could. When Barbara and Marion jumped to the bank, Dick and I plunged into the Salmon River, as the canoe almost turned turtle. Dick being closer to the bank was in waist deep, while I was up to my armpits. We turned in the canoe, changed into swimsuits, and ate our lunches in the picnic area. My shoes were still wet following the afternoon activities and barbecue, so I had to drive home in my bare feet. My school year book is still inscribed: "To the boy from 'down under' at the class picnic - Best of luck always - Marion".

We were graded four times a year in high school, and I received all A's in Algebra, Latin, and Ancient History, and all B's in English. This pattern held true throughout all four years, nothing but B's in English, nothing but A's in everything else. Since we knew that college acceptance depended upon the courses you took, as well as the grades, I took five classes in both my sophomore and junior years. Besides two years of Latin, I added two years of French in those two years. Of course we were required to take four years of English, and American History in our junior year. I took fours of math, and three years of science. By my senior year, I had met all the college entrance requirements, and goofed off by taking only four courses, including mechanical drawing.

I have mentioned that I spent fourteen years in the shadow of my brother, Dick, and Sully Sullivan. I was very shy and introverted, probably because all new ideas had to originate with Sully. I finally branched out on my own in high school, playing on the football team for three years, and the tennis team for two. I never made the varsity in tennis, but was a starting tackle on the football team in both my junior and senior years. Tom Kelly had been the football coach for over twenty years, and we used the single-wing offense, even though the rest of the world had moved to the "T" formation. Tom retired as coach after my junior year, and Walker Briggs replaced him, but kept the single wing for the first year.

In the single wing, both tackles line up side by side, between the right guard and the right end, who splits off to the right. The space between the right end and the tackle is filled by the blocking back, and the wing back lines up outside the same end. The fullback and halfback line up behind the center, who snaps the ball back to the fullback. The fullback has the option of plunging straight ahead or spinning and handing the ball to the halfback to carry around end. My senior year, Red Grant and I were the tackles, Marshall (Heinie) Hodge was the quarter back, and called the plays. Bob Dibatisto was the halfback, and Ralph Azinger, (whose son Paul is on the PGA tour) was the fullback.

Each play had a number, and #164 was "fullback up the middle". The blocking back and the right end would double team the left defensive tackle. The two tackles would double team the left defensive guard, and the fullback would run through the hole they created. In the East Hartford game, on our first series of downs, Heinie called "164" as the first play. Red and I each weighed over 190 pounds, and the little guard in front of us weighed about 150. We picked him up on our shoulders, carried him backwards for six yards, and dumped him on his butt. Ralph ran up our backs for a six yard gain. On the second play, Heinie called "164" with the same result, and a first down. We ran the same play eight more times, with Ralph scoring on the tenth play. I still have the cleat marks from Ralph's shoes on my back. When we got back to the sideline after the extra point, Walker Briggs said: "For Christ's Sake, Hodge, don't you know any other play but "164"? Heinie answered: "But it was working!", and Walker said: "Yeah, but you killed Azinger!". Ralph sat on the bench, gasping for breath, and Walker turned the signal calling over to Bob Dibatisto.

We still did not have television during our high school years. The first TV program I saw was a Friday Night Boxing match, on a TV set in the window of Potterton's Appliance store on Main Street. We still got our entertainment from radio, but now watched adult programs like Bob Hope, Red Skelton, Fred Allen, Gangbusters, I Love a Mystery, and "The Hit Parade". With Sully off to college, and Dick involved in musical activities, I had to find new friends among my own classmates. One of the characters on Fred Allen's program was a southern senator called "Colonel" Claghorn, whose favorite expression was "I say, son!". Wes Smith could imitate him exactly, and frequently did.

We formed a group called : "The Southern Army", and spent all our after school hours together. Wes became "Colonel" Smith, Jim Spencer became "Captain" Spencer, and I was "General" Schubert. We became mobile in 1946, when Ricky Morrison, Al Bradley, Lenny Johnson, Mike Vignone and Wes Smith got their drivers licenses. Their parents were very liberal with the use of their cars, and we used to "cruise the main drag" every night. We would play pinball at the center Snack Bar, play pool at "Lefty Bray's or drive to Bolton for ice cream at Andersons. Bob Turek, Lee Silverstein, Vinnie Diana, Walt Grzyb, Joe Accornero, and I were riders until our senior year, when I finally got my driver's license. One night, Al Bradley put 200 miles on his father's car, without leaving the town of Manchester!

My junior year, I really kicked over the traces, and joined every activity club possible. I was elected to HI-Y by the senior members of the football team. Unless you played a sport, you excluded from this YMCA sponsored club. I was club secretary in my senior year and was also elected to the "Torch Society". I joined the Debating Society, and was elected President the next year. Although I couldn't carry a tune in a bucket, I joined both the A Cappella Choir and the Boy's Choir, thanks to brother Dick being a star of the music scene, - choirs, band, and orchestra. Although I couldn't act, I was a member of Sock and Buskin, the junior/senior Dramatic Club. Although everyone had to try out, the Faculty Advisor, Helen Page Skinner, took every boy who tried out, to balance the club by sex. Only girls were rejected. I did play Doctor Gibbs in Thornton Wilder's "Our Town", but only because all the good actors were used up. Ricky Morrison was outstanding as the "Stage Manager" and Nancy Moore starred as "Emily". My senior year I was a reporter for the "High School World", which appeared every Thursday in the Manchester Evening Herald, compliments of the Fergusons, who owned the paper.

I graduated third in the "Class of Ninety Forty Eight", tied with Joan Coffin, thanks to my two extra years of French. They counted the best grades you received in four marking periods per four classes per four years, or sixty four grades. My A's in French negated two years of B's in English, so my total was 56 A's and 8 B's, tying me with Joan. Connie Rogers was our Valedictorian with 64 A's, and Carolyn Sonniksen was Salutatorian with 63 A's and 1 B! Because of a combination of my grades and my extra curricular activities, I was accepted by Wesleyan University, and awarded a four year full-tuition scholarship.

By then, Dick was in his second year at Trinity in Hartford, and was still living at home and commuting each day, and we still shared our double bed. Middletown was too far for commuting, so in September 1948, I spent my first night away from home in Clark Hall, and my first night in my own bed, although it was the bottom of a pair of bunk beds which I shared with my three new roommates.

NO GUNS ON SUNDAY

Chapter IX

The Hurricane of 1938

Today, all hurricanes have names, and their whereabouts and potential landfall is broadcast loudly and clearly on every TV channel.

In 1938, I had never heard the word "hurricane", until we were in the midst of one. It was in September, and I was in Miss Florence Benson's third grade class. There were more children born on the West Side than in preceding or following years, and two different classrooms and teachers were needed at Washington to accommodate me and my classmates. Miss Benson was dating Chet Brunner, (whom she eventually married) and drove a different car to school each week. I was also in her class for second grade, and she was promoted along with us. Dick was in Mrs. Julie Faulkner's fourth grade class, and Allan was at home with Mom.

We went to school on that fateful day, knowing nothing about any storm bearing down upon New England, and the weather during the morning was unremarkable. We always came home for lunch, and returned to school for the afternoon session carrying umbrellas, as it had clouded up and it did look like rain. We had a normal afternoon's complement of lessons, but shortly before the dismissal bell rang, Miss Benson was called to the office. She returned and told us that we would not be dismissed, but would stay in school because of the weather. She did not mention the word "hurricane", and started us on some make-do work, the nature of which I do not remember.

Sometime later, (anywhere from 30 to 90 minutes) we told that we could now go home. The rain was heavier than before, and the wind had picked up, but whoever had decided that we should be kept after, had now decided the opposite. For some reason, the grades were being dismissed separately, starting with the lowest, and we were the third group to be sent on our way. My normal route from school to home was to cross Pleasant Street, go up Short Street to High Street, go one block, and turn onto Cooper Street. From there it was two blocks downhill to our house.

I used to walk home with my cousin Carol, Jean Monast, and Arlene Custer. There was a large friendly Irish Setter who lived on High Street and liked to jump up on everyone and lick their faces. It was my job to lead the way around the corner from Short Street, to make sure the coast was clear before the girls would come along. This day, it was not the setter that met us on High Street, but the wind, which blew our umbrellas inside out! We hurried down Cooper Street, dragging our useless umbrellas behind, the rain pelting our every step.

I was met at the front door, by Mom, who was watching up Cooper Street, anxiously awaiting our return from school. The girls all had several more blocks to go, but they all got safely home. At the top of the hill, in the front yard of the house closest to High Street, there stood a majestic Horse Chestnut tree. The chestnuts were inedible, but the spiny husks contained shiny dark brown nuts. We collected them whenever they had fallen on our four daily trips to and from school, and sometimes tried to knock them down with sticks and stones. By the time they had released Dick's fourth grade class, the wind was really howling, and the top of Cooper Street was covered with horse chestnuts. Dick stopped to fill his pockets, while Mom wrung her handkerchief, willing him to stop the nonsense and get on home.

Dad was still at work at Cheney Brothers, when the worst of the storm hit us between four and five o'clock. The first casualty was the Linden tree that stood across the driveway by Grandma Roth's House. Mom cried when this shallow-rooted tree came down, because her father had planted it to remind him of his home in Germany, and it was his favorite. Next to go was the tall chimney serving our apartment and the stores below. It had been built so tall, because it was close to grandpa's house, and they didn't want the smoke blowing into their bedroom windows. The top two-thirds of the chimney crashed down onto our front porch roof with an awful racket, and scared us all.

Sometime during this period, the electricity went out, since power lines were down all over town. The row of stately maples along the front of our property, and the Doelner's next door swayed and bent over, and lost most of their leaves, but stood the full brunt of the storm. The pine tree, which stood behind the fallen linden, also weathered the storm with just the loss of a couple of limbs. Both the apple trees that Grandpa Roth had transplanted from his farm in Torrington came a cropper. His pride and joy, which stood at the top of the driveway, and onto which he had grafted seven different kinds of apples was the first to go, followed by the one against the side of the garage.

Dad finally made it home, and all my Aunts and my Uncle Al from next door. My Aunts all worked in Hartford at various insurance companies, and their boy friends, Rich Reichenbach and Bob Werner brought them home in Bob's car. By this time the wind had passed, and Bob parked his car in the driveway, and we could see all the damage by his headlights. He also had a radio in his car, and we gathered around listening to the news reports. This was the first time I heard the word "Hurricane".

Mom had scrounged all the candles she could find, and when they ran out, improvised with regular string taped between two blocks of paraffin. She had a goodly supply of this "sealing wax" because she was in the process of making grape jelly, and she sealed the tops of the jelly jars with melted paraffin. No windows had been broken, and there was no flooding anywhere in the neighborhood. We went to bed by candlelight, and awoke to the brilliant sunshine that always follows a storm.

The next day was a Friday, but there was no school, because the entire town was without electric power. We spent the day wandering about the neighborhood, checking out the damage. Almost every yard had fallen trees of one type or another, and everyone mostly just stood around shaking their heads. The major topic was about the path that the hurricane had taken. It had come north through Rhode Island and into Massachusetts, and was expected to head out to sea, when it did a three-sixty and came back across Connecticut from the east. All three trees in our yard fell directly to the west.

There were some work crews out on Friday, clearing streets that had been blocked, and trying to restore power. I don't remember just how many days we went without electricity, but I remember Mom making several paraffin candles. We had a gas range, so none of our meals were interrupted by the outage. Uncle Al, Dad, and the neighbors collaborated on cleaning up the downed trees. No one had personal power saws in those days. You either sawed the tree trunks by hand, or hired it done.

It took weeks for all the trees to be cut up and disposed of. Uncle Al wielded a mean axe, lopping off the main limbs, and making piles of branches. He had given Dick and me, Boy Scout hatchets for the preceding Christmas, and we made smaller branches out of the bigger ones. This kept us busy for many Saturdays and school day afternoons. The only casualty was the middle finger of Dick's left hand. We used the stump of the multi-variety apple tree as a chopping block. One day, Dick had his finger among the branches, and gave himself a whack. Luckily there were branches on either side of his finger that prevented its amputation. He was taken for stitches, and the gash healed properly, but as far as I know it was the only casualty of the neighborhood.

NO GUNS ON SUNDAY

Chapter X

World War II

As I mentioned in Chapter VIII, there was no television until 1948, and we had to get our news about the world at war from other sources. Although Japan invaded China in 1937, and Germany invaded Poland on September 1, 1939, (the historically recognized start of WW II), we paid little attention to what was happening on the international scene. Our earliest knowledge of hostilities came from the War Cards distributed in Topps penny bubble gum packages. These were mostly gory scenes of Chinese refugees being mistreated by Japanese soldiers. I do remember the Presidential campaign in 1940, when Franklin D. Roosevelt won a third term over Wendell Wilkie with the slogan: "He kept us out of the War!" I am not sure how much effect the doggerel: "A horse's tail is nice and silky. Lift it up and you'll see Wilkie!" had on the Republican's loss.

After the Japanese bombed Pearl Harbor on December 7, 1941, the various media turned their full force on War news, and patriotic utterances. Hollywood jumped in with both feet, a weekly newsreel containing nothing but war news. They also made patriotic movies about every armed service, like "I was a Yank in the RAF", "A Guy Named Joe" about the Air Force, and "The Halls of Montezuma" about the Marines. The most popular weekly pictorial magazine was "Life", which devoted most of it's' pages to war scenes. One publisher created the monthly magazine, "Army Laughs" which contained jokes, cartoons and pinup pictures of Hollywood starlets. Besides the creation of "War Comics", other comic book heroes started fighting "Nazis" and "Japs". The front page of every newspaper and every radio news broadcast was devoted to war news. Walter Winchell would start his weekly news broadcast with a clicking telegraph key, and the phrase: "Good evening, Mr. and Mrs. America, and all the ships at sea".

The United States had started preparing for war in 1940, when the Selective Service Act was reactivated in September, and men between 18 and 36 were drafted into the army. The Lend-Lease Act which provided England with ships and munitions was passed in March of 1941. Following Pearl Harbor, the pace of the draft was stepped up, and all enlistments were extended to the duration of the war plus six months. Thousands of men volunteered for all the other services. Dad volunteered for the Navy, but was rejected as "over age" being 37 years old. Gordy Weir, who lived on Summer Street, joined the Air Force, and spoke at a school assembly in the spring of 1942. Gordy became a bomber pilot stationed in England, and rose rapidly through the ranks. He stayed in the Air Force after the war ended, and retired as a General, after twenty years.

With the mobilization of our armed forces well under way, Washington turned its attention to the converting the "Home Front" to a wartime mentality. Since the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor was an "Air Raid", and we had declared war on both Japan and Germany, both the West and East Coasts were put on an Air Raid Alert Status. At Washington School, all four classrooms on each floor opened off a central corridor. The windows at each end of the hall were covered on the inside with cheese cloth, as well as the window in the door of each classroom. This was to prevent flying glass shards when a bomb exploded close to the school. We had air raid drills, signified by the continuous ringing of the school bells in each classroom. We had always had fire drills, every year, so a different pattern of ringing was established for each emergency. For a fire drill we had to line up and walk single file out the classroom door, down the stairs, out the front door, and along both sides of the sidewalk until the last student was outside the building and off the steps. For an air raid drill, we filed out into the hall, closed the doors to the rooms and sat in rows on the floor, with our backs to each wall, facing toward the center. In each case the end of the drill was signified by an "All Clear" signal on the bells.

