

A Walk Through the Sands of Time

An Autobiography by
William Allen Harker



*This book is written in loving memory of
Virginia Bosch Harker,
mother of my three children, and the friends
and relatives who all contributed so much
to making my life a rich and
rewarding experience.*

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INTRODUCTION

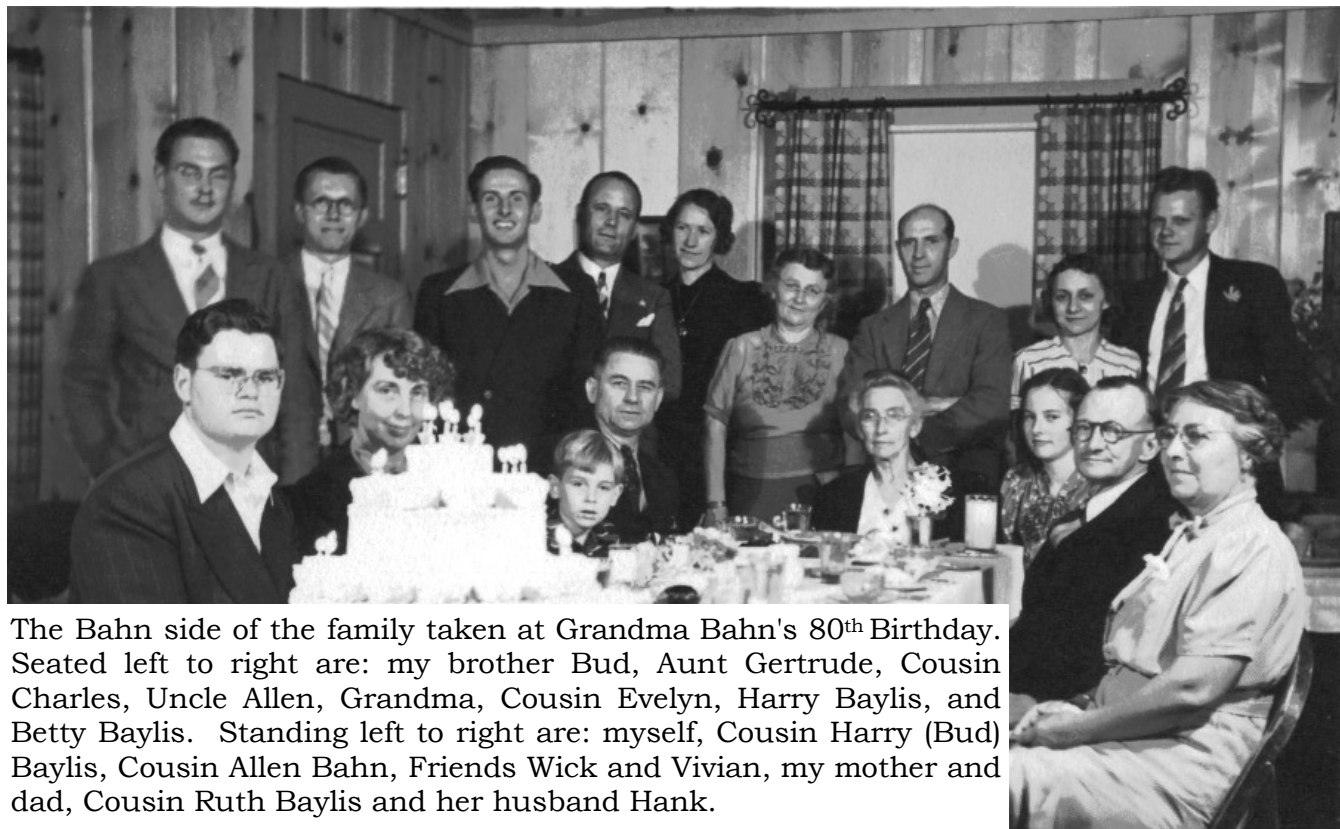


For some time I have been thinking of writing the story of my life for the edification of future generations of the Harker family. My daughter, Harriet Burger and my granddaughter, Lori Burger gave me the needed encouragement to get going on it, and so on this second day of February, 1999 at the ripe old age of 82 years and four months I'm going to start on it.

My approach will be to relive my life to the best of my memory, day by day and year by year. I understand this technique was used successfully by prisoners of war to retain their sanity during torture and incarceration. When writing about other individuals I will confine myself to only those that I knew personally.

As you know, life is never dull and I will be describing funny things as well as sad things, but will delete anything that might detract from my fine character and reputation.