While the schools were immediately organized, it took longer to provide air raid protection for the rest of the civilian population. The Cheney Mills whistle which was sounded at Seven AM, Noon, and Five PM, Monday through Friday, had also been used for Fires Alarms, during peacetime. The signal could be heard all over the West and East Sides, while Highland Park was serviced by Roger's Paper Mill and the North End by Bon Ami. Fire Alarm Boxes were located strategically on telephone poles around town, and each was numbered. The fire department was mostly volunteers, except for skeleton staffs at each fire house. The number of the box which had been "pulled" was repeated three times, so the volunteers knew where to meet the trucks. Whenever the alarm sounded, everyone in town, counted to see if the fire was near their house, Box number 22, was at the corner of Cooper Street and High Street, and I only heard it sound once during my 22 years on Cooper Street. The fire was in the garages behind the Donnelly property across the street, and we watched the fire truck come down the street and put the fire out.

The factory whistles were augmented by sirens installed atop the Town Hall at the Center, and on the YMCA at the North End. When the "Air Raid" sounded, all outside activity was supposed to cease, and everyone was expected to seek shelter. All vehicular traffic was banned until the "All Clear". In actuality, most motorists pulled over, but the drivers usually just sat there until the drill was over. If the drill occurred after dark, it was called a "Blackout", and every light in every structure in town was required to be turned off, or completely hidden from outside view. No one had shades on their windows that were completely opaque, and just pulling down the shades was unacceptable. Everyone had to buy "Blackout Curtains" or shades that were completely opaque and large enough to cover the entire window and allow no ray of light to escape. We bought enough material to cover the two windows in the kitchen and the front door. We would then close all the doors to the living room, bedrooms and bathroom, and huddle around a dim light in the kitchen.

Each and every town and city on both coasts had to create an infrastructure to manage and police the "Air Raid Warning System". The town was divided into units, and volunteer civilian men and women were recruited as "Air Raid Wardens" to police and enforce the "Blackouts". Equipped with flashlights, because every streetlight had been extinguished, each "Warden" would walk his assigned beat, examining each house for light leakage. Stern warnings were issued to any household with lights showing. Every warden had to be trained to identify and report on any enemy activity on his beat. Military logic determined that only incendiary bombs would be used against civilians, so the Wardens were trained to identify the type of incendiary being used, (i.e. magnesium or phosphor), and report this to headquarters in the Town Hall.

Since the Wardens had to keep patrolling their sector, teen-aged boys were recruited as "Air Raid Messengers". Dick and I volunteered, and went through a twelve week training session, which included types of incendiaries, enemy airplane identification, and first aid. Upon graduation, we were given ID cards and armbands, and assigned to Wardens in our neighborhood. I can't recall what insignia was on the Warden's armbands, but ours was a bolt of lightning in a circle! I drew my next door neighbor, Markie Moriarity, whose beat ran down Cooper Street from Ridge Street, and then along West Center Street to where it met Center Street. When the sirens blew, I would grab my flashlight and my bicycle, and meet Markie at the corner of Ridge Street. It was too dark to ride, but I pushed my bike back and forth along the route, until the "All Clear".

Besides "Blackouts", "Brownouts" were required in all those states that abutted the sea coasts. During 1940 and 1941, the German U-boats (submarines) only attacked British and French ships. In 1942, U.S. ships were fair game, and the U-boat fleet moved across the Atlantic, to keep troops and supplies away from Europe. Streetlights were turned off in coastal cities, and the top half of all automobile headlights were painted black to reduce their brightness. This was done to diminish the possibility of U-boats lying offshore detecting ships by their silhouettes against the shore lighting.

The K-9 Corps was started, and dogs were trained to accompany Coast Guardsmen on their foot patrol of the Atlantic coast, hunting for German Saboteurs who were expected to be put ashore from U-boats. The "Radio Alert" system came into being because the government gurus figured that German airplanes would follow the broadcast signal for selected stations to zero in on their targets. At a given signal, every station was required to broadcast an alert, and then switch to a common frequency. All of these precautions were conceived in 1942, and brought to fruition by 1943. Everyone vigorously practiced these "drills" for about eighteen months, before it became common knowledge that the Nazis never had the capacity to send airplanes across the Atlantic, and the Japanese attack on Hawaii was a once in a lifetime occurrence. By the time the Allies (The United States, England, and France) invaded Europe on "D Day", (June 6, 1944), all Air Raid Drills had completely stopped.

The biggest change to our family was positive; Dad now had a full time job with Pratt & Whitney Aircraft, whose engines powered over half of the U.S. warplanes. Coincidental with an increase in income, the Office of Price Administration froze prices on almost everything for sale, to prevent scalping during product shortages. Food rationing and gasoline rationing were also instituted. Every family was issued food ration books with numbered stamps for butter, sugar, meat, and canned goods. Each month, a set of stamps would be made valid for food purchase. The rationed amount of food was always more than sufficient to eat well, and so we did! With Dad's new income, Mom used the attic stairs as a pantry, and stocked it by using up as many canned food stamps as possible. Each stamp had a point value, and every food was given a point count. Tokens were created to give "change" when you bought less food than the stamp was worth.

John Hurley had left the First National Store and moved across Summer Street as a partner in the renamed "Jones & Hurley". Karl, whose last name I don't recall was appointed manager of the First National, and he hired Sully, and then Dick as part-time help. I would hang around with the two of them, as an unpaid "junior assistant". One of our tasks was sorting and counting food stamps and tokens. Karl had to turn in the proper amount of stamps for his weekly delivery. Of course, some "fudging" was possible. Gasoline was also rationed, and every car and truck owner was allotted sufficient gas for his business needs. If the vehicle was not need for business or commuting, the owner received an "A" decal and stamps, good for four gallons a week. The decal had to be affixed to the cars windshield, and only the same lettered stamps were supposed to be accepted. There were three categories for cars, A, B, and C, and Trucks received a "T", with an unlimited gas supply.

All the farmers who had trucks and tractors received "T" stickers, and had more stamps than they could use. One farmer used to shop in the First National, and he used his "T" gas stamps to buy extra butter and sugar. Karl had only an "A" sticker on his car, and gladly made the trade. Then he had to use a gas station who would accept a "T" stamp from a customer with an "A" sticker. They were not hard to find, since the station operator could share the "T" stamp with friends and relatives.

Dad had a "B" decal allowing eight gallons a week, since he used the car for delivering cases of beer from the package store around the neighborhood. After he went to work in the aircraft, as Mom did not drive, deliveries were stopped. We did not have a telephone, so an extension from the package store phone was brought upstairs. We were not listed, only "Schubert's Package Store", but we answered upstairs when the store was closed. If the store was open, and the call was for one of us, Dad would signal on a separate buzzer he had installed. (I think it cost a fifth of whiskey to install the pirate extension and the buzzer.) We frequently got phone calls after eight o'clock on Saturday nights asking for delivery to a party. The stock answer was: "We haven't delivered since the war started." From force of habit, I gave this response one Saturday night in the spring of 1946, and the caller said; "Haven't you heard? The war's over!"

The Japanese invaded Guam Island on the same day they bombed Pearl Harbor, and captured it three days later. By January 2, 1942, they had also captured Wake Island, Hong Kong, and Manila, giving them complete control of the South Pacific. Germany already controlled all of Europe except Great Britain, and was bombing London on a nightly basis. America had to rebuild the Pacific Fleet after Pearl Harbor, but the Atlantic Fleet was intact, and massive shipments of arms, airplanes and air crews to England began immediately. An invasion fleet was assembled, and in November of 1942 the U.S. invaded North Africa.

To show the Japanese that their homeland was not impregnable behind their wall of invaded islands, the U.S. Air Force bombed Tokyo on April 18, 1942. Sixteen twin-engine B-25 land-based bombers were modified to be able to take off from an aircraft carrier. The carrier snuck close to the Japanese coast, and, led by Lt. Col Jimmy Doolittle, the bombers retaliated for Pearl Harbor. The bombers could take off from the carrier, but they could not land on it. They continued to fly westward, and most of them landed safely in China, some in Siberia, and some ran out of gas over water. Doolittle and his group were canonized by Hollywood in the movie "Thirty Seconds Over Tokyo". The Movie "Guadalcanal Diary" vividly recreated the August 1942 invasion of Guadalcanal by American Forces.

Cheney's Silk Mills had produced parachutes for peacetime barnstorming airplanes, but the war with Japan cut off the only supply of silk worms. They turned instead to nylon, and created a subsidiary, Pioneer Parachute, to produce parachutes for warplanes. With all able-bodied men in the service, and many of their wives working at "The Aircraft", as Pratt & Whitney was known, there was a shortage of sewers needed to construct the parachutes. Pioneer recruited single women from Maine, where there were no "defense plants". One of the Cheney estates at the top of Forest Street was turned into a dormitory to house these young ladies. Others found rooms with local families. Mrs. Helms on Cooper Street rented rooms to two comely girls from Maine. When her son, Roy, returned from army duty at the end of the war, they were still there. He courted and married Rita, the prettiest of the pair.

Since parachutes were considered a critical wartime product, soldiers were stationed in Manchester to guard the Pioneer factory building, which was also on Forest Street, around the clock. They pitched their tents on the athletic fields of Mt. Nebo, and guarded the reservoir as well as Pioneer. The high school soccer team was moved to the north end, and football games were played at the West Side Four Acres.

The federal government sold "War Bonds", supposedly to finance the war, but really to make the civilian population become part of the "War Effort". Every civilian and even the service men were encouraged, even harangued, to enroll in the payroll deduction plan to purchase war bonds. Bonds were sold at 75% of their face value, with a maturity of 10 years. They were sold in multiples of \$25.00, which was the smallest and cost \$18.75. \$50 bonds sold for \$37.50, and you could get a \$100 bond for \$75. To include everyone, including school children, stamp books were issued with 75 spaces on which to paste a 25 cent stamp. When your book was full, you could trade it in for a \$25 war bond. Miss Booth had a spelling bee contest in the spring of 1942, which I won. The prize was two 25 cent war stamps. The stamps and bonds were sold at the Post Office and every bank.

A massive patriotic propaganda campaign was waged through the war. The radio "air waves" were filled with patriotic songs, written to commemorate every wartime event. "Let's Remember Pearl Harbor" was the first and most popular song written for the war. "Praise the Lord and Pass the Ammunition" came in a close second, honoring a Navy Chaplain who manned a machine gun after the gun crew was killed by enemy fire. "The Story of Roger Young" honored an Army Private who died attacking a Japanese machine gun nest. "Heil, Pfft, Heil, Pfft right in the Fuhrer's Face" made fun of Adolph Hitler, the German Dictator. "There'll be Bluebirds Over the White Cliffs of Dover, Tomorrow, Just You Wait and See", was the sentimental favorite.

Hollywood continued with their "War Effort" movies. Abbot and Costello suspended their "Who's on First" skit to make patriotic movies. Abbot and Costello in the Army, was followed by Abbot and Costello in the Navy, and then Abbot and Costello in the Air Force! Disney characters made fun of the Axis leaders, Hitler, Mussolini, and Tojo. Donald Duck quacking in German was hilarious. Charlie Chaplin's "The Great Dictator" is still a classic, making the rounds on The Turner Classic Movie Network. The State Theater hosted live shows promoting the sale of War Bonds., and periodically helped the scrap metal drives by making the admission price one used kitchen pot. Scrap metal was recycled to reduce the need for newly mined metal ores.

Prior to the war, all cigarette packs had foil liners to keep the cigarettes fresh. The foil was called "Tin Foil", but first it was lead, and then aluminum. One of the first wartime casualties was the foil lining in cigarettes. Halfway through the war, Lucky Strike cigarettes changed the color of their pack from Green to White. They claimed that they were supporting the war effort by not using the green dye that was needed for army uniforms. They flooded the air waves and the newspapers with the slogan: "Lucky Strike Green has gone to War!" One tobacco company created a new brand called "Wings", with a trading card in each pack with a picture of an Allied Warplane, and a description of its' prowess.

As predicted by General "Billy" Mitchell in 1921, airplanes played a major role in the waging of World War II. The German "Luftwaffe" made nightly air raids on London and other targets in an effort to soften the English resistance prior to an invasion across the English Channel. The entry of the United States into the war, and the immediate retaliation bombing of Germany prevented the invasion. While the Air force designated each type of aircraft with a letter and a number, the airplane manufacturers gave each model an exotic name. The B-17 bomber was named the "Flying Fortress" because of its extensive machine gun turrets. The B-24 bomber was called the "Liberator", and the B-29 was known as the "Superfortress". The B-26 was the "Marauder", while the B-25's used to bomb Tokyo were named after Billy "Mitchell".

Fighter, or "Pursuit", planes included the P-40 "Tomahawk", (also known as the "Flying Tiger"), the P-51 "Mustang", the P-47 "Thunderbolt", and the P-38 "Lightning". The British had the Hawker "Hurricane", the Supermarine "Spitfire", and the DeHavilland "Mosquito". The Navy used the "F" designation for their "Hell Cat" and "Hell Diver" planes. All of these airplanes were available in model kits for construction by patriotic adult and child model makers. Every kid had at least one model kit. We also doodled dogfights between Allied and Axis warplanes.

While Allied bombers destroyed German manufacturing plants, the Armies and Navies cut off their supplies of raw materials. After defeating General Rommel, (The Desert Fox), in North Africa, the Allies invaded Sicily, Italy, Greece, and France on D Day. They pushed across the Rhine, while the Russians closed in from the East. On May 7, 1945, Victory in Europe, or "VE Day" was declared.

In the Pacific, the Marines raised the flag on Iwo Jima on February 19, 1945, and invaded Okinawa on April 1st. To save American lives sure to be lost in an invasion of Japan, President Harry S. Truman decided to use the newly developed Atomic Bomb. Hiroshima was destroyed on August 6th, Nagasaki was destroyed on August 9th, and "VJ Day" was August 14, 1945. President Roosevelt, who was reelected for a fourth term in 1944, on the slogan: "Don't change horses in the middle of the stream" died on April 12, 1945, and missed both victories ending the war. The atom bomb was tested on Bikini Atoll in the South Pacific, destroying the island whose fame lives on in the swim suit industry. The pilot of the bomber which dropped the first atom bomb named his B-29 "The Enola Gay" after his mother, and her name will also live forever in crossword puzzles. There were celebrations in every city on VJ Day, including Manchester's Main Street. We returned to school in September, sans ration books and gas stamps, to find returning veterans in some of our classes. They had enlisted before graduation, and were completing their education. The War was over!

NO GUNS ON SUNDAY

Chapter XI

Tobacco

The Connecticut River flows southward through a rift valley formed millions of years ago, when the earth's mantle split apart between the Green Mountains of Vermont and the White Mountains of New Hampshire. A section on the earth's crust sunk into this rift, forming the Connecticut River Valley. For thousands of years, the river has been carrying fertile soil deposits from the north to the south, and has created ideal soil conditions for the growing of cigar tobacco. From the Massachusetts state line, as far south as Portland, tobacco farms sprang up on both sides of the river.

While tobacco is no longer grown in Connecticut, tobacco farms and corporations flourished in the 1930's, 40's, and 50's. Three kinds of tobacco were grown in Connecticut, Shade-grown, Broadleaf, and Havana, which is a strain of Broadleaf, developed in Cuba. Broadleaf was used for the centers or "fillers" of cigars, and Shade-grown was used as the outside or "wrappers". Tobacco leaves grow up to a length of three and a half feet, and up to eighteen inches in width. Each leaf has a large center vein, from which smaller veins radiate every four to six inches. In the manufacture of cigars, the sections of leaf between the smaller veins are cut out with a sharp knife. The veins, including the center vein, are discarded.

Any section of leaf which had a hole in it could not be used to make a cigar. The Tobacco farmer's greatest fear was a hail storm, which could wipe out a years work in an afternoon. The General Cigar Company and the Consolidated Cigar Corporation controlled the market for the sale of all cigar tobacco. They also bought up tobacco farms as they came on the market, and controlled the production of the lion's share of both Shade-grown and Broadleaf tobacco. In the 1960's, homogenized tobacco for cigars was invented. Tobacco leaves were ground up, mixed with an adhesive, and turned into "tobacco paper" of uniform consistency and thickness. There were no longer any waste leaves, and the demand for perfect cigar tobacco dropped. At the same time, the popularity of cigars declined, and all the small farmers were forced out of business. The larger corporation farms soon followed, and by the 1970's, the Connecticut tobacco industry was gone forever.

I had my first job on a tobacco farm in August of 1942, and continued to work "on tobacco" every summer through 1951. My Aunt Martha married Richard Reichenbach in April of 1941, and by the summer of 1942, Rich was in the Navy, and they were living in Pensacola, Florida. Rich's Father, Jacob owned an eight-acre tobacco farm in Broadbrook, on the northern outskirts of Manchester. With all able-bodied men either in the service, or working in defense industries, Jake was unable to hire any help to harvest his Broadleaf tobacco. A distress call went out to all the able-bodied nephews and nieces to save the crop! Jake had two brothers in Manchester, and they each contributed a son. Arthur was 11, and lived on Summer Street, and Cousin Jack was 13, and lived on the East Side. My brother Dick, 13, and my cousin Carol and I who were both 12 completed the work force of raw, untrained recruits.

Daily transportation to and from the farm was nonexistent, so the five of us packed our bags and moved into the farmhouse. The four boys shared Rich's old room, and Carol bunked with Rich's sister, Edie. Besides the tobacco crop, the farm was almost self-sufficient, with a horse, a cow, a calf, pigs, chickens, and a vegetable garden. While we were there, the calf was turned into veal, but "Tante" Reichenbach as Rich's mother was called, had to purchase all the other meat to keep us strong and healthy. She collected our ration stamps from our parents, and served us five meals a day. Besides a hot breakfast, and meat and potatoes for both lunch and dinner, hot coffee and doughnuts were served in the middle of both the morning and afternoon work shifts.

Tobacco plants, like Christmas trees, have a single stem or trunk, from which the leaves extend at regular intervals, decreasing in size as they approach the top. A full-grown tobacco plant is shaped just like a "perfect" Christmas tree. A mature plant will reach a height of eight feet, and its top will blossom out, and produce seed pods. Enough plants are allowed to mature each season, to produce seeds for the next year's crop. In early spring, these seeds are planted in sterilized and fertilized seed beds, where they grow to a height of eight to ten inches. They are then carefully pulled out and bundled together in small bunches with the roots all facing the same way. They are then planted in plowed and cultivated fields, spaced three feet apart in rows that are four feet apart.

During Spring Vacation in 1944, while the Allies were invading France, I was helping Jake and "Tante" set the year's tobacco crop. The "setter" was a horse drawn, two-wheeled, cart with a water barrel over the axle. Beneath the barrel, a water hose ran down to a dual plow attachment that opened and the closed a furrow, into which the plants were inserted. A three-foot wheel on the axle controlled a spigot at the end of the water hose, from which issued a spurt of water into the furrow, every three feet. Jake sat up front with the reins, and drove the horse, following a straight line etched into the earth. An outrigger, which could be moved to either side, etched the line for the next row, as each row was set.

Tante and I sat on two tractor seats bolted to shafts hung beneath the axle on either side of the plow. We rode about four inches above the ground, with our feet on a foot rest below the axle. We each had a flat box of seedling plants in our laps, and alternated setting the plants in the furrow whenever the water spurted from the hose. If we missed a squirt, someone had to go back later with a trowel and fill in the misses. Tante, not only never missed her turn, but frequently inserted three plants in a row, when I fumbled the ball. Somehow, we managed to set all eight acres. Once the plants have been set, the weeds must be kept down, by cultivating between the rows, and hoeing between the plants. This monumental task was accomplished by Jake and Tante alone, each year. By harvest time, each row is a long low hill, with gullies between the rows.

Once the plants reach a height of four feet, they are "topped", to prevent them from going to seed, and to broaden their leaves. Once a plant has been topped, "suckers" begin to appear in the joints between the leaves and the stem. These suck the goodness from the plant, and must be periodically snapped off and discarded. Tobacco and tomatoes are both members of the nightshade family, and every serious tomato grower knows what suckers are, and that they must be pinched off. Tobacco suckers are much larger, and I have had to use two hands to remove three and four foot long suckers, complete with their own blossoms.

By the time we five cousins arrived on the farm in August of 1942, the tobacco was ready to be harvested. Our first task was to sucker every row before it was harvested. We suckered ten rows at a time, each of us doing two rows at once. Jake and Tante would follow along behind, helping the stragglers and catching any misses. Broadleaf tobacco plants are harvested whole, each plant being cut down with a thin-bladed hatchet. The plant is grasped about mid-stem with the left hand, and tipped over far enough to expose the stem beneath the bottom leaves. The object is to cut the stem as close to the ground as possible, without breaking or cutting any leaves. The plant is then laid on the ground in the sun, to wilt, so that it can be handled.

Four rows are harvested at a time, the cutters following in sequence, each cutter laying his plants over the stumps of the previous row. If any cutter cuts too high, the stumps will pierce the leaves of the next cutters plants, reducing their value. At first, only Jake and Tante did the cutting, but then each of us eventually got a turn, starting with Dick, then Jack, then me. Rows one and two are laid with their butts facing each other, and likewise, rows three and four. Only enough rows are cut which can be harvested in the critical time between wilting and burning. Freshly cut tobacco leaves are crisp and stiff, and will break off the stem if they are handled before the wilt. The leaves will become brittle and crumble if they are left too long in the sun.

Tobacco leaves are dark green on top, with pale green undersides, when they are ready to be harvested. They do not turn brown until they are "cured". They are cured in barn-like structures called sheds, by a combination of air drying and charcoal heat curing. A tobacco shed is divided into tiers, each one six feet in height. Each tier is divided into rows four feet in width. The sheds have peaked roofs, and the rows run the length of the shed, usually six or eight rows across the shed. Jake Reichenbach raised eight acres of tobacco, and had two sheds, one which held three acres of harvested plants, and one which held five acres. The smaller shed had three full tiers of six rows and a "peak" tier of two rows. The larger shed held three tiers of eight rows, a "purline" tier of four rows, and a peak tier of two rows.

The rows are divided into sixteen-foot-long sections, or bays, by 2"X8" joists, anchored to vertical posts rising from concrete piers in the center and each side of the shed. Wider sheds have more than one set of uprights. Each row has a pair of movable sixteen-foot 2X4's, both top and bottom. The two top 2X4's are placed four feet apart, on edge, and the tobacco plants are hung on four foot laths spaced ten inches apart. Each lath has six whole tobacco plants hanging on it, and weighs between twenty four and forty two pounds. The person "hanging" the tobacco walks along the two bottom 2X4's, which are placed close together on their sides. The "hanger" carries a ten inch piece of wood which is placed on top of the 2X4, and moved sequentially to maintain the proper spacing.

The process of placing the six tobacco plants on the four-foot lath is called "spearing" or "stringing", and takes place in the field. A movable spearing horse, mounted on wooden spoked carriage wheels is pulled along the center of the four cut rows of tobacco. A log, or a pair of bolted together 2X6's has been attached to the axle in such a fashion that the short front end stands four feet off the ground, while the longer back end drags on the ground. A lath holder, similar to a flag holder is bolted on the top of the front of the log, and a V-shaped box holds a bundle of laths on the rear. The wheels are spaced four feet apart, so that they ride in the gullies between the harvested rows.

A spearing team consists usually of five people: the "spearer", two "handers", and two "carry-offs". The larger tobacco farms have three or four spearing teams, harvesting twelve or sixteen rows at a time. There was only one team on the Reichenbach farm: Jake did all the spearing, Carol and Arthur were the handers, and Jack and I were the carry-offs. Dick was the "rigging" loader, and Tante went back to the house to cook and bake and feed the chickens and clean the house.

The spearer places one end of a single lath in the lath holder, and fixes a hollow steel spear head over the forward end of the lath. The spear has a point with two razor-sharp edges, which are kept sharp with files and whetstones. Each hander picks up two tobacco plants by their butts, and hands them to the spearer, one at a time, the handers alternating. The spearer spears the center of the each plant stem about eight inches below the butt, spacing them evenly along the lath, until it holds six plants. As soon as the lath is full, one of the carry-offs lifts the lath out of the holder and carries it over to the rigging loader. The process is repeated until the rigging is loaded, or if more than one rigging is available, until the end of the row is reached.

Either horses or tractors are used to pull the rigging along beside the spearers, and then to the shed when it is full. The rigging is a four-wheeled vehicle with one or two sets of two by four racks six to eight feet off the ground, spaced apart the required four feet on which the full laths are hung. Jake's rigging was horse-drawn, six feet tall, with a driver's seat and whipple tree attached. When the tobacco had been cut and wilted, Jake would harness up his horse, and station the rigging next to the spearing horse. At first, Jake had to stop spearing and move the rigging periodically to keep it close to the spearing horse. Eventually, he allowed Dick and Jack and I to grab the reins and move the rigging forward. The rigging was twelve feet long, and when it was full, Jake drove it to the shed for hanging. Since the laths were packed tightly together, the load usually filled two sixteen-foot shed rows.

The sheds are filled from the top down, starting with the peak tier. The rigging was backed into the smaller shed, which was filled first. Initially, all the hanging was done by Tante, with Dick's help, but eventually Dick was allowed to "hang" tobacco. Tante would climb to the top tier, and arrange the two by fours, for hanging and walking. Dick would climb to the next lower level, and arrange his two by fours. Jake would lift the laths of tobacco off the rigging with a ten-foot long forked pole. He would raise the pole and pass the lath to Dick, who would pass it on to Tante. The rest of us had nothing to do, but pick up any leaves that fell off in the hanging process. These were strung on a lath with a large needle and stout string. The first year that we worked, Jake had me try to do the "poling", but I could not raise the lath high enough to reach my brother. The next two years, I did the poling, Dick did the hanging, and Jack did the "handing up".

The small shed only had one door, in the center of one of the side walls, but the large shed had a door in each end wall, and the rigging could be driven in one door and out the other. When we finished the small shed and moved to the large shed, three people were needed to hang the peak. Tante climbed to the peak, Dick to the purline, and Jake sent me up to the third tier to pass the laths up to my brother. A sixteen-foot two by four, supported at the ends, is springy and shaky, and I was scared out of my wits. Whenever anyone handled a lath full of tobacco, Jake would caution: "Don't scrape the tobacco!", - each broken leaf decreased its value. To convince Jake, that I was not suitable for walking on wobbly two by fours, I intentionally scraped each and every lath which I passed up to Dick. I managed to finish the whole rigging, but Jake took the hint, and sent Jack up from then on.

Every tobacco shed is sided with one by twelve inch boards which run vertically from the roof to the ground. Every other board is hinged, and can be opened fully back against its neighbor to allow air to circulate through the shed. As soon as any tobacco is hung in a shed, all the boards are opened, and they stay open for six weeks, except during heavy rain storms. This air drying is the first step in curing the tobacco. In October, the sheds are closed up, and charcoal smudge pots are placed along the dirt floor, and charcoal fires are kept smoldering twenty four hours a day, until the tobacco is fully cured. The corporation tobacco buyers visit each farm during the curing season, evaluating the crop and setting the sale price, which is always "take it or leave it".

After the tobacco is fully cured, the leaves have to be stripped off the plant stems, and baled for shipment to the cigar manufacturer. The leaves have become brittle during the curing process, but will absorb moisture during damp weather. following the occurrence of a "Tobacco Damp", the harvest procedure is reversed. The laths are taken down, starting with the lowest tier, and the tobacco plants are removed from them. The plants are laid in piles across pairs of 2X4's on the dirt floor. with their butts all facing in the same direction. The four-foot high piles are covered with tarps to keep them moist, and pliable. When all the plants have been taken down and covered, the "stripping" can be done throughout the long winter months.

The cousins were called upon during Christmas vacation of 1942, to help strip the leaves from their stalks. We had to dress as warmly as possible, because the space heaters could not heat the whole shed, and barely heated the stripping area. The tarps were pulled back, and we would grab the butt of a plant with our gloved left hand. With our bare right hand, we pulled each leaf off the stem, starting at the butt end, until we had a bundle of leaves, their stems all facing the same way. The bundle was laid on top of the tarp, and the bare stalk was tossed behind us. Jake would collect the bundles, and place them in a wooden baler, lined with heavy brown paper. When the baler was full, he wrapped the paper over the top, and compressed the bale with lever, and tied it with twine. The side of the baler was then swung down, and the bale lifted out. The side was raised, and the baler re-lined with more paper off a large roll, and the process repeated. We warmed our right hands in our pockets, or at the heater, as often as possible, and our toes were frozen. For the first time in history, we were glad when vacation ended and we had to go back to school.

We harvested Jake Reichenbach's tobacco for three years from 1942 through 1944. The food was good, except the butter, which was churned in the kitchen from sour cream, ugh! It tasted so bad, that I even had to eat my sweet corn on the cob with only salt on it. The summer was healthy, with lots of fresh air and exercise, but aside from room and board, the pay was minimal. We each received twenty dollars in 1942, and with a ten dollar raise each season, we made forty dollars apiece in 1944. The war ended in 1945, and either Jake didn't plant tobacco, or he hired discharged veterans to harvest his crop, but we took the summer of 1945 off. Dick worked in the First National, across the street, and I helped Mom and Grandma in the candy store.

There was more shade-grown tobacco than broadleaf raised in Connecticut, in the 1940's. The tobacco was grown in the shade of acres of cheese cloth suspended on wires over the fields. Even the sides were enclosed, and opened only during "picking". Shade grown tobacco was harvested a few leaves at a time, and the picking season lasted longer than the harvest season for broadleaf. Shade-grown was the largest employer of teen aged boys on summer vacation from school. A picker would sit on the ground, between two rows of tobacco, and pick the bottom leaves off the plants in each row, pulling himself along the row with his heels. He would pick every leaf that was fourteen inches long, or longer, and place the bundles in the gully of the next row. The next picker would do the same, both of them placing the bundles in the row between them. To make sure that the proper leaves were picked, a line was drawn on the picker's left forearm with mercurochrome, fourteen inches from his fingertips.

There was a "dragger" for every pair of pickers, who would drag a canvas basket down the center row, picking up the bundles laid there by the two pickers. The canvas two-foot by three-foot basket had a wire frame, and a handle at each end. The dragger used a wire hook to pull the basket along to the end of the row, where he would leave it and grab an empty basket for the return trip, up the next set of four rows. The full baskets were piled on a flatbed trailer pulled by a tractor, and taken to the tobacco shed. A shade-grown shed was identical to a broadleaf shed, except that the tiers were only three feet high instead of six feet. A shed could be switched back and forth, by adding or removing the sixteen-foot 2X4's used to hang the laths of tobacco.

Inside the shed, there was a crew of "sewers", who did the same job as the broadleaf spearers: hang the tobacco on the laths. The same size lath was used as for broadleaf, except the ends each had a one inch deep slit. The sewer would knot a length of string into one end of the lath, and sew the leaves onto the string, using a six inch steel needle with a large eye. The large center vein of a tobacco leaf is flat on top, and rounded on the bottom. The leaves were sewn onto the string through this vein, a pair at a time, with their flat sides facing each other. As each lath was filled, it was carried off and hung up in the shed, just like broadleaf. While many of the sewers were adult women, teenage girls were also hired for this job. "Straw bosses" were needed to oversee the work of the pickers, draggers, and sewers, so local school teachers also found summer jobs on the shade-grown tobacco farms.