Obviously, without grandparents and parents, I would not be here to write all this stuff for posterity. Therefore the following prologue will be devoted to writing about, and describing, those relatives who lived in my lifetime. We will start with my mother's side of the family and then go to my dad's side.



The Bahn side of the family taken at Grandma Bahn's 80th Birthday. Seated left to right are: my brother Bud, Aunt Gertrude, Cousin Charles, Uncle Allen, Grandma, Cousin Evelyn, Harry Baylis, and Betty Baylis. Standing left to right are: myself, Cousin Harry (Bud) Baylis, Cousin Allen Bahn, Friends Wick and Vivian, my mother and dad, Cousin Ruth Baylis and her husband Hank.



A gathering of the Harker, Finch, Kelly, Otis, and Lichty families. Grandma Harker is in the center. Cousin Alberta and my brother Bud are in front holding dogs.



Mother and me when I was little. I adored her.

PROLOGUE



Grandpa and Grandma Bahn were Pennsylvania Dutch who settled in Langhorn Pennsylvania where my mother, Edith, her brother Allen, and sister Cora who died as a child, were born. Grandma Bahn's name was Ellen and Grandpa Bahn's name was William. He was a cabinet maker, carpenter and builder who constructed many houses in Pennsylvania and later, in California. After graduating from High School my mother attended business school where she studied shorthand and stenography.

She then went to work for the great inventor, Thomas Edison, as his private secretary recording testimony for use in protecting his many patents. One time she told me that Edison was a bit absent minded, took short catnaps of a half hour several times a day and often working until 2 in the morning. She said that his favorite snack was saltine crackers and milk and that he always had cracker crumbs and spilt milk on his suits. One day while working for Edison she met the Wright Brothers, inventors of the airplane, when they stopped by to visit Edison's laboratory.

The Bahn's came to California in the 1890's and settled in Alhambra where they built a large home at 30 North Curtis Avenue. Grandpa had a parrot named 'Polly' (what else?) that he kept in his shop behind the garage. Her perch was an old highback wood chair and she would walk back and forth along the top of the

chair back saying "Polly want's a cracker." She was sure original! However she did learn to mimic a lot of people and sounded like a real person when she talked. Sometimes while playing outside I would think I heard my grandma call me only to find out when reporting in the house that it was Polly!

Grandpa had an office in their house and it was my favorite haunt whenever Grandma was taking care of me. It reeked of cigar smoke, which I truly loved, and was a rather dark room as the walls were painted with dark green calcimine and furnished with an old rolltop desk that was illuminated by a green shaded desk lamp. He sat in a captain's chair which I now have and prize very much. The rest of the walls in the house were painted with white calcimine and all the floors except for the kitchen and back porch were covered with Oriental rugs.

They had an old cabinet victrola in the living room which I loved to play when I was there. My favorite record was one of Happy Hooligan singing "Yes, We Have No Bananas." They also had an old foot pumped upright organ (not to be confused with sexual ecstasy) in the living room and I spent many happy hours trying to play it. I finally mastered it after taking piano lessons.

Thanksgivings were always spent at Grandpa and Grandma Bahn's house. After dinner, while the women cleaned up and worked in the kitchen doing the dishes, the men would all congregate in the living room to talk and smoke cigars.

Mother's brother Allen and his wife Gertrude built a house just two doors away at 33 North Curtis. Uncle Allen was a very emotional fellow possessed with a short temper. He was the accountant for Hassbaracks, a large wholesale grocery company in Los Angeles which later became Smart and Final. Aunt Gertrude was a bit of a flirt which upset my mother no end. Mother's cousin and husband, Betty and Harry Baylis built a home further up the street at 120 North

Curtis. Uncle Allen and Aunt Gertrude had two boys, Allen Jr. about my age and Charles who was several years younger. They were the cousins I played with when staying at Grandma's house. The Baylises also had two children, my second cousins, Ruth and Harry.

Later on Grandma and Grandpa adopted a son, Raymond, who served in the Navy and married a girl named Barbara when he left the Navy. She worked in a candy factory dipping chocolates and became quite heavy as a result of too much work sampling. Aunt Barbara would always bring boxes of chocolates to the Thanksgiving dinners and Christmas parties. Uncle Raymond was a finger print expert with the San Marino police department. They had a daughter, my cousin, named Evelyn who, when an adult, became a librarian in the LA County Library. They also had a younger boy whose name I can't remember and I don't know what ever happened to him.

My Grandpa Harker was also named William and also a carpenter and builder who came to the United States from Sussex England. He married my Grandma Harker, a school teacher, whose name was Grace. Her Great Grandfather had married a Cherokee Indian Squaw and that is how I claim to be one thirty second Cherokee Indian.

They eventually moved to Mitchell South Dakota where my dad, Harry Finch Harker went to school and played football on the Mitchell High School team, sometimes on frozen ground in the winter. Dad had three sisters, Mame, Lulu and Jane and two brothers, Joe and William. When Aunt Mame was about four years old the family bulldog bit off her nose. Plastic surgery was unknown in those days so she went through life without a nose just two holes where her nostrils were. Uncle Joe died in the smallpox epidemic in the 1920's and Uncle Will who was an expert trap shooter won a state championship for which he was awarded an engraved gold watch that I had for many years and then lost somewhere along the line.

Aunt Mame married a fellow named George Kelly, a Texan about six foot three who wore size twelve shoes. He was a druggist and ran the pharmacy at the Owl Drug Store in downtown Los Angeles and was always bringing my folks samples of hair tonic, soap and elixirs of various kinds. Uncle George was a rather heavy drinker but carried his liquor well. Aunt Jane married a fellow named Rubin who was a carpenter for the Union Pacific Railroad. I think he repaired box cars. Rubin was kind of a weird fellow who had funny haircuts and always wore long underwear and high button shoes. Aunt Lu married a fellow named Bert Lichty who was an insurance salesman. They had two daughters, one that died in infancy and another, my cousin named Alberta.

Grandpa and Grandma Harker had a home on Lemon Street in Alhambra of which I have little memory as Grandpa died when I was quite young and Grandma moved in with the Lichtys who had a home on Garfield Avenue just around the corner from the house my folks built on Second Street in 1910 and where I grew up. Uncle Bert had a badly misshapen right hand, wrist and forearm, the result of a Model T Ford backfiring while he was cranking it to get it started. Aunt Lu was blind in her right eye which had been cut by a shard of flying glass when she was a small girl watching my dad and his brother breaking glass bottles by throwing them against a stone wall. She adjusted to the one eyed sight, however, and drove a car and was a very good typist.

Christmas afternoons were usually spent at Grandma and Grandpa Bahn's house and Christmas evenings with the Lichty's and Grandma Harker. The only problem with this arrangement was that it took me away from my Christmas toys except for the one's I was permitted to take with me. After supper Aunt Jane, who was an accomplished pianist would accompany the adults as they all sang hymns. The one's I liked most to listen to were, "Bringing In The Sheep" and "When The

Roll Is Called Up Yonder".

After arriving in California my mother got a job as advertising manager for Hamburgers Department Store, later to become the May Company Stores. She had an office in the LA Times building in downtown Los Angeles at First and Broadway. She and my dad were in the courting stage of their relationship at that time. On the evening of October 1, 1910, around 8:00 p.m., the building was blown up with dynamite by union terrorist an hour after my dad had picked my mother up to take her to dinner. The building was completely destroyed. 20 people were killed and many more injured. Among the dead and injured were a number of my mother's co-workers and friends.

During the great air meet in 1910 at Dominguez Field, now the City of Carson, she went up in a hydrogen filled gas free flying balloon as an advertising stunt. The pilot was the famous balloonist, Dick Ferris, and they set a national distance record, landing up in Monrovia.

But, enough of this background it's time to move on and get into the real purpose of this writing, i.e. to document my life as I remember it.