Shade-grown tobacco is air dried and charcoal cured exactly like broadleaf, and needs a "tobacco damp" before it can be taken off the laths and baled. The shade-grown farms were all owned by either General Cigar or Consolidated Cigar, since no small farmer could afford the investment in poles, wire, and cheesecloth needed to produce a crop and sell it. I almost worked as a dragger one day in July of 1947. I was picked up by the General Cigar truck, but it had rained the night before, and the pickers refused to sit in the mud, and wouldn't pick. Tony Alibrio, my Chemistry teacher was straw boss, and he said for the draggers to pick. When we refused, we were all sent home, with no pay. I did not return, but waited for the broadleaf season to start. Southern

One of my classmates in high school, was Lenny Johnson, whose father, Axel, was the operations manager and his own field boss on Hackett Brothers broadleaf tobacco farm, located in Buckland, a suburb of north Manchester. In the summer of 1946, Lenny got jobs at Hackett's for Bob Turek, my brother, Dick, and me. Lenny had his driver's license, and picked us up and took us back home after work in Hackett's pickup truck, which was assigned to his father, and kept at his house.

Buckland's "Four Corners" was the intersection of North Main Street and Adams Street, and the Hackett homestead and headquarters was one block east of Adams Street' on the south side of North Main. Gerrich's garage occupied the corner lot, but Hackett's tobacco extended all the way to Adams Street, behind Gerrich's. The main entrance was between Hackett's house and the barn where the tractors were garaged. Hackett had his own gasoline pump and storage tank, which was kept filled by Gerrich, at bulk prices. There were three tobacco sheds, and twenty-four acres of tobacco here, along with the seed beds. Hackett also rented several other fields, bringing his total tobacco acreage to eighty acres.

There were two Hackett brothers. Tom, who was pushing fifty, managed the business, and handled the payroll. His younger brother, Bill was in his early thirties, and worked part time in the field with us peons, doing some of the hanging, and other odd jobs. Tom rode around in a maroon 1946 Cadillac, and Bill rode around on a motorcycle. The work crew always gathered at Headquarters every morning, even when we were harvesting at other locations. The rigging drivers got their tractors from the garage, filled the gas tanks, drove them to the field where we were working, and hitched them to their riggings. The rest of us would store our lunches in the barn, and either walk to the nearby field, or ride in the company truck to distant fields. We always returned to headquarters for lunch from twelve to one, and you could buy sodas and deserts at the Buckland Corner Store.

Axel Johnson, Bill LaMont, Julius Bratsnyder, and "Brownie" were the only permanent year-round Hackett employees. There were three tractors, two Farmalls, and one John Deere, for pulling riggings, and Brownie and Lenny drove the two Farmalls. Dick became a rigging driver, and was given the hand-clutch operated John Deere. Bob and I were hired as carry-offs. Lenny's younger brother, Cliff was one of the handers. We started harvesting in one of the homestead fields, and there were three spearing teams, led by Julius, who had been spearing for decades. While the cutters were making their first swath, the rest of us had to sucker the adjoining rows. All the jobs were the same as at Reichenbach's with the exception of the rigging drivers, who had to climb on top of their riggings and hand the laths up to the hangers, the forked pole had gone the way of the horse-drawn rigging. We got paid eighty five cents an hour, and our first week's pay, which was handed out in brown envelopes at noon on Friday by Tom Hackett, was as much as we got in a full season from Uncle Jake.

All went well the first week, with all the new hires figuring out the routine. We bought new lunch boxes, with pint thermos bottles, which we filled with milk to wash down the two sandwiches Mom made for each of us. On Monday of our second week, Julius was the only spearer to show up for work. The rumor was that of the other two spearers, one was drunk, and one had a fight with his wife, and left town. Nobody seemed to know what to do, and we all just stood around looking dumb. One of the handers got his lunch box, and started to eat his lunch. Partly kidding, I said, "Well, I guess that I'll have to spear today!" Axel heard me, and said, " Ya, you're big enough!" and handed me the spear.

Bill LaMont, the number one hanger, was pressed into service as the number two spearer, and I got the third spearing horse. Now I had to put my money where my mouth was. Spearing is not an easy job, nor is it accomplished by brute strength. The tobacco plants must be speared through the center of the stem, six inches below the butt end, and between leaves. If you spear the plant too close to the butt, it will split and fall off the lath. If you spear it too far below the butt, it will stick up too far and damage the ends of the plants hung above it in the shed.

The stems of the plants vary in thickness from two inches to four inches at the butt, depending on the maturity of the plant. As the harvest season progresses the stems get thicker. Suffice it to say, my first day's spearing was haphazard, but by the end of the week, I was keeping up with Julius. Nick Popoff was hired as the permanent number two spearer, and I finished the season as a competent number three. Of course, with the increased importance of my job, I received an increase in pay. At \$1.70 an hour, I was rolling in dough, and every bit of it was tax free! Except for Axel, Brownie, Bill, and Julius, we were all transient farm workers and paid in cash, with no individual records kept. My weekly take home pay for spearing tobacco was higher than my starting salary for my first job at General Electric, in Pittsfield, Massachusetts in 1952.

Each spearer was assigned his own two handers and carry-offs. Lenny's younger brother, Cliff and Warren were in my crew. Cliff was something of a daydreamer, and after handing me the first two plants for a new lath, he frequently neglected to get the last two plants ready. Having speared Warren's two plants, and needing two more to finish the lath, I would say: "Two, Cliff!". I said this so many times that season that he became known as "Twocliff". There was downtime when the riggings were all in the shed, and the handers and carry-off used to play "Champstick". They would search for the sturdiest laths in the bundle, and alternate chopping down on their opponents horizontally held lath. The unbroken lath was the champstick, until it was finally broken by the new champ. Axel used to wonder where all the broken laths came from, although some weak laths did snap during actual spearing.

In order to decrease the spearer's downtime between riggings, when the distance to the shed caused a delay in their return to the field, Hackett added a fourth rigging, using a stripped down 1927 Cadillac, modified by Gerrich's garage to pull a rigging. This was only partly successful, since the Caddy frequently got stuck in the soft earth. In 1947, Gerrich built three steel-framed double-wide riggings, each side carrying a full rigging load. That same year George Mrosek joined us as a rigging driver. He had his own car, a 1940 Ford convertible, and he volunteered to pick up Bob Turek, and Dick and I. Axel let him pump a tank full of gas each week, since Lenny didn't have to use Hackett's pickup to fetch us. One hot afternoon, while waiting for George to put his tractor away, we put the top down for the trip home. George dropped Dick and me off, but before he and Bob got to the East Side, the clouds opened up, and they were both soaked. George never let us touch the top again!

We had to spend time suckering every morning in those rows that were to be cut. While this gave the tobacco more time to dry off before cutting, it also decreased the hours of harvest time. To keep the spearers productive, "bums" from Hartford were used to do the suckering. Either Bill Smith, or Brownie would take the covered stake truck to Front Street, where the homeless slept off the previous night's drunk. Anyone sober enough to climb aboard, was returned to Front Street at six P.M. with a sunburn and ten dollars drinking money. The same bums showed up throughout the season, but seldom two days in a row. Ten dollars would buy enough "Sneaky Pete", (cheap wine) to require a sleep-off day in between suckering days. An old whiskey barrel on wheels was filled at Hartman's spring every day, and towed to the suckering field. It was nearly empty every night, hangovers need water!

In 1948, Tom Hackett tried to cut the pay of us spearers, and when we received our first weeks pay at Friday noon it was twenty cents an hour short, almost a ten dollar a week reduction. On Saturday, Nick Popoff and I formed a two-man union, and initiated a slowdown. We waited until the sun was high overhead, and reduced our output to a minimum. Julius, who was on salary, worked at his normal pace, and was soon far down the rows, ahead of us. Axel urged Nick and me to speed up, saying: "Let's go boys, the tobacco is burning!", which of course it was! Axel sent Brownie back to the homestead to fetch Tom, who immediately recognized that we had him over a barrel, because burned tobacco is useless. He called Nick and I each aside and restored our pay, retroactively. We caught up to Julius before the tobacco was burned and lost.

That same year (1948), Dick and I had worked the entire summer at Hackett's. We spent the month of July walking behind the small four-wheeled Farmall tractor, steering cultivators. A bar was attached to the rear of the tractor, from which four chains were attached to cultivating plows. Brownie drove the tractor, and Dick, Lenny, and I, and a Lithuanian immigrant, who lived on one of the rental farms, guided the four plows. While we kept the weeds out of the gullies between the rows, a team of lady "hoers" hoed the weeds out from between the plants. We generally worked in separate fields, but one night a wind storm caused all the tobacco plants to lean over. We had to join forces, and straighten up all the plants before we could resume hoeing and cultivating.

Lenny joined the Naval Air Force in May of 1949, but Dick and I continued on at Hackett's for two more years. Dad bought us a 1939 Studebaker "Dictator", complete with running boards, which we used for commuting to the farm each summer. Dick used it to commute to Trinity College in Hartford during the other three seasons of the year. Working all summer in the sun, made my skin so dark, that in a picture taken on Barbara's 20th birthday on August 26th, it looks like she has a "black" boyfriend.

I worked in the Actuarial Department of Connecticut General in June and July of 1951, to see if the actuarial life would agree with me. It didn't, and I had to quit after six weeks, or my father would lose me as a dependent, if I earned over \$400.00. This meant that I could join the August harvest at Hackett's. The outdoor life, fresh air, sunshine, and a raise in pay, (tax free) was much superior to that in the office confines of Connecticut General. I thought then, that my tobacco days were over, but in 1954, Barbara, William, and I flew to Manchester from Indianapolis on a month's Army leave. To help pay for the airline tickets, I sought out Axel Johnson at Hackett's. There was new management, and Axel had been demoted to boss of the cutters, but he told the field boss that I was a seasoned spearer, and they let me spear for two weeks.

I have many fond memories from a decade of Augusts spent harvesting Connecticut Broadleaf Cigar Tobacco. The people I met and worked with, the friends that I made, and the things that I learned about life and living. The money that I earned paid for summer movie dates, and Bolton Special sundaes at Anderson's in Bolton Notch. It paid for my back to school clothes, Christmas presents for my family, my college text books, and a semester's worth of spending money. It was hard work, but it was fun! I especially remember:

One year, Old Gold Cigarettes added apple honey to their tobacco, and advertised it on the radio with the slogan: "Does your cigarette taste different lately?" We adopted this slogan as our own, and whenever we went between the rows of tobacco to urinate, as we peed on the tobacco leaves we repeated loudly:

. "Does your cigarette taste different lately?"

NO GUNS ON SUNDAY

Chapter XII

Wesleyan University

In September 1948, I entered my freshman year at Wesleyan University in Middletown, Connecticut, about 30 miles southwest of Manchester. I was assigned to 30 Clark Hall, a four-story dormitory divided into thirds, each with its own stairwell, around which were clustered four rooms on each floor. 30 Clark was on the third floor of the Center section.

I shared its two rooms with three roommates, George Slye from Wellesley, MA, Dave Burbank from Longmeadow, MA, and Don Sanders from Ticonderoga, NY. The rooms were built for only two occupants, so we shared the two desks and desk chairs in the front study room, and the two closets, two dressers, and two bunk beds in the back bedroom. George and I got the bottom bunks, with Dave over George and Don sleeping above me. The first order of business was to call home and ask for delivery of more chairs. Mom and Dad delivered a folding day bed, and bought me a second-hand arm chair.

There were twelve other freshmen assigned to our floor, and between moving and unpacking, we all circulated between rooms, meeting our new "floor" mates. I was flabbergasted to discover that Richard Wetherall Bowers, aka "Judge" was moving into the next room, number 29. Dick had graduated from MHS with me, and was called Judge, because his uncle was a state judge, and the moniker "Judge Bowers" was applied to both him and his brother Arthur. We lived on different sides of Manchester, and were never friendly in high school. I did not know that he had applied to, and been accepted at Wesleyan.

Wesleyan had twelve fraternity houses on campus, and each of them had their own student bedrooms for upper classmen and their own dining hall. Freshman rooms were all in the south and center sections of Clark Hall, and in North College. North Clark Hall was reserved for members of the John Wesley Club. Parts of North College and all of Harriman Hall were allocated to those upperclassmen that were non-fraternity members, or couldn't fit in their fraternity's rooms. Dave and George joined DKE, and Don joined DU, and they moved into their respective houses for their sophomore year. Judge and I did not join any fraternity, and roomed together for the next three years, two in North College, and our senior year in Harriman Hall, in a room that overlooked the south goal posts of Andrus Field.

Each dorm had an upper classman assigned as a proctor, to keep order, and be available for emergencies. Our proctor lived on the fourth floor, but spent almost all of his time at his fraternity house, and was never home, except to sleep. Consequently, the noise levels were generally high, and studying was a chore. Room doors were generally kept open, and one or more of our floor mates was always available for impromptu "bull" sessions. I didn't know how to study, since I didn't have to study in high school, and gladly joined in any and all discussions. After I scored a 56 on my first math hour written test, I would find an empty classroom in Fisk Hall and study there each night, until after ten or later, because I had to maintain a B average in all my classes to retain my scholarship.

The college had many part-time jobs for students; waiting tables, washing dishes, correcting papers, clerking in the college store, and selling milk and sandwiches each evening in the dormitories. The sandwiches were made in a fraternity house kitchen, and the milk came in waxed cardboard half-pint cartons. It wasn't very long into our first semester, when Judge invented the "water-bomb". Each floor had its own toilet, shower, and lavatory, and if you filled your used milk carton with tap water it could be dropped down the stairwell, where it burst open on the floor and splattered anyone who had come through the front door. Needless to say, this only added to the noise levels during study hours.

There was a friendly rivalry between the freshmen in Center Clark and South Clark. We had a snow storm during finals week, and a South Clark student threw a snow ball through the window of 32 Clark, across the hall from our room. I had a final the next morning, and was about to sack out, but had gone next door to chat with Robo. When the glass shattered, a piece nicked my ankle, drawing blood. A declaration of war was drawn up, signed by those in residence, and delivered to south Clark. I signed it "in blood" and then went to bed, while the snow ball fight raged. When I returned to school for the second semester, there was a message in my mailbox directing me to report to the Dean of Students. I did so, and he informed that there was too much noise in Clark Hall, and I had been named as the ringleader. He said that if there were any more disturbances in Clark Hall, I would be expelled, whether or not I was present in the dorm! I immediately visited each room and related the story to each occupant. I then policed the dorm every night until the end of the year. The Dean was an amateur psychologist; he picked the biggest student in the dorm, and made him the policeman. It worked!

As I mentioned in Chapter VIII, Wesleyan awarded me a four-year, full tuition scholarship, one of four given to Connecticut residents each year. I was also offered a "waiter ship" job at the Downey House, the college dining hall and campus cafeteria. Tom Soukup, from upstate New York, was also on full scholarship, and the two of us worked together at Downey House all four years. Walter (Heide) Heideman managed Downey House, and he allowed Tom to wait on tables all four years. Me, he assigned to the kitchen, drying silverware, washing dishes, or bussing tables. My senior year, I was allowed out in public, as cashier for both lunch and dinner. We had to work eighteen hours a week, for which we received all our meals. My freshman year, I dried silverware, after it came out of the dishwasher, from 5:30 to 7:30, six nights a week. Sometimes I would wake up in the middle of the night, drying silverware in my sleep.

Except for four elderly lady cooks, a counterman, a daytime dishwasher, and a handyman, all the work was done by students, all of whom were on scholarship. The counterman, Dave Cooper, and the dishwasher, Moe, were both black. Dave was a friend of every student, and allowed them to eat forbidden food. We served ourselves lunch from Dave's counter, but we had to go through the kitchen for breakfast and dinner, and were served at the kitchen counter by the cooks. We were not allowed to eat exotic food, like cinnamon rolls which were called "butter buns". Tom Soukup had a butter bun every morning for all four years, keeping them hidden from Heide. Dave was invited to all of our parties, and used to regale us with tales of the Deep South. Besides working in a factory, he drove a car with a trunk full of "white Lightning" for the local bootleggers. He said that he came north when he was run out of town for dating a white woman. Moe, on the other hand, was ancient and dispensed homilies and philosophic advice to those who bussed and stacked dishes along side him.