Form No. 2
1920

MARGIN RESERVED FOR ENDING

WRITE PLAINLY WITH UNFADING INK—THIS IS A PERMANENT RECORD
READ THE INSTRUCTIONS ON BACK OF THIS CERTIFICATE

PLACE OF BIRTH, Dist. No. (To be inserted by Registrar)		STATE OF CALIFORNIA DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC HEALTH VITAL STATISTICS		Local Registered No. 378	
County of <u>Los Angeles</u>		STANDARD CERTIFICATE OF BIRTH			
City or Town of <u>Long Beach</u>		(No. <u>3707</u> <u>Livingston Drive</u> Sec. <u>5</u> Ward <u>1</u>)		(If birth occurred in a hospital or institution, give the NAME, number of ward, and number.)	
or Rural Registration District					
FULL NAME OF CHILD <u>William Allen Barker</u>		IF CHILD IS NOT YET NAMED, MAKE SUPPLEMENTAL REPORT AS DIRECTED			
PERSONAL AND STATISTICAL PARTICULARS					
SEX OF CHILD <u>Male</u>	Year, Month, or Other (To be inserted only in case of still birth)	Number in Order of Birth	DATE OF BIRTH <u>Sept</u> <u>23</u> <u>1916</u> (Month) (Day) (Year)		
FATHER			MOTHER		
FULL NAME <u>Harry F. Barker</u>			FULL NAME <u>Edith Newman Bahn</u>		
RESIDENCE			RESIDENCE		
<u>1824 American Ave</u> City <u>Long Beach</u> State <u>Calif.</u>			<u>1824 American Ave</u> City <u>Long Beach</u> State <u>Calif.</u>		
COLOR OR RACE <u>White</u> BIRTHDAY <u>29</u> (Year)			COLOR OR RACE <u>White</u> BIRTHDAY <u>29</u> (Year)		
BIRTHPLACE <u>Iowa</u> (State or country)			BIRTHPLACE <u>Pa.</u> (State or country)		
OCCUPATION (a) Trade, profession or particular kind of work <u>Appraiser</u>			OCCUPATION (a) Trade, profession or particular kind of work <u>Houswife</u>		
(b) General nature of business, industry, or establishment in which employed (for employer)			(b) General nature of business, industry, or establishment in which employed (for employer)		
Was a prophylactic for <u>Syphilis</u> administered? <u>Yes</u>			Number of children born to this mother, including present birth <u>2</u>		
If so, when <u>1st Silver Nitrate</u>			Number of children of this mother now living <u>1</u>		
CERTIFICATE OF ATTENDING PHYSICIAN OR MIDWIFE					
I hereby certify that I attended the birth of this child, who was <u>Alive</u> on the date above stated. (State alive or stillborn)					
(Signature) <u>Walter B. Hill M. D.</u> per <u>C.K.</u>					
Dated <u>9/23</u> <u>1916</u> (Physician, midwife, father, etc.)					
Address <u>Long Beach, Calif.</u>					
Filed <u>Sep 25</u> <u>1916</u> <u>Ralph L. Taylor M. D.</u> Registrar or Deputy					

CHAPTER I



Edith Harker was pregnant with her second child, having lost her first to convulsions in infancy. He was named Baby Roy and is buried in the San Gabriel Cemetery. The year of her second pregnancy was 1916 and as her delivery time drew near my dad took her to the Seaside Hospital in Long Beach where her pediatrician practiced. His name was Dr. Jones and he wore horn rimmed glasses and looked a lot like the famous movie comedian, Harold Lloyd.

She soon went into labor and in the early morning hours of September 23 I arrived in this world and, after a sound slap on my back, took my first breath and my place as a member of the human race and citizen of the United States. I don't really remember much about the event though.

After an appropriate time of laying-in Mother and I were taken home to my parents house at 1800 South Second Street in Alhambra where I was placed in a crib in an alcove of their bedroom. My mother and dad had built the house themselves in 1910 with the help of my two grandpas. In the summer of 1917 I became a victim of the terrible influenza epidemic that killed millions of people throughout the world. Being somewhat of a survivor I managed to come through the ordeal with no apparent permanent damage. About all I can recall of the incident was being wrapped in flannel and breathing vapors of eucalyptus oil that was heated on top of a

gas burner in the room. I'm not sure if I really remember that or if I heard my folks talking about it, but I do have strong memory of the flannel wrappings.

I don't recall a lot of detail of those first few years of my life, but I do remember getting my first dog when about 3 three years of age. He was a little black and white Fox Terrier that Earl Vanderveer, a friend of my folks, brought to me. Earl lived in Redondo Beach so we named the puppy "Dondo." I don't know what finally happened to him but I do remember we kept him tied to a pine tree in the back yard where I could play with him. I also remember spraying my Grandpa Harker with a garden hose while he was working in the back yard and he came after me yelling "Aye, Aye, Aye Billy." That was my first terrifying experience.

On August 26, 1920 I got a little brother who they named Harry Harland Harker, and later nicknamed Buddy which in later life became Bud for short. I had plenty of things going by then so the competition of a baby getting a lot of attention in the house did not bother me much.

In 1923, at the age of seven my mother took me to Ramona Grammar School at 6th Street and Valley Boulevard to enroll me in the first grade. I was so smart by that time that I skipped kindergarten. My first grade teacher was Miss Greenfield and I was scared to death of her. We sat at the old fashioned school desks with attached seat and an ink well in the upper right corner of the desk. We learned the alphabet and how to spell using wooden boxes about 12 inches long and two inches wide that had slots containing little cards with the alphabet letters printed on them in black. We would then take the cards out and lay them on the desk to spell words, sort of like anagrams.

My second grade teacher was a Miss Obe. It was about this time that I had my second of a number of terrifying experiences in my life which I brought on myself. In those days everyone had a garbage can that was put out at the curb every week to be picked up by the

city garbage collector who happened to be a black man. One day while he was picking up the garbage at our house I ran out in the back yard and hollered, "Hey Nigger!" He yelled something back to me which I can't recall, but Mother heard me and came running out of the house, dragged me inside and told me the fellow would be coming after me with a knife.