The Heidemans, Heide, his wife, Enid, and daughter, Marty ate dinner every night at Downey House, along with the student staff, and Enid became a surrogate mother to many of us. Their college-provided house had extra bedrooms and Enid would allow the house party dates of upper classmen to stay with the Heidemans and save on room rentals. Barbara stayed there for my Junior Prom weekend in 1951. Every year, just before Christmas vacation, the Heidemans hosted a Christmas Party for the Downey House staff. They would provide food and drinks, and we would draw names for a gift swap. In return, the seniors on staff would take a collection, and buy a present for the Heidemans. Our senior year, Tom Soukup and I took up the collection, and went downtown shopping. We found a coffee table, which the Heidemans needed, but we were twenty dollars short. We both dug into our pockets and we each threw our last ten dollars into the kitty. The coffee table was a hit, and the very next week we were both notified that we had been selected as "Rosa Bennet Worthy Scholars". We each received a check for one hundred dollars. I used mine to buy Barbara a "Tin Cup" pearl necklace for Christmas. The only drawback to working at Downey House was the requirement to stay thru graduation Day and Alumni Weekend, if we wanted a job the next year. I was the only dorm resident for a week in June, each year.

As mentioned in Chapter VIII, I enrolled at Wesleyan as a math major, with the intention of becoming an actuary in the insurance industry. Hartford the Capital of Connecticut, was also known as "the insurance capital of the world". With the help of my Faculty Advisor, I selected economics as my minor. During orientation week, I passed an English test, and was exempted from taking freshman English. All freshmen were required to take "Humanities" - a great books and classics introduction course. I chose German 1-2 for my obligatory foreign language, and took philosophy 1-2 instead of English. My math course was Analytic Geometry, and my fourth subject was Physics 3-4. Physics 3-4 was the introductory physics course, (no ever explained what had happened to Physics 1-2), and was taught by Professor Van Dyke, the Chairman of the Physics Department.

Professor Van Dyke believed that a solid base in physics principles was necessary for success in the advanced courses, and he intended to personally see that we all learned the basics. He made physics come alive and vividly demonstrated principles, which I have retained all my life. His demonstrations were so alive, and so humorous, that the course was called "Circus 3-4". He inhaled helium, and talked in a high-pitched voice to show effect it had on his vocal cords. He froze a matchbox full of mercury with liquid CO₂, and pounded a nail into a board with his frozen hammer. He demonstrated the constant pull of gravity, (32 feet per second per second) by hanging a bell from an electromagnet. When he blew a steel ball through a wire at the end of a blow gun, the magnet was disconnected, and the bell dropped. No matter how hard or softly he blew; the steel ball struck the bell somewhere before it hit the floor. He said that a sniper, who dropped out of the tree when he heard his enemy shoot at him, didn't understand physics and was a dead pigeon.

My favorite demonstration was used to illustrate the principle of a pendulum. If you raise the weight at the end of a pendulum when it is at the bottom of its arc, and lower the weight at the ends of its arc, you will cause the pendulum to increase its arc and swing higher and higher. Every school child employs this principle on the playground swings when he raises his feet at the bottom, and extends them out at the end of each arc. Professor Van Dyke used a coffee can full of sand at the end of a rope fed through a pulley at the top of the auditorium. Giving the can a slight push, he then pulled on the rope when the can was at the bottom, and let out rope at each end of the arc. In a short time, he had the can full of sand swinging from wall to wall across the front of the auditorium. At that moment, his lab assistant put a record on the PA system, and we all heard: "He floats through the air, with the greatest of ease, the daring young man on the flying trapeze". Circus 3-4 indeed! Thanks to Professor Van Dyke, I have remembered and used many physical principles for over 50 years.

I recovered from the 56 in my first math hour written and finished my first semester with a B+ average. I only needed a B average to keep my scholarship, but a B+ put me on the Honor Roll. The Wesleyan football team, composed mostly of veterans of World War II, was now into its third undefeated season. Since I was playing freshman football, in mid-season I was called to a meeting in President Butterfield's office of all students playing football that were on scholarship. He had received complaints from alumni about paying students to play football, and lowering the academic standards of the college. He informed us that no matter what position we were playing, or how important we were to the team's success, if our scholastic average dropped below a B, our scholarship would immediately terminated, and we would be forbidden to play on any athletic team.

I maintained my B+ average for all eight semesters of my four years at Wesleyan. I took every math course offered during my first three years. Finite Differences was only taught every other year, and not available to me in my senior year, so I was allowed to do individual study and write a thesis on the subject for consideration by the honors college. It was approved, and I graduated with "Honors and Distinction in Mathematics". Besides math, I took 2 years of economics, 2 years of philosophy, and 1 each of psychology, religion, Russian history, and Oral English.

I played football all four years at Wesleyan, but it was a long learning process. In high school, I was the biggest one on the team, and merely threw my weight around, although, once in a while I did make a spectacular play. At Wesleyan there were several players as large and larger than me, and they knew how to play football. I was second string on the freshman team and the played JV ball in my sophomore year. I made the varsity in my junior year, but only as a third string sub, with little actual game time. I finally learned enough to be a starting defensive tackle for all of my senior year, and played a major roll in the defeat of our hated rival Trinity College, my Brother Dick's alma mater. Although my father had seen me play football in high school, in seven years, my mother had never been to a football game of mine. Mom, Dick, and Barbara all attended the Trinity game in Hartford, which was my last football game. We beat Trinity 6 to 3, and I went home to Manchester with them. Dad gave me bottle of French champagne which Barbara and I took to Wesleyan that night for house party weekend.

Besides football, I also spent four years on the track team, competing in the shot-put, hammer throw, and during the indoor track season, the thirty-five pound weight heave. I wasn't very good at any one of these, but enjoyed the exercise and the competition. Some form of athletics or physical education was required for every student every semester. If you were not on a team, or in off-season, you had to take one of the following: swimming, handball, squash, tennis, or golf. No one received a diploma from Wesleyan unless he had passed tests in swimming, either handball or squash, and either tennis or golf, or had taken a full semester of classes in all three categories. Every freshman was given the swimming test during orientation week, and had to swim 100 yards, including 25 yards on their back. I passed the test, but just barely, and took swimming as my winter class the first year. I took handball the next two years, and wrestling my senior year. As graduation approached, neither Tom Soukup, who ran the mile on the track team in spring, and ran cross country in the fall, nor I had taken golf or tennis. So, one afternoon, he and I reported to the tennis coach, and played two games of tennis, demonstrating that we both knew how to serve, and keep score. Wesleyan graduated only gentlemen fit both intellectually and physically.

Although the legal drinking age in Connecticut was twenty one, Wesleyan was a "wet" campus, and on house party weekends every fraternity served liquor to all comers, regardless of their age. Wesleyan's reputation had spread far and wide, and one major national publication had written: "No college girl has lived until she has been to a Yale Derby Day, a Dartmouth Winter Carnival, and a Wesleyan House Party!" Two of my freshman roommates, Dave and George were members of Delta Kappa Epsilon, and since I did not belong to a fraternity, the invited me attend the weekend parties at DKE. Barbara came to every house party during my freshman year, as did George's girlfriend Susan Kedian, and the four of us became friends. Although George left Wesleyan after his sophomore year, Dave graduated with me, and I was a "party weekend Deke" for all four of my years at Wesleyan

The staff of Downey House also used to party together frequently. Wesleyan was also a singing college, with its own song book composed by former students. Alumni weekend included the all-college sing on the steps of North College. Of course, we also made up our own songs; my favorite was created by a Downey House waiter: "Dennison Terrace is a memorial, and it is the college custom to treat it as such. Do not tear ass on the terrace, violators will be prosecuted to the fullest extent of the law!" - sung loudly to the tune of Pomp & Circumstance, with beer glasses raised on high.

While I had studied to become an actuary, after spending six weeks in the Group Actuarial Department of Connecticut in the summer of 1951, I decided that I did not enjoy their office culture, and would not pursue an actuarial career. I interviewed with several companies who sent recruiters to the campus, and decided to join General Electric on their Business Training Program in Pittsfield, Massachusetts. In June of 1952, I didn't work at Downey House between final exams and graduation, but went home to Manchester, and returned on Graduation Sunday with Mom & Dad & Barbara to receive my diploma in an outdoor ceremony on the steps of Dennison Terrace.

NO GUNS ON SUNDAY

Chapter XIII

The Army Finance Corps

On Monday morning, December 1, 1952, Barbara drove me to the Hartford railroad station, with a change of clothes in my fibre "laundry" suitcase from Wesleyan days. There were twenty of us draftees, including George Eagleson from Manchester. The rest, mostly black, were from Hartford. We were met by a representative of the Hartford Draft Board, who took attendance, and then handed me the roster of recruits and a train ticket to New Haven for "Roger Schubert and 19 draftees". We were met at the New Haven Station, and bused to the Recruiting Office, where we retook our pre-induction physicals. During the eye test, without my glasses, I could not read the top line which consisted of an "A". I was told to walk toward the chart, until I could read the first line. I walked slowly toward the chart for fifteen feet, and finally said: "A". The tester wrote down: "20/400, and said that I had passed. As I turned around I saw all the other draftees gaping at me in wonder.

After we all passed our physicals, we raised our right hands, as a group, and were duly sworn in to the United States Army. We were given a lunch of ham and cheese sandwiches and milk, and put aboard a Trailways bus to Ft. Devens, Massachusetts. We were unloaded and greeted by an overweight sergeant, who marched us to the supply room, where we drew sheets, blankets, and a pillow. We then were marched to the barracks, where we made up our cots, and settled in for the night.

The next day we returned to the supply room, where we were asked our sizes and issued two complete sets of dress and fatigue uniforms, and a duffel bag to hold them. They didn't have any boots in my size, so I only received GI socks to wear with my civilian shoes. My Ike Jackets didn't fit properly, but I didn't complain because my brother, Dick, had gone through 16 weeks of basic training, lost forty pounds, and received a complete new set of uniforms. Dick had enlisted in June in the Officers Candidate School, after he received his Masters in Education at the University of Connecticut. He couldn't get a teaching job until the fall, so decided to get his Army Service out of the way as soon as possible.

We had all received Army Serial Numbers in New Haven, and we were given stamps and stamp pads to mark our Army Issued belongings. My serial number was US51217231, and my stamp combined the first initial of my last name with the last three digits of my serial number thusly: "S231". The US signified that I was a draftee, those who enlisted, like Dick, had a number that started with "RA" for "Regular Army". We were told to don our uniforms, and pack up and send our civilian clothes back home, which I did, except for my shoes, which I wore until I got to Ft. Dix for basic training. For the next week, we were marched around the camp for a battery of tests, both morning and afternoon, at the end of which the tests were reviewed, and we were interviewed and assigned an "MOS" number reflecting our Military Occupational Skills.

Fort Devens was the processing center for the recruits in all six New England States. Each month, on or about the first, they received a new batch of recruits which they had to classify, assign to duty, and ship out to the appropriate basic training camp. They normally take four weeks to complete the process, but the center decided that if they could process and ship out everyone in three weeks, they could all go home on leave for Christmas. They didn't have enough staff to accomplish this, so they pressed new recruits into processing jobs. My interviewer had been drafted the previous month, and was waiting to ship out for his own basic training. It was midmorning before it was my turn, and he told me to take a break while he had a smoke. As we sat there, he glanced at my test results, and said: "Well, at least it looks like you can speak English!". All his previous interviewees that morning had been uneducated blacks from Hartford. We chatted awhile, and by the time the interview started, we were friends.

He asked for my job experiences, and I answered that I had five months at General Electric in the Finance Department. He explained that only jobs lasting six months or longer could be accepted; but he said, "Let's call it six months", and listed it. He then picked up the MOS manual, and turned to the Finance Section, which listed a dozen or more financial classifications. He handed me the book, saying, "I don't know, pick the one that fits." The one that fit was "Accountant, Clerk", but instead, I picked: "Accountant, General", which was much more prestigious. He read the qualifications, and asked, "Can you do all that?" I answered, "Most of it." He said, "Hell, they'll teach you what you have to know", and gave me the MOS for Accountant, General. I thanked him, and took my paper work over to the Chief interviewer for review.

The chief interviewer reviewed the data, and spotted a mistake. My interviewer had written Accountant, General in one place, but General Accountant in another place. The chief called him over and pointed out that only Accountant, General was proper Army language, and changed the offending phrase. He then said: "This guy is a "Specialist", wrote Specialist Across the form, and tossed it into the complete file. As a result, I was sent to Fort Dix, New Jersey for eight weeks of basic training, and then to Finance School at Fort Benjamin Harrison, Indiana.

It only took one week to test and classify us, but then we had to wait for transportation to New Jersey, and we could not go until the previous batch of basic trainees vacated the barracks at fort Dix. For the next two weeks, we pulled KP and other duties during the day, and hung around the PX in the evening, drinking sodas and listening to the juke box. Unfortunately, the most popular song was "I Saw Mommy Kissing Santa Claus", and here I was, separated from Barbara after four weeks of marriage. We were allowed visitors on Sunday afternoon, and Barb drove up from Manchester for a two hour reunion.

On December 22, they shipped us, and new recruits from other induction camps, to Fort Dix, where I was assigned to the Service Battery of the 84th Field Artillery Battalion. Some thirty years later, my son, Tom, served in the same outfit during one of his hitches in his twenty year Army career. We were not supposed to arrive until after January 1st, and the training cadre was very unhappy because their Christmas leave was cancelled. Obviously, the induction center general had more pull than the training center general! Since our eight-week training cycle would not start until mid January, we were in for another three weeks of KP and fatigue duty.

Even though we were only doing make-work, we could get no leave or weekend passes. We were confined to the base through both Christmas and New Years. I managed to get a room in the visitor's quarters for New Years Eve, and Barbara took the train to Trenton, and a bus to fort Dix, for a stolen two days together. There were many New York and New Jersey recruits in the outfit, and three of them from Newark went AWOL over New Years. They were caught, but the Battalion Commander was death on AWOL's, so they were given two weeks company punishment, and not reported to Battalion. They were assigned to the supply room for extra duty every evening, and after two weeks, they were friends with the supply sergeant. Consequently, when our eight weeks of training started, we all marched to the rifle range, while they rode on the ammo trucks!

No one in Service Battery was fully qualified for frontline infantry service. Most of us were "C" profiles, me because of my eyesight. Since I had to wear glasses to aim an M1 rifle, I was not considered fit for combat. Everyone had been assigned to a non-combatant school. Seven of us were going to Finance School, and the rest were mostly slated to be cooks or field wiremen. Halfway through the eight week cycle, twelve of us were called out of formation and told that we were all qualified for Officers Candidate School. If we were interested, we would be transferred to a 16 week infantry cycle, where we could apply for OCS. Someone asked: "What if we weren't accepted for OCS?" Then we could transfer back to an 8 week cycle, IF there was room! The Korean War is raging! Twelve NO's!

I finally drew some boots at fort Dix, and sent my scuffed and bedraggled civilian shoes home to Barbara. Because Dick spent 16 weeks in basic in the summer, and I spent only 8 weeks in the winter, I did not lose weight like he did, and I wore my ill-fitting Ike Jackets for two years. Dick was still at Fort Dix when I got there, waiting for transfer to fort Bliss and OCS. He gave me good advice about surviving in basic training. The emphasis in our cycle was on physical fitness, lots of PT and hiking to the rifle range. We also had to qualify with a high enough score shooting the M1 Rifle. My nearsightedness made it impossible for me to see the target at 500 yards, and I saw lots of "Maggie's Drawers", (the red flag denoting a complete miss of the target). If you did not qualify, you could not complete your basic training. Several of us, including me, qualified with an "M1 Pencil", adjusting the actual score to a passing grade.