Turned out she had made an apology to him and he just laughed and said he understood as he had kids of his own. But for two weeks I would not walk to school alone and Mother had to accompany me as I watched over my shoulder for a black man coming after me with a knife.

It was about this time that my dad and his college fraternity brother Roy Harris decided to overhaul the family auto which was a two cylinder Tourist built in Los Angeles. They had both attended Troop College which later became Cal Tech and where Dad had studied electrical engineering. I remember they took the car completely apart and hung all the parts on a wood board fence that ran along the north side of our back yard. Some time later they put it all back together and had three parts left over and could never find where they went but the car ran OK without them.

The area where we lived in Alhambra was called Ramona Park and our house was only one of four on the block. Rabbits and squirrels would often run through our yard. Also a lot of doves and quail. Over the years however, the area built up until there was no more vacant land. Garfield Avenue was just a wide dirt road, but the streets where we lived had some sort of paving on them with concrete curbs and gutters.

We were just one block from the Pacific Electric car line that ran to Los Angeles. In the 1940's that rail line was torn out to make way for the 1-10 Freeway, a real mistake if ever there was one. Anyway, a lot of tramps would go along the tracks and often stopped at our house for some breakfast. Mother always gave them something and I would sit and watch them eat.

This was in the early 20's and most of them wore old army overcoats and hats. I think many of them were Vets from World War I. They were sure a scraggly looking bunch with beards, dirty hands, and smelled bad.

These were the days before electric refrigerators and we had an ice box on the back porch that held a 25 pound block of ice in the top and the food went on the bottom. The ice sat in a pan with a drain hole for the water as the ice melted and dad drilled a hole in the floor of the porch and ran a small rubber hose down to it so the water would go under the house.

Our ice man, a Mr. Peterson delivered ice once a week with a horse drawn ice wagon. When he arrived we kids would all come running to get some of the ice shavings to suck on. Only milk, cream and such things that had to be kept cold were kept in the ice box. Others, like vegetables, fruit, butter, etc., went in a cooler that was built into the house. It was just a small closet-like affair that ran from the floor to the ceiling with a door on it and wood slat shelves and was open at both ends so it would draw the cool air from under the house up and out the top. It actually worked very well.

Mother used to buy fruit and vegetables from a Chinaman named "Chang" but stopped using his produce when she caught him one day urinating on the side of his wagon. We also had a junk man who was a Russian Jew and spoke a form of English that no one could understand. He would come down our back dirt alley about every two weeks in his horse-drawn cart yelling, "yags, pecks, an bottoes secks," which translated into "rags, papers, bottles and sacks." We kids used him as our source of spending money, getting a few cents for junk we had collected while waiting for his arrival.

Alhambra did not have a fire station to serve our area at that time so a number of men in the neighborhood formed a volunteer fire department with a fire house located at the corner of Sixth Street and Valley Boulevard across from Ramona School on a bean field,

which played an important role in my life that will be told about later. My dad along with some of the other men in Ramona Park were volunteer firemen and were alerted to a call for action by a large bell in the fire station that held the only fire truck. It was painted pale yellow and they called it "Betsy." Dad kept his fire fighting gear that consisted of a heavy canvas and leather coat, a black metal helmet, rubber boots and a special wrench for turning on the fire hydrants, in my bedroom closet. When that bell rang, Mother would run to the phone and call the station to find out where the fire was while my dad came running into my room to suit up. Since he worked in Los Angeles during the day the above sequence usually occurred at night and he could spot the fire's location by the orange glow in the sky. Of course, all this activity would wake me up and he often took me with him to the fires. The worst one I can remember was when the barns at the Midwick Polo grounds caught fire and destroyed a large number of valuable polo ponies. The firemen would get them out but then they would run right back into the burning barns.

The volunteers would have to periodically check the fire hydrants in the neighborhood to make sure they were working OK. They would attach a fire hose and then water each other's front lawns.

Mother was way ahead of her time in the psychology of raising children. She taught me a lot about learning. When I was little we used to play a game of mamma bear and little bear and would go around growling at each other. We also played that the house was a ship and I was the captain. Dad mounted an old steering wheel to the back porch railing and I would stand there like the ancient mariner working the wheel and steering the ship. I also played electrician by poking at the insulators with a broom stick where the power wires came into the house. When I was about 12 years old Mother taught me how to balance the family check book and that became one of my chores each

time a bank statement arrived. Mail was delivered to the house by postmen on foot. After balancing the check book I would then organize all the cancelled checks in numerical order and file them in a desk drawer.