Finally, after eight weeks, we were shipped off to our schools, seven of us to Fort Benjamin Harrison in Indianapolis, Indiana. The transportation office issued us each train tickets from Trenton to Indianapolis, via Philadelphia. They also issued meal tickets for dinner, breakfast, and lunch, but only one for each meal, in the name of "Private Bean and six men". Pat McGinnis, who was single, had his car on post, and was going to drive to Indiana, and turn in his train tickets at Fort Ben. "Private Bean" and two others were going with him, leaving three of us on the train. Because of crowding, they ran out of berths, and there were three roomette tickets. We took them and also the meal tickets, since the others would be reimbursed for their travel by car. We were allowed any dinner except steak and any breakfast on the train. When we got to Indianapolis, the downtown USO center directed us to a restaurant who would accept army meal tickets, and the owner gave the value of seven lunches to the three of us. The USO center was very helpful, and the ladies sewed our new finance patches onto our uniforms.

We bussed out to Fort Benjamin Harrison, located on the northeast outskirts of Indianapolis, Indiana, and signed in, ready for Finance School. The executive officer of Service Battery, a reservist, told me that I would like Fort Ben, because "they didn't go in for a lot of soldiering out there" Both the Army Finance School and the Adjutant Generals School were located at the Fort. I was assigned to Class 29 - Financial Procedures, and me and my classmates shared one barracks, and marched to class.

The school was twelve weeks in length, and married students were allowed to live off post. I found a room with kitchen privileges on Meridian Street in Indianapolis, and made plans for Barbara to come out. I had classes from Monday morning through Saturday noon, and she had our car in Manchester. Barbara's Mother didn't want her to drive to Indianapolis by herself, and I couldn't make a round trip in thirty six hours. My cousin, Walter, was hanging around Manchester, waiting to be drafted, and he agreed to drive Barbara to Pittsburgh in our car. Our high school classmate, Betty Chapman, had married George Connors, and they were living just outside Pittsburgh, in Canonsburg, PA. I would take the train to Pittsburgh on Saturday, meet Barbara and Walter, and drive back to Indianapolis with Barbara on Sunday, while Walter returned to Hartford on the train.

"The best laid plans of mice and men go oft astray!" Barbara and Walter left Manchester on Friday morning, had crossed New York and New Jersey, and were heading west on the Pennsylvania Turnpike, when our '48 Chevy blew a piston rod. Walter was driving, and for over fifty years, he has refused to tell me just how fast he was driving. They were near the eastern end of the Turnpike, got towed off, and found a garage whose mechanic said he could fix it, but it would take the rest of the day, and part of the night. They found a rooming house nearby, and stayed overnight, calling Betty to say they would be a day late. Knowing none of this, I took the Saturday afternoon train, arriving in Pittsburgh about the same that Barbara and Walter did. The auto repairs took all of the cash that both Barbara and Walter had with them, so I had to give Walter all my cash for his train fare home. After spending the night with the Connors, we limped back to Indianapolis on Sunday, because the crankshaft was "out of round", and we couldn't drive faster than forty miles per hour.

Besides Barbara and I, Stanley and Vickie Halgas also had a room with the kindly old Grandmother, who shared her kitchen and dining room with us. Stanley was at Finance School with me, and he and Vickie came from Thompsonville, Connecticut. At first we shared the buying and cooking of meals with them, but they had champagne tastes, and we had beer pocketbooks, so we each bought and cooked separately. Barbara had inquired about a job with Traveler's regional office, but they had no openings, so she went to work for Aetna's regional claims office. There she met Pat Matthews, whose husband Bob, was an Army CID agent, stationed in Indianapolis, and was using the local recruiting office as cover. We didn't learn of Bob's true assignment until after we were both discharged.

Once Barbara arrived, and I moved out of the barracks, I still was required to make the company formation twice a day, and then march in formation to the school building at the center of the post. After the morning session, a bus would take us to the mess hall near the barracks area for lunch. At the end of the afternoon session, I would have to try and catch the dinner bus, or hike back to the barracks' parking lot to get my car. So, after morning formation, the other three classmates who lived off post, and I would slip out the back way and drive our cars to the school parking lot. Several of the single men with cars, saw this and followed suit. Next, all of us stopped making morning formation altogether, and drove straight to our morning class. Corporal Scurlock, our class leader would still salute the first sergeant each morning and report: "Class 29, all present and accounted for."

A week before the Kentucky Derby, one classmate went out of town, had an auto accident, and was hospitalized. This was reported to company headquarters, and on Monday morning Cpl Scurlock reported: "Class 29, one man AWOL." He repeated this each formation until Wednesday morning when the first sergeant, noticing all of us missing, said: "One man, hell. Fifty Percent AWOL!" Cpl Scurlock was instructed to turn in the names of everyone who was missing, and we were told that we would spend Saturday afternoon, (We only had classes on Saturday morning), learning how to make formations. Pat McGinnis was among those missing, and instead of driving to the Kentucky Derby, he watched it from the dayroom with the rest of us "AWOLS", in between falling out for a formation every hour. His fiancée in Massachusetts had sent him \$5 to bet on Dark Star when he got to Churchill Downs. He considered finding a bookie downtown, but undefeated Native Dancer was the odds-on favorite, and he figured it was a lost cause. Dark Star, of course, upset Native Dancer and won the Derby, paying 50 to 1. Pat's ex-fiancée was home in Worcester, counting her \$250, until Pat broke the bad news to her.

In June, I graduated first in my class from Finance School, and was assigned to the Finance Center, which was in the middle of a move from St. Louis to Ft. Benjamin. We located a two room apartment at 2424 Park Avenue, and moved there before driving to Manchester for two weeks leave. The Matthews rode home with us, and continued on to Houlton, Maine where they lived. They flew back to Indianapolis, and we made the return trip by ourselves. Carl Bishop, from Warwick, Rhode Island, who graduated second, was also assigned to the Finance Center. After graduation, he flew to Rhode Island, and returned to Indianapolis by car with his new bride, Tina. Tina went to work for GMAC, where she met Audrey Chiro, from New Orleans, whose husband, Russell, was attached to the Adjutant General's School. The eight of us became fast friends, and spent many of our off-duty hours together. After fifty years, we still correspond, and meet now and then for reunions.

I was assigned to the Final Pay Division of the Finance Center, which was located in a leased automobile dealer's garage on route 40 in downtown Indianapolis. Barb was working at Aetna in the center of the city, and I would drop her off on my way to work. She took the bus home. The new Army Finance Center was under construction at Fort Ben, and the various divisions had been moved to rented locations around the city in anticipation of its completion. The building was in the shape of a square figure eight with two courtyards, and was called "The Little Pentagon". I did not have to report to company headquarters except on Thursday nights for a "Troop Information Program" session, also known as either "TIP" or "Poop the Troops".

Carl Bishop was assigned to a division with office space on Post, and he kept me informed of critical company happenings. One of which was rain duty. While the outside of the new building was finished, they were still working on the interior, including the air conditioning. Since Indianapolis summers are hot and humid, all the windows were kept open 24 hours a day. If it rained during the day, construction workers could close the windows, but they didn't work at night. So all ranks below corporal had to pull rain duty and sleep on cots in the cafeteria area, ready to close windows if it rained. What fun!

The Final Pay Division was responsible for reviewing the pay records of everyone who was discharged, and paying both their final Mustering Out Pay installment, and anything else that was owed to the discharge. Of course, if they owed anything to Uncle Sam, we deducted it from their MOP. But, mostly we made payments, because while soldiers were at the front in Korea, they were only given partial payments of ten or twenty dollars per month. When they were shipped back for discharge, most of their records were in Korea or in transit. They were given their last month's pay, \$100 MOP, and travel pay home. All partial payments were sent back to St Louis, and entered into a computer. We had IBM listings of all partials which we used to reconstruct the actual pay status and send a check for the balance owed. We used to receive letters from disgruntled ex service men complaining about the slowness of our service. Of course, these were usually from someone with a bad record who owed money to the army for fines or lost property. I received one letter from a writer who threatened to call the President, and if that didn't work, he was going "right to Uncle Sam!"

At last, the Finance Center was finished, and ready for occupancy. Now I had to drive to the Fort every day, and Barbara had to bus both ways to Aetna, downtown. Most of the employees at the Finance Center were civilians, and they were supported by two groups of enlisted men, the majority from Headquarters Company, to which Carl and I belonged, and the 7th Finance Disbursing Unit. They moved the divisions on separate days, and the 7th FDU got Thursday off, when they were moved. We were moved on Friday, and had to report to work, to help move furniture. Since I lived off post, I could not wear my fatigues except on post, so I went in my class A's and carried my fatigues. There was very little work to do since our stuff had not arrived, so I didn't change, but the executive officer of the 7th FDU put me on his S list, because I wasn't helping his men move their furniture. (After he had given them Thursday off!)

Finally, everyone was moved in, and we settled down to continue our normal assignments. But, whoever designed the building and its parking lot neglected to investigate the route of the only bus service from Indianapolis to Fort Harrison. The bus to the Fort went north on Meridian Ave from the circle and then northeast on Massachusetts Ave. Anyone who did not live on the line had to take a bus from their neighborhood down to the circle, and transfer to the bus to the Fort. This was next to impossible, so all the civilian employees drove their cars to work, and the parking lot could not hold all the cars. Someone spotted the cement floor from a former airplane hangar across the access road from the parking lot, and the rest of the overflow started parking there. Unfortunately, they had to cross ten feet of muddy fill, and frequently got stuck. The post engineer decided to remedy the problem by having an enlisted work party dig out the muddy soil and replace it with gravel. Guess who the 7th FDU exec picked from his S list for the work party?

The work party consisted of one reservist sergeant, two PFC's, one pick axe, two shovels, and one dump truck with a civilian driver. The sergeant, being a reservist and not regular army, allocated the work among the three of us. Two would rest, while one broke of the soil with the pick axe. Then one would rest while the other two shoveled the dirt into the dump truck. We rotated the work so everyone did both tasks, and we took a long lunch hour, and coffee breaks in the cafeteria. We had to go down two feet, and were able to move about sixty cubic feet a day. After two weeks, we had completed thirty feet out or one sixth of the distance required.

The head of the post coal yard then showed up looking for his dump truck which had been lost to him for ten days. He saw how hard it was to loosen the soil with our pick axe, so he sent over the power shovel from the coal yard. However, the teeth had been removed from the bucket, because they were useless while moving coal, and the power shovel couldn't dent the ground. So he sent over a road grader whose blade neatly plowed up the soil. Then the power shovel, loaded the dirt into the dump truck. With about twenty feet more to go, the truck disappeared with a flat tire. The post engineer showed up, and told the shovel operator to go away, the guys with the shovels were supposed to load the truck. The road grader left, with nothing to do, and then we spent the next two weeks using pick axe and hand shovels. After we had spread the gravel they dumped in our hole, our work party was disbanded and we returned to our normal finance duties.

Or so we thought! Now that the civilians could safely cross the gravel to the hangar base, they started driving off the far side, which was also muddy. The post engineer's solution was to sink sections of steel railroad track along the far edge of the cement platform. They reactivated their team of professional parking lot fixers, and gave us a posthole digger to replace the pick axe and a stack of steel rails. They showed us where to plant the first post, and told us how many feet apart to put them. As we worked our way along, we discovered that the cement base did not have a clean edge; concrete had flowed outward in a haphazard pattern. The flimsy posthole digger could not penetrate the cement, so we just moved outward until we found clear soil. Of course, the row of posts was not in a straight line, so the engineer blew his stack, fired us and did it over with a pneumatic drill.

This time when I returned to the Final Pay Division, they had re-assigned my cases to someone else. I finished out my term in another division, posting unsatisfied RQSA's to the records of people who had left the Army with unpaid claims against them. Any records with money owed to the army were sent from the Final Pay Division to the collection department. This department would dun the ex-serviceman for up to one full year, threatening all sorts of dire consequences unless they ponied up. If they did not pay within the allotted year, we posted the charge to the man's last pay record, to be collected if he ever returned to active duty. This job was neither as challenging nor as satisfying as delivering a man's final pay to him.

Being put on the parking lot detail by the lieutenant, was only one instance of pettiness and vindictiveness by army officers that I observed on a regular basis. Before the Finance Center was moved to Benjamin Harrison, the fort contained only the Finance and Adjutant Generals schools, and supporting troops. It was not large enough to be commanded by a general, and the Post Commander was Colonel Stagliano. The Finance Center was commanded by Brigadier General Bean, and Headquarters Company, to which I had been assigned upon graduation reported to him. When General Bean arrived on post, he wanted the number one card and parking space at the officer's club, which is always assigned to the post commander. Colonel Stagliano would not give it up, and the Pentagon agreed with him.

To get even, General Bean issued orders of the day to his troops which conflicted with those issued by Colonel Stagliano for the rest of the fort. The post dress rule was Class B, (no tie) during work hours (8 to 5), and Class A, (with tie) after 5 PM. The general's dress rule was Class B, day and night. This drove the MP's crazy, since they had to stop everyone on base after 5 without a tie, issue citations to post personnel, but let us go free. This required them to check everyone's ID for company assignment. The colonel retaliated by closing the nine-hole golf course on post to enlisted men, making it for officers only. This affected the draftees assigned to the Finance Center, but not the career NCOs on post, who didn't play golf. Some draftee assigned to the center discovered that the course had been built with money from the enlisted men's fund. Rather than re-open the course, Special Services made deals with three local country clubs, and we could get free passes to these courses every weekend. They were all well-kept 18-hole courses while the post nine-holes were in poor shape, so we made out just fine.

Since that did not work, the colonel's next step was to segregate the post swimming pool. Every other day was designated either "O" for officers or "E" for enlisted men. This only applied to service men; wives and children were allowed daily use of the pool. Sergeant Breaux, who was in Final Pay with me, complained that he couldn't swim with officers, but his son could! Sergeant Breaux owned an Oldsmobile 88 and used to cruise route 100 in the evenings, looking for Hudson Hornets to race. There was a Mobil station on the corner of Post Road, and he had a Mobil Credit Card. Whenever he was short of cash, the owner would bill his credit card \$5.00 for one used tire, and give him the cash. One month, he told me, there were six used tires on his Mobil bill!

When William was born on March 14, 1954, our landlady kicked us out of 2424 Park Avenue, because "children" were not allowed in the apartment house. I can't blame them, because it was an old one family house divided into three apartments. Our kitchen, where William's crib was located, was separated from our landlady's bedroom by a thin cardboard wall. We lucked into a side by side duplex just outside the front gate of the post at 5225 Post Road, and I was able to walk to the Finance Center. We shared the building with Patsy and Walt Sailor, draftees like us from Tennessee. The place was small, but comfortable. We had a living room with a roll-out day bed, an eat-in kitchen, and a dressing room large enough for Will's crib and bassinet. I was promoted to corporal, but we still lived hand to mouth. Barbara's family allotment check for \$154 was mailed to her mother, who forged Barb's name and deposited it in our checking account. I drew \$100 cash on payday (the 1st), gave \$90 of it to our landlord, and had \$10 to spend until Barbara's check cleared.

We managed to survive until my discharge at the end of November 1954. For Thanksgiving dinner, I took back all our empty soda bottles and bought two chicken pot pies. On November 30th, we loaded everything we owned into our 1948 Chevy, expecting to be on our way by 10 AM, like all recent discharges. But inter-company squabbling caused the hospital to hold up my clearance until 4 PM. We finally left at 5 PM, and drove back to Manchester. Except for William and his clothes and baby furniture everything we had was two years old. I left Barbara and William in Manchester with Barbara's parents, and went back to Pittsfield and my job at General Electric. I found us a single house for rent at 34 Catherine Street, and in January 1955, we started on our life's journey as civilians.

NO GUNS ON SUNDAY

Chapter XIV

Barbara Jean Hall

I first met Barbara in September of 1945, at the start of our sophomore year at Manchester high School. In "Doc" Emery's Biology class, I sat directly behind her, and always borrowed her little steel ruler whenever we had to make drawings of the specimens that we dissected. I didn't carry my twelve-inch ruler, because it wouldn't fit in any of my books, but she always carried her six-inch ruler, a gift from Carpenter Steel, courtesy of Dave O'Neil, a friend of her parents. Barbara grew up on the East Side, and attended Lincoln Elementary and Nathan Hale Junior High Schools, while I lived on the West Side, and went to Washington and Barnard. While we were both enrolled in the college preparatory course, she chose Spanish for her language elective, while I chose Latin. As freshmen, we were divided into sections by language choice, and took all four freshman classes with the same group of students. Biology was an elective in our sophomore year, and not everyone chose it, so students from different language groups met each other for the first time in "Doc's" Biology Class.

Barbara was also born in Manchester Memorial Hospital, on August 26, 1930. Her parents were Alton Alfred Hall and Mildred Gertrude Lipp, who drove to Miller's Falls, New York, in Alton's 1928 Model A Ford where they were married on August 27, 1929. Barbara's brother, Roger Alton Hall, was born on December 17, 1934. Both Alton, who was known affectionately as "A.A.", and Roger, sometimes called "R.A.", had flaming red hair in their youth. By the time that I met Barbara, A.A. was almost completely bald, with only a fringe of pure white hair. A.A. was a teacher at Howell Cheney Technical School in the 1920's, and I was startled one day to hear a former student call him "Red Hall". In 1927, he joined the Southern New England Telephone Company, and retired in 1967 with forty years of service. He was a member of the Telephone Company Pioneers Club.

"A.A."s mother, Elnora Walker Hall, died in 1907, when he was five years old, and he and his younger sister Daisy were adopted by his mother's cousin, Amy and Walter Brown. Mildred was the eldest of six children, and lived on her father's dairy farm, on Keeney Street in Manchester. Besides selling milk as the "J.J. Lipp & Son Dairy", her father, Jacob J. Lipp, also ran a livery stable, and raised broadleaf tobacco. Mildred's youngest sister, Avis, was born in July 1930, one month before Barbara, and was our classmate throughout high school. I actually met Avis before I met Barbara, because Avis and I both went to Barnard Junior High.

Mildred was in high school when A.A. was teaching at the trade school, and she used to drive one of her father's carriages back and forth to school from Keeney Street. A.A. was living on Hackmatack Street at the time, and used to ride home with Mildred. When they got to his house, he had to jump out of the carriage, because the horse, "Daisy" would not stop, after leaving the School Street livery stable, until she reached the Lipp barn. After graduation, like many of Manchester High graduates, Mildred worked for The Traveler's Insurance Company, in Hartford.

When Barbara was born, her parents lived on the West Side, but they shortly moved to a two family home at the top of Summit Street, near the Center of Town. In 1937, The Halls bought their first house at 37 Holl Street on the East Side. The house was one block from the East Cemetery, where all of our relatives are buried, and where Barbara and her neighborhood gang used to play. The Sealtest Dairy was even closer, and they also used to play hide and seek among the delivery trucks and empty cases. The two-family houses on either side of them were occupied by the Joyners and the Johnsons. A.A. and Mildred lived there until after A.A.'s retirement, when they moved to at Wells Village in Vernon.

The Halls were lifelong members of the South Methodist Church, where Barbara went to Sunday School, was confirmed, and went to Youth Fellowship. South Methodist was the site of our wedding and reception on November 1, 1952, William's baptism in 1954, and both A.A.'s and Mildred's funerals in 1985 and 1997. A.A. was a Mason, Mildred was a member of Eastern Star, and Barbara joined Rainbow Girls, ascending to the position of Worthy Advisor. Barbara was also active in Girl Scouts, from Brownies through Girl Scouts to Senior Girls.

Barbara took piano lessons from Fred Werner, who was the organist at Concordia Lutheran Church, but never stayed with it. Rather, she was into dancing, and, for several years, studied all its variations, as well as baton twirling, with June Jay. In her sophomore year, she became a majorette with the high school band, along with Jean Hannay, a junior, and Janet Wilson, a freshman. For the next three years, she marched in the holiday parades, twirled at football games, and went to state band festivals. She was a member of both drama clubs, Paint and Powder, and Sock and Buskin. She took part in both Girls Leaders and Y-teens, and was on the Student Council in her senior year.

While I borrowed her steel ruler all throughout our sophomore year, I didn't get up the courage to ask her for a date until our junior year. I would walk her home from school, and stay for after school snacks, which we didn't have on Cooper Street, and then catch the bus to the West Side. One night I was invited to stay for dinner, and Barbara's Boston Bull Terrier, Snooky, eyed every forkful of food that I put into my mouth, a new experience for me! We went to the movies and to a couple of "sock hops" and I took her to the Junior Prom. Unfortunately, she was an accomplished dancer, and I had two left feet, so we broke up before our senior year.

Sock and Buskin, the Junior-Senior dramatic club, held a formal dance every spring. The faculty advisor, Helen Page Skinner, insisted that every member go to the prom. If you didn't make a date, she would make it for you. In our junior year, she paired me up with Gloria Ferrell, and paired up Norman Kronick with Kathleen Gilroy, and my father drove the four of us to the prom. The next year, I made my own date with Jean Monast. Barbara was in charge of decorations for the dance that year, and she decided that the theme would be "Cherry Blossoms for Spring". She got scads of tree branches, and had everyone in the club twisting pink crepe paper on them. Our proms were always held in the third floor auditorium, and she got the janitors to string wires across the room from the tops of the windows. I volunteered to help lay the branches across the wires, and stayed after school to do this. It was late when we finished, and only Barbara, myself, and Helen Page Skinner were left. She offered the both of us a ride home, which we accepted. She knew who was dating who, and as we were getting into her car she said: "Do you both want to ride in the back, for old time's sake?" We didn't share the back seat, and we both went to the Senior Reception with other dates, but we finally got together again for our escapade at the senior class picnic. (See Chapter VIII for details.)

After Graduation, Barbara followed in her mother's footsteps, and went to work at The Traveler's Insurance Company in Hartford. We dated all summer, and then in September I left for Wesleyan University in Middletown, Connecticut. Since I worked six days a week washing dishes, I only got home on holidays and vacations, even though I was only thirty miles away. I faithfully wrote a letter to Barbara every week, and I think that they are still among her keepsakes. Her father was now the manager of Manchester's Central Office Maintenance for SNETCO, and needed his phone for telephone company business. Although he received a bill each month, it was totally written off as a company expense. Out of the goodness of A.A.'s, (and the phone company's) heart, I was allowed to make a collect phone call to 37 Holl Street each Thursday evening.

Barbara came to Wesleyan for both the Fall and Spring Houseparty Weekends, and also for the Junior Prom. The Virginia Lodge, on Washington Street, near the campus rented rooms by the night, and put up several girls, including Barbara, for each weekend. Since I had no car, we walked everywhere on campus and downtown Middletown. Although we were only eighteen, liquor was sold and served to all comers at the fraternity houses, and we both had our first (and other) mixed drinks. The most popular drink at Wesleyan in 1948 was "Rye & Ginger", because it went down so easily.

In 1949, Barbara got a scholarship from the Methodist Church, and talked her parents into allowing her to use it at Wesley College in Dover, Delaware. Wesley is now a four-year college, but in 1949, it was a two-year junior college, awarding an Associate of Arts Degree to successful graduates. Barbara was a straight "A" student, and was elected to Phi Theta Kappa, (the Junior College equivalent of Phi Beta Kappa) during both years. Barbara's second roommate and best friend at Wesley was Beverly Hoffnagle, from Bristol, Connecticut. After graduation, Barbara was Beverly's Maid of Honor, when she married Tom Booth, and then Beverly was Barbara's Matron of Honor at our wedding.

Since Barbara was in Dover, all the Thursday night phone calls were stopped, so we had to rely solely on the US Mails. On May 1st, every year the city of Dover has Dover Days, with celebrations throughout the city. Wesley College celebrates "May Day" with the election of a May Queen, and her Court. In 1950, Barbara was elected "Duchess" of the Court, and I took two trains and two busses from Middletown to Dover, to spend the weekend at Wesley with her. I bunked in the boy's dorm, which was a Quonset Hut, with Tom Booth, and after Saturday night's dance, the four of us spent the night at Tom's Mother's house in Boothwin, Pennsylvania, just north of Wilmington, Delaware.

The Sunday morning paper said that there was a train strike, but when I called the Wilmington Station, they said that the train to New York was running as scheduled. I said good-bye to Barb, and Bev, and Tom in Wilmington, and took the train to Pennsylvania Station in New York. When I got off the shuttle from Penn Station to Grand Central Station, I entered a world of chaos. It was the New York, New Haven, and Hartford Railroad that was on strike, and no trains were running to New England! I had to spend the night at the YWCA Sloan House, and fight the crowds to get a bus to Middletown on Monday, missing a full day of classes.

In the spring of 1951, I really wanted Barbara to come to Wesleyan for "my" Junior Prom, but her mother couldn't send her money for the trip. Having worked three years for "Heide", I got her a room for free with the Heidemans, and she could eat all her meals with me at Downey House. her only expense would be the train fare, which neither of us had. The Middlesex Hospital was paying \$25 a pint to blood donors, so I sold them a pint of my blood, and sent the check to Barbara, who used it to come up from Delaware for the Prom. She forged a parental permission slip, and made the weekend round trip without telling her mother.

Barbara received her AA Degree, with Honor from Wesley in May of 1951, and her folks took me and her Brother, Roger, to the graduation exercises. She returned to Manchester and went back to work at Traveler's. That summer, we pooled our resources, and bought a 1940 Chevrolet two-door sedan. Since I was on scholarship, and couldn't have a car on campus, we registered it in her name. It had a hood decoration which was a swan with plastic wings which lit up when you turned on the headlights. Bob Turek dubbed it: "A car with a bird on the front with a light in its ass!" Our first trip in our first car was on Labor Day Weekend, when we drove to Booth's Corners to visit Tom and Beverly Booth in their new little house. Barbara kept the car at her parent's house, and used it to commute to Hartford. She would drive to Middletown for visits, football games, and party weekends.

On the last day of spring vacation in 1952, while home in Manchester, I had a serious appendicitis attack. Dr. Sundquist removed the offending organ in Manchester Memorial Hospital. I was covered as a dependent by Dad's Pratt & Whitney Health Insurance, which paid the bills. Wesleyan also had a health insurance policy on us students, and since I missed a week of classes, they filed a second claim, and on my return to Middletown, presented me with a check for \$100. The next weekend, Barbara and I went to Michael's Jewelers, and I used the check for a down payment on a diamond engagement ring. On Sunday, May 10, 1952, we became officially engaged at a family luncheon, and we set Saturday, November 1, 1952 as our wedding day.

In June, I graduated from Wesleyan, and went to work for General Electric, in Pittsfield, Massachusetts. My roommate for the last three years at Wesleyan was Richard "Judge" Bowers, who also lived in Manchester. While we were at Wesleyan, the Korean War broke out, and we were classified as 2A - Student, and deferred from being drafted. I used to drive to Manchester each weekend to see Barbara, and finalize our wedding plans. Shortly after our graduation, Judge was notified that he had been reclassified 1A, and three weeks later I received the same notification. He then received a notice to take his physical exam in New Haven, and then took his physical. I was notified exactly three weeks after Judge, and took my physical three weeks later.

I figured that based on those happenings, I would be drafted three weeks after Judge, and asked him to keep me posted, as to our status. That summer, we sold the blue 1940 Chevy, and bought a black 1948 Chevy Fleetline Fastback. I found a one bedroom furnished apartment in Pittsfield, and moved from my single room to the apartment on October 1st, having received no bad news from Judge. On October 8th, a letter arrived in my new mailbox stating: "Greetings from the President of the United States ... You will report for active duty in the United States Army on Monday, November 3, 1952!"

It was Wednesday evening when I checked the mail box, and I had eaten supper on the way home from work. I didn't have a telephone, so I went out to a pay phone and called Barbara, to tell her the "good" news. Thursday morning I called my boss at GE, drove to Manchester, and called Judge Bowers, who hadn't heard a word from the draft board. During high school, Barbara had worked at Hale's Department Store, and her ex-boss was now head of the local draft board. She called him and informed him of our plans to get married two days before Uncle Sam wanted me. After we delivered a Wedding Invitation, and a copy of our engagement announcement from the paper which stated that a fall wedding was planned, the draft board met and deferred my induction until December 1st.

We were married as planned at the South Methodist Church on November 1, 1952. Besides Beverly Hoffnagle Booth, Barbara's attendants were Lois Olson, Connie Rogers, Priscilla St. Pierre, and Sharon Lipp. Bob Turek was my Best Man, and my brothers and Barbara's brother were ushers. After a honeymoon trip to Dover, Delaware; Williamsburg, Virginia; Mount Vernon; and Washington, DC; we returned to Pittsfield to spend the rest of the month at 88 Daniels Avenue, our first home. On Friday, November 28th, we packed up our clothes, and moved back to 37 Holl Street. On Monday, December 1st, I reported to the railroad station in Hartford for induction into the Army. Barbara went back to work at Traveler's and remained with her parents, until she was allowed to join me.

In March of 1953, I was sent to Finance School at Fort Benjamin Harrison, located on the northeast outskirts of Indianapolis, Indiana. The school was twelve weeks in length, and married students were allowed to live off post. Barbara drove out to join me, and we lived in Indianapolis until my discharge on November 30, 1954. William Roger Schubert was born on March 14, 1954 at the Ft. Ben. Army hospital, and cost us \$8.00.

We moved back to Pittsfield, Massachusetts, and I returned to work at General Electric. Lawrence Hall Schubert arrived on September 21, 1955, and Thomas Alan Schubert on January 15, 1958, each time Barbara was hoping for a daughter, and a bit disappointed. While she was in the hospital with Tom, a mother in Ohio had her first daughter after fourteen sons. I took the newspaper clipping in to Barb, and told her not to give up hope - only twelve more to go. She had me thrown out of the hospital!

At General Electric's Transformer Division, I was on their Business Training Course, and worked in various finance departments. When they bought an IBM 705 computer in 1956 to design power transformers, I was offered a job as a computer programmer, because I had majored in math at Wesleyan. I changed jobs in 1959, joining Teleregister in Stamford, Connecticut, as a Systems Engineer, programming and installing On-line Banking Systems. We moved to East Norwalk, Connecticut, and Nancy Jean Schubert was born on August 20, 1960. I did not believe the doctor when he called and said that I had a daughter.

I changed companies several times, and we moved twice more, before I retired in March of 1989. All positions involved system engineering support for computer products in various industries. In 1965 we moved to Lawrence Township, New Jersey, and I joined the RCA Graphic Systems Division. We built and installed the "Videocomp", a cathode ray tube photo setter, and the "Page One" composition system which supported it.

After RCA closed the Graphic Systems Division in 1971, for lack of business, we moved to Westboro, Massachusetts, where I rejoined RCA's UPC Division in Marlboro, to develop scanners and symbols for the supermarket industry. When IBM won the symbol competition, RCA shut down another business under me, in 1973. For the next two years, I was Vice President of Customer Services for Photon in Wilmington, who manufactured the "Pacesetter" phototypesetters. Finally in 1975, I joined Atex in Bedford, where I directed the installation and support of Newspaper editorial and classified ad composition systems. We did not move again, and I commuted some 40 miles each way for 16 years.

For details of my business career, see my other (as yet unwritten) memoir entitled "Summers in Miami, Winters in St. Paul". There is generally a six-month lag between the sale and installation of a computer system. It was early in my career as a systems engineer that I realized that the salesmen spent their winters in Florida and their summers in Minnesota, and my job commenced six months thereafter!