By the time I reached the third grade at Ramona Grammar School we started using the black boards and chalk. In those days they were really black, being made of black slate. Today most of them are green and made of a hard manufactured material. I always looked forward to the days when it was my time to be monitor. This duty was assigned on a rotating basis and consisted of passing out papers to the other students, sharpening the teachers pencils, cleaning the black boards at the end of the day and getting the chalk dust out of the felt erasers by smacking them together which always resulted in a cloud of choking white dust. By today's standards the teaching methods seem antique.

We were taught "Ritin, Readin, and Rithmatic," to the tune of a wooden ruler rather than 'a hickory stick.' I seemed to have a propensity for getting into trouble and one day while in the second grade I smarted off at Miss Obe and was sent up to sit on the bench on the second floor lobby just outside the principal's office. That bench was akin to capital punishment as far as we children were concerned. It was a long mahogany affair with a high back and you were in full view of other students as they passed by. It was downright humiliating because they all knew you had done something wrong.

Anyway, on this particular day Miss Roule, the principal, came out and saw me sitting on the bench crying and I guess felt sorry for me because she gave me some animal crackers. I had just started eating them when Miss Obe came by and saw what was going on and asked where I got the crackers. When I told her she stormed in to Miss Roule's (pronounced Rowel) office and I could hear her screaming at the poor kind hearted principal for giving me the crackers when I was supposed to be doing punishment time.

Miss Roule was a tall slender older woman with

her gray hair piled up high on her head. She wore long black ankle length dresses with a white lace collar that almost went up to her ears and her rimless eye glasses were fastened on a chain that hung from a small silver device pinned to her dress at breast height. It was a spring loaded affair that retracted and wound up the chain so her glasses hung from it when she removed them from her face.

If you are wondering where the animal crackers came from I must tell you that it was my mother who started the school cafeterias and lunch rooms in California. Her first such effort was a small snack bar on the second floor lobby at Ramona Grammar School and that is where Miss Roule picked up the crackers. In later years the snack bar was expanded into a full fledge cafeteria on the ground floor and, as the word got around, school cafeterias began appearing all over the State of California.

Mother was heavily involved in the PTA and over the years often had my various teachers to our house for dinner and always addressed them by their first names which was not lost on me. One, my 6th grade teacher was named Frances E. Scott. She was a sharp looking gal and I sort of took a fancy to her.

One day, during an afternoon penmanship exercise in her class, when she was bawling out one of the other students, I rose to the occasion and berated her after addressing her as Frances E. Scott. She made me stay after school and word of my misdemeanor got back to my parents who raised holy hell with me and then got a little book with a chain on it which was fastened to the belt loop on my pants. I had to wear that damned book every day and, before I went home, the teacher had to make an entry indicating how my deportment had been that day. It was very humiliating to have to wear that book because the other students eventually found out what it was all about. It was very effective however, and my deportment improved over night.

Mother was always getting me involved in her PTA activities. My folks had me taking piano lessons at an early age and Mother got me to giving piano recitals

at PTA meetings. One time she got me in some sort of program that involved the March of the Wooden Soldiers that included a bunch of us little boys all dressed up in red pants, black coats and red and black soldier hats like the Foreign Legion used to wear. We had to march around the stage to the tune of "The March of The Toy Soldiers." We took quite a ribbing from some of our classmates over that.

In those early days I was fascinated by gravity, flying and centrifugal force. I was always throwing rocks and things up in the air to watch them fall back to earth and used to tie heavy objects on the end of a line and then swing them around in a circle until they were straight out from my body and defying gravity, or so it seemed to me. I was always looking for heavier objects to do this with and one day came on the idea of tying dad's square bladed spade to the end of a rope and swinging it around.

I was right in the middle of this experiment and getting quite dizzy from going round and round when my little brother Buddy, who was about 4 years old at the time, came wandering out into the back yard and right into the path of the flying spade. Believe me I never saw him coming. The sharp corner of the spade caught him right above his left eye cutting a deep gash in his forehead which bled profusely. As he screamed and bled all over the place I thought for sure he was dying. He survived but carried a small scar into his adult life marking the spot where he and the spade collided. That was another terrifying experience.

Mother wanted a rock garden and began collecting all sorts of rocks the size of melons everywhere we went. It did not seem to matter to her if they were granite, shale, volcanic, or cobble. Dad made a big pile of dirt in the back yard upon which mother carefully arranged her rocks and planted various types of cactus. Rock gardens and empty discarded glass bottles should be kept out of reach of small boys. Seeing the bucket of empty bottles out of one eye and the rock pile out of the

other gave me a great idea and I proceeded to throw the bottles into the rock pile. Of course, they smashed and scattered broken glass throughout the rocks and cacti. As I neared the end of the bottle supply, Mother looked out the kitchen window, saw what I was up to, and screamed for my dad who was at the other end of the house fooling around with a radio he had built.

Dad came out of the house with his dreaded leather razor strop in hand. I saw him coming and immediately sensed trouble so started running around the yard while he chased me yelling "Confound you Billy." It was the first time I had ever heard him swear and provided me with one more terrifying experience. Needless to say, the razor strop was applied to my bare behind with great accuracy.

While on the subject of corporal punishment I should add that we had a wood shed attached to the side of the garage that was well outfitted with wood shingles. Whenever Buddy or I got out of line a trip to the wood shed and a session with one of the shingles was a foregone conclusion.

As mentioned earlier, we lived just one block from the railroad track and one afternoon while a bunch of us neighborhood kids were playing kick the can in the street, word reached us that an old lady had been run over by the electric street car. We all raced down to the track and I will never forget the sight that met our eyes. Strewn along the track was a bunch of stuff that looked like old rags mixed in with raw hamburger. It turned out later that the lady was 80 years old and deaf. Just another terrifying experience for me.

Over the years our parents did a lot of remodeling and adding on to our home with the result that it and other structures on the property just about doubled the original square footage. One of the earliest improvements was to the kitchen with installation of a new sink and drain board. The old varnished wood drain board was replaced with a manufactured material that looked like, and was as hard as, polished granite.

Mother had a hair brush that had belonged to her great grandmother of which she was very fond. It was made of black ebony wood with an ivory surface where the bristles were imbedded. She was standing at the kitchen sink one day cleaning the brush under running water when I said something that greatly displeased her. She swung at me with the brush and I ducked causing her to miss and hit the edge of the granite like drain board. The brush split in half and I started to laugh and she started to cry and ran out of the house saying she was going down to the track and let the street car get her. Terrified, I started to cry and ran after her pleading for her not to do it. I've no idea what the neighbors thought was going on, but she finally relented and came back home with me. When dad got home and was told what had happened to the hair brush I was immediately sequestered for a session in the wood shed.

Somehow Mother had acquired an old red tar lined water barrel that came off a railroad bridge and was kept full of water to fight the fires that frequently occurred on the wooden bridges. She placed it in the back yard to collect rain water for use in washing her hair. Bud and I always saved some of our firecrackers after the 4th of July to play with later. We used them to blow up ant hills, tin cans and all sorts of things. One year I had saved several cherry bombs and wondered what would happen if I set one off in Mother's water barrel. There was only one way to find out!

I got a small empty glass jelly jar, drilled a hole in the lid, put some rocks in the jar so it would sink and stuck the cherry bomb fuse through the hole in the lid, screwed the lid on tight, lit the fuse and dropped the jar in the barrel. Nothing happened for a moment and then there was a loud 'kathunk.' About a bucket-full of water flew out the top and all the seams split open as the water poured out all around the barrel. It was empty in nothing flat. The barrel never would hold water after that and mother had to be content with using tap water

to wash her hair. All was not lost however as Dad filled the barrel with dirt and Mother planted pansies in it.

Another of my favorite pastimes was playing with a magnifying glass, using it to focus the sun's rays to burn things. I used to cremate ants and all sorts of bugs, burned designs into wood shingles, melted all sorts of stuff and even started a small fire in a pile of weeds in our back yard which I then extinguished with a garden hose.

During those years we kids all had what we called "Chugs" that were homemade coaster cars. We also made the traditional soapbox coasters using skate wheels. The "Chugs" were more sophisticated and consisted of a frame of 2 x 4's on two axles and four wheels removed from wagons, tricycles, baby buggies or anything else we could find. A wood box was mounted in front as a hood and a steering wheel on a broom stick was run through the box and ropes, from each end of the front axle which swiveled on a bolt in the middle, were wrapped around the broom stick so the front wheels turned as the steering wheel was turned. A candle in an empty coffee can was nailed to the front of the box for a headlight and the motive power was any friend you could get to push you.

In later years I built a bigger chug and powered it with an engine and drive wheel that I had used on my bicycle. It was my first powered car. On summer evenings we either rode in our chugs or played kick the can under the street lights. There was not much traffic in Ramona Park in those days.