In October 1989, we moved to Sea Colony in Palm Coast, Florida, as empty nesters, having married off all our children. who have provided us with nine grandchildren, and one great grandson. Their wedding dates, and the names and birthdates of their children can be found in the attached appendices.

So, now it's just me and Barbara Jean Hall Schubert, my love and my helpmeet, mother and grandmother, who has given whatever anyone has needed, all her life. God Bless Her, for making my life complete.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14

- * Robert August Schubert Sr. (5-Sep-1876) - (3-Feb-1960) m. (?-___-1889) Anna Barbara Scheibenpflug (23-Jul-1875) - (6-Jun-1927)
 - m. (?) Fannie Scheibenpflug (9-May-1988) - (23-Dec-1977)
- * Bernhard Wilhelm Schubert (12-Mar-1900) - (11-Jun-1977) m. (25-Sep-1929) Jennie Amelia Lucas (23-May-1905) - (9-Mar-1988)
- * Walter Robert Schubert (24-Oct-1931) - m. (22-Oct-1955) Elaine Kenny (2-Oct-1933) - (Aug-2-2007)
- * Elizabeth Hedwig Schubert (8-Jul-1901) - (22-Jan-1979) m. (29-Jun-1922) James Grimason
 - m. (?) Harold Louis Hall (?) -
- * Elizabeth Anna Grimason (8-Jul-1923) - (Aug-15-2007) m. (17-Aug-1943) Raymond Schaller (5-Nov-1917) - (18-Mar-1999)
 - * Russell Allen Schaller (28-Aug-1945) - m. (?) Diane Krob
 - * Jeffery Allen Schaller (19-Jan-1970) -
 - * Heather Elizabeth Schaller (8-Mar-1972) - (30-May-1989)
 - * Kenneth Raymond Schaller (23-Oct-1947) - m. (?) June DeSimone (1-Jun-1950) -
 - * Matthew Adam Schaller (7-Aug-1978) -
 - * Emily Elizabeth Schaller (12-Mar-1982) -
 - * Linda Ellen Schaller (23-May-1952) - m. (?) Bruce James Fortuna (10-Dec-1953) -
 - * Barbara Ellen Hall (20-Mar-1937) - m. (?) Morgan Bowen Steele (2-May-1937) -
 - * Holly Beth Steele (31-Dec-1966) -
 - * Glen Morgan Steele (30-Oct-1970) -
 - * Janet Lynn Steele (16-Feb-1973) -
 - * Mildred Ruth Hall (8-Feb-1938) - m. (?) Arthur Porter (?) -
 - * Scott Porter (28-May-1972) -
 - * Nancy Lucille Hall (28-Jul-1940) - (3-Dec-2003) m. (?) Kenneth Tremaine Johnson (?) -
 - * Kurt Tremaine Johnson (7-Aug-1962) - m. (?) Yvonne Cullina (11-Dec-1963) -
 - * Eric Robert Johnson (28-Feb-1965) -
 - * Robert Bernhard Schubert Jr. (14-Feb-1903) - (25-Jan-1993) m. (24-Jul-1926) Gladys Marie Fuller (12-Dec-1905) - (26-Jun-1997)
 - * Carol Ann Schubert (3-Apr-1930) - m. (11-Feb-1961) David Shepherd Sutcliffe (16-Jun-1922) - (Mar-22-2000)
 - * Mark Stephen Sutcliffe (5-Feb-1963) -
 - * Alice May Schubert (23-Apr-1941) - m. (27-Jan-1962) William H Hefferon (20-Apr-1937) -
 - * William Scott Hefferon (25-Jul-1962) -
 - * Tammy Ann Hefferon (7-Nov-1967) -
 - * Robert Bernard Schubert III. (17-Feb-1943) - m. (?) Carol Chamberlain (21-May-1947) - (26-Jan-1996)
 - * Kimberly Schubert (24-Nov-1971) - m.(?) Andrew Margonis (?) -
 - * Kristen Schubert (13-Nov-1974) -
 - * Max Joseph Schubert (27-Mar-1904) - (3-Mar-1975) m. (8-Sep-1928) Lena Margaret Roth (12-May-1906) - (4-Jan-1992)
 - * Richard Max Schubert (26-Mar-1929) - (11-Jul-1997) m. (25-Jul-1953) Marguerite Elizabeth Hinrichs (22-Jan-1932) -
 - m. (29-Oct-1973) Mary J. Clarke (5-Feb-1939) - (2-Feb-1996)
 - * Ralph Martin Schubert (31-Mar-1955) - m. (23-Oct-1982) Sandra Arlene Kottwitz (6-Sep-1957) -
 - * Timothy Paul Schubert (22-Aug-1986) -
 - * Jonathan William Schubert (31-Mar-1990) -
 - * Benjamin Joseph Schubert (15-Apr-1996) -
 - * Britney Nicole Schubert (18-Jul-1996) -
 - * Steven Wayne Schubert (17-Aug-1999) -
 - * Paul Arnold Schubert (31-Mar-1961) - m. (?) Teri Lynn Thomas (30-Jan-1962) -
 - * Tarrah Leigh Thomas Schubert (16-Sep-1980) -
 - * Francis Maxwell Schubert (15-Jun-1989) -
 - * Ellen Elizabeth Schubert (5-Mar-1963) - m. (9-Apr-1988) John Richard Giglio (29-Apr-1960) -
 - m. (31-Dec-2001) John Gast
 - * Jordan Tyler Giglio (15-Jun-1992) -

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14

- ... * Roger Edward Schubert (21-Mar-1930) - m. (1-Nov-1952) Barbara Jean Hall (26-Aug-1930) -
- ... * William Roger Schubert (14-Mar-1954) - m. (24-Oct-1981) Robyn Louise Whipple (19-Mar-1957) -
- ... * Laura Beth Schubert (15-Mar-1986) -
- ... * Eric William Schubert (9-Dec-1988) -
- ... * Lawrence Hall Schubert (21-Sep-1955) - m. (1-Nov-1986) Lisa Amols (12-Oct-1955) -
m. 11-May-1996) Judith Drew (21-Sep-1960)-
- ... * Russell Leland Schubert (1-Sep-1987) -
- ... * Rachel Larissa Schubert (15-Dec-1989) -
- ... * Thomas Alan Schubert (15-Jan-1958) - m. (9-Jun-1986) Michelle Cervice Morgan (22-May-1962) -
- ... * Tori (Dawn) Schubert (17-Dec-1981) -
- ... * Ryan Edward Schubert (9-Jul-1983) -
- ... * Denise Schubert (15-Dec-1984) -
- ... * Oren Michael Schubert (18-Sep-2006)
- ... * Nancy Jean Schubert (20-Aug-1960) - m. (2-Jun-1984) Christopher Joseph Riffe (14-May-1960) -
- ... * Cara Jean Riffe (30-Jun-1994) -
- ... * Daniel Jacob Riffe (20-Nov-1995) -
- ... * Allan Roth Schubert (7-Oct-1934) - m. (9-Oct-1954) Mary McIntosh (9-Mar-1934) -
- ... * Mary Alice Schubert (12-Mar-1957) - m. (3-Jun-1984) Jonathan Bernard (15-Jun-1951) -
- ... * Nina Rose Bernard (1-Jan-1989) -
- ... * Andrew Thomas Schubert (9-Jul-1958) -
- ... * Christopher Allan Schubert (30-Nov-1961) - m. (12-Sep-1989) Sharon Ingellis (3-May-1963) -
- ... * Thomas Allan Schubert (13-Apr-1993) -
- ... * Joseph Patrick Schubert (09-Feb-1998) -
- ... * Margaret Anna Schubert (15-Nov-1912) - (31-Jan-1988) m. (1-Jun-1937) Joseph Sherwood Wright (3-Jun-1909) - (29-Jun-1969)
- ... * Thomas Robert Wright (28-Aug-1945) - m. (?) Camelia Louise McKinney (22-Feb-1950) -
- ... * Margaret Wright (9-May-1970) -
- ... * Thomas Wright (14-Apr-1972) -
- ... * Douglas James Wright (21-Aug-1950) - m. (?) Ceil Ann Bator (31-Aug-1951) -
- ... * Angeline Marie Wright (7-Apr-1975) -
- ... * Matthew James Wright (21-Jun-1977) -

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14

- * John Roth (25-Feb-1878) - (18-Sep-1937) m. (25-Jun-1904) Katherine Thuck (6-Jan-1886) - (6-Apr-1959)
- . * William John Roth (10-Apr-1905) - (24-Jul-1905)
- . * Lena Margaret Roth (12-May-1906) - (4-Jan-1992) m. (8-Sep-1928) Max Joseph Schubert (27-Mar-1904) - (3-Mar-1975)
- . . * Richard Max Schubert (26-Mar-1929) - (11-Jul-1997) m. (25-Jul-1953) Marguerite Elizabeth Hinrichs (22-Jan-1932) -
m. (29-Oct-1973) Mary J. Clarke (5-Feb-1939) - (2-Feb-1996)
- . . . * Ralph Martin Schubert (31-Mar-1955) - m. (23-Oct-1982) Sandra Arlene Kottwitz (6-Sep-1957) -
- * Timothy Paul Schubert (22-Aug-1986) -
- * Jonathan William Schubert (31-Mar-1990) -
- * Benjamin Joseph Schubert (15-Apr-1996) -
- *Britney Nicole Schubert (18-Jul-1996)-
- *Steven Wayne Schubert (17-Aug-1999)-
- . . . * Paul Arnold Schubert (31-Mar-1961) - m. (?) Teri Lynn Thomas (30-Jan-1962) -(?-?-1998)
- * Tarrah Leigh Thomas Schubert (16-Sep-1980) -
- * Francis Maxwell Schubert (15-Jun-1989) -
- . . . * Ellen Elizabeth Schubert (5-Mar-1963) - m. (9-Apr-1988) John Richard Giglio (29-Apr-1960) -
- * Jordan Tyler Giglio (15-Jun-1992) -
- . . * Roger Edward Schubert (21-Mar-1930) - m. (1-Nov-1952) Barbara Jean Hall (26-Aug-1930) -
- . . . * William Roger Schubert (14-Mar-1954) - m. (24-Oct-1981) Robyn Louise Whipple (19-Mar-1957) -
- * Laura Beth Schubert (15-Mar-1986) -
- * Eric William Schubert (9-Dec-1988) -
- . . . * Lawrence Hall Schubert (21-Sep-1955) - m. (1-Nov-1986) Lisa Amols (12-Oct-1955) -
m.(11-May-1996) Judeth Drew (21-Sep-1960)-
- * Russell Leland Schubert (1-Sep-1987) -
- * Rachel Larissa Schubert (15-Dec-1989) -
- . . . * Thomas Alan Schubert (15-Jan-1958) - m. (9-Jun-1986) Michelle Cervice Morgan (22-May-1962) -
- * Tori (Dawn) Schubert (17-Dec-1981) -
- * Ryan Edward Schubert (9-Jul-1983) -
- * Denise Schubert (15-Dec-1984) -
- * Oren Michael Schubert (18-Sep-2006)
- . . . * Nancy Jean Schubert (20-Aug-1960) - m. (2-Jun-1984) Christopher Joseph Riffe (14-May-1960) -
- * Cara Jean Riffe (30-Jun-1994) -
- * Daniel Jacob Riffe (20-Nov-1995) -
- . . * Allan Roth Schubert (7-Oct-1934) - m. (9-Oct-1954) Mary McIntosh (9-Mar-1934) -
- . . . * Mary Alice Schubert (12-Mar-1957) - m. (3-Jun-1984) Jonathan Bernard (15-Jun-1951) -
- * Nina Rose Bernard (1-Jan-1989) -
- . . . * Andrew Thomas Schubert (9-Jul-1958) -
- . . . * Christopher Allan Schubert (30-Nov-1961) - m. (12-Sep-1989) Sharon Ingellis (3-May-1963) -
- * Thomas Allan Schubert (13-Apr-1993) -
- * Joseph Patrick Schubert (09-Feb-1998) -
- . * Louise Ida Roth (21-Aug-1907) - (2-Nov-1957) m. (?) Carl Wiganoski (?) - (?)
- . * Albert John Roth (16-Mar-1909) -(12-Nov-1999) m. (28-Dec-1939) Ella Korder (4-Apr-1918) -(14-Nov-1999)
- . . * Alice Virginia Roth (2-Aug-1941) - m. (1-Oct-1966) John Wiehe (?) -
- . . . * Lynn Rochelle Wiehe (27-Jul-1968) - m. (28-Jul-1990) Kristopher Cornelius
- * Jared Wayne Cornelius (3-Dec-1992) -
- *Joshua Cornelius
- . . . * Michael John Wiehe (5-Feb-1971) - m. (1996)Angela Munson
- . . * George Paul Roth (2-Aug-1943) -
- . . * Frederic Alan Roth (31-May-1948) - m. (24-Aug-1973) Linda Priebe
- . . . * Brian Peter Roth (20-Jun-1978) -
- . . . * Michael David Roth (15-Dec-1980) -
- . . * Marcia Ellen Roth (12-Jul-1953) - m. (12-May-1974) Donald Saucier

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14

- . * Elsie Florence Roth (2-Oct-1912) - m. (7-Sep-1940) Robert E. Werner Sr. (3-Jan-1909) - (17-Jan-1985)
- . . * Robert E. Werner Jr. (8-Jun-1941) - m. (10-Jun-1961) Patricia Rothhammer (30-Nov-1942) -
m. (?) Cynthia Davenport
- . . . * Sheri Lee Werner (19-Oct-1962) - m. (26-Jun-1982) Anthony Ferrigno
- * Ashlee Melissa Ferrigno (26-Dec-1983) -
- * Megan Michelle Ferrigno (12-Sep-1985) -
- . . . * Kim Marie Werner (18-Jul-1964) - m. (21-Dec-1985) Richard Hiller
- * Krista Marie Hiller (6-Jun-1986) -
- * Erika Nicole Hiller (21-Oct-1988) -
- * Kathryn Michelle Hiller (23-Jul-1990) -
- . . . * Ronald Eric Werner (25-Jul-1969) - m. (17-Oct-1992) Jennifer Balchunas (?)
- * Ryan Eric Werner (14-Jul-1997)
- . . . * Nicole Lynn Werner (7-May-1978) -
- . . * Sandra Mae Werner (29-Apr-1943) - m. (12-Dec-1970) Harold Brooks (15-Oct-1916) - (4-Oct-1990)
- . . * Lenard Arthur Werner (10-Apr-1953) - m. (13-Aug-1988) Deborah Liner (1-Mar-1963) -
- . . . * Mitchell Lenard Werner (1-May-1991) -
- . * Frieda Helen Roth (23-Apr-1916) - m. (22-Feb-1946) Stanley W. Horsman (4-Mar-1912) - (4-Apr-1995)
- . . * Stanley J. Horsman (3-Sep-1948) - m. (27-Apr-1991) Kimberly Jones
- . . . * Nichole Horsman (13-Mar-1993)-
- . . . * Michael Horseman (17-Mar-1994)-
- . . * Marcia Horsman (22-Aug-1949) - m. (19-Apr-1975) David Tangerini
- . . . * Nathaniel B. Tangerini (4-Sep-1978) -
- . . . * Ethan J. Tangerini (4-Jun-1980) -
- . . . * Elizabeth E. Tangerini (7-Aug-1983) -
- . . * Steven E. Horsman (11-Feb-1955) - m. (7-Jun-1986) Patti Chaney
- . . . * Joseph W. Horsman (19-May-1987) -
- . . . * Christine R. Horsman (13-Jul-1990) -
- . * Martha Emma Roth (28-Oct-1917) - (May - 2005) m. (19-Apr-1941) Richard E. Reichenbach (14-Feb-1914) - (24-Nov-1995)
- . . * Gail Reichenbach (10-Jan-1947) - m. (15-Oct-1977) Richard May