Somehow I managed to get through the eight years of grammar school in only eight years. When I was in the 7th grade the PTA decided to put on a live stage play titled "The College Graduate" and I was cast in the leading role. I was the only non-adult in the production and made somewhat of a name for myself as we played to sold out audiences for three nights in a row. I have a lot of fond memories of those days at Ramona Grammar School. Like the time a guy in an old Jenny

biplane circled the school grounds at a low altitude during lunch hour and threw out hundreds of Baby Ruth Bars attached to tissue paper parachutes. They floated down and landed in trees and back yards bordering the school grounds as all us kids ran helter skelter to get them. I still can't look at one of those candy bars without remembering the event.

Then there was a game called mumblety-peg in which an open blade jackknife is flipped in such a way as to make the blade stick in the ground. The school grounds had some long narrow wood benches for kids to sit on while eating their sack lunches or resting. Well, we chose to play mumblety-peg on those benches by straddling them while facing each other. One day I flipped the knife and it went further than I intended piercing my opponents penis. After that the game was outlawed on the school grounds.

After Bud became of school age he and I would eat our lunches together that Mother had packed in our lunch boxes and if they contained hard-boiled eggs I would crack them by hitting Bud on top of the head with them. One day Mother mistakenly put a fresh egg in my lunch box and you can imagine the results when I smashed it on Bud's head. I had to take him to the boys restroom and scrub the egg yolk out of his hair.

We used to play a game called "Pirates and Treasure" in which we would draw little maps and hide them around the school for the others to find. Our favorite hiding places was in the mortar between the bricks of the all-brick school building. The mortar was of such a poor quality that we could scrape it out with our bare fingers. It was no wonder that the building collapsed in the great Long Beach earthquake of 1933. Obviously the contractor had cut some corners pocketing the savings but the school had been built so long before that they were never able to catch up with the guy.

One day, during noon recess a bunch of us were playing "work-up" baseball using one of those small

hard indoor balls that had leather seams that stuck up about an eighth of an inch above the ball's cover. I was next at bat and was standing just behind the kid who was up when he ticked a spinning foul that went over his left shoulder and right into my private parts. There was an immediate terrible pain and then everything went numb. I could feel my penis through my pants but it could not feel me squeezing it. I felt dizzy and ran to the boy's room where I unbuttoned my pants to see if my penis had been knocked off. Before I could find out I fainted and fell to the floor. Someone reported the situation to one of the teachers and I was revived and sent home for the rest of the day. Oh yes, I still have my penis!

That brings me to another subject. At the age of 12 my parents decided to have my tonsils and adenoids removed. Since I had never been circumcised they arranged for that at the same time. I will never forget the terror of having that sieve like thing with gauze on it placed over my face and mouth as they poured ether on it. The smell was awful and the few breaths I took trying to scream burned my nose and throat. I woke up several hours later hurting at both ends!

My eighth grade class wanted to have a plaque mounted on the wall of the upstairs lobby commemorating our presence over the years. It was decided to put on a stage play and charge admission to raise the money to pay for the plaque. Again, I had a leading roll and was becoming some sort of a ham, a quality that has never left me. During a practice session one night after school a classmate, Don Wallach stood on the wash basin in the boys bathroom in an attempt to look through a ventilation grate into the adjoining girls bathroom. His weight broke the basin from the wall and ruptured the water pipes. It was just after the rehearsal and we were all leaving so he said nothing about it. The water ran all night and seeped through the floor and the ceiling below, flooding the classrooms underneath. The damage was considerable and all the money we made

from the play went to help pay the repairs. We never did get that plaque on the wall.

It was while I was in the eight grade that I had my "official" grammar school girl friend and her name was Louise Magill. She was a pretty blond and about my own height whom, at the time, I thought the world of. I never did get to kiss her but did get my arm around her waist on a few occasions. She was frequently the object of my erotic nocturnal dreams and I was sure I was in love with her.

All of us have had childhood nightmares, but few that we can remember. I do however remember my worst one because it repeated itself over and over for a long time. It had to do with a little girl standing on tip-toe trying to put an envelope in a mail box that was fastened just above her reach on a telephone poll. I would go over to help her at which time something, a monster that I never got a good look at, would begin chasing me. As I ran my feet kept sliding and I could not make any headway. It was like running on a treadmill. Then, when little, I would wake up screaming and later when I was older I would wake up in a cold sweat. I never could figure out what it was all about.

Bud and I got a weekly allowance of 25 cents each for which we did the yard work, watering and helping with the dishwashing in addition to keeping our bedroom clean. There were a couple of big pine trees in the parkway on the north side of the house and we had to rake up all the pine needles which we would pile in the gutter and then burn. One day I had a particularly large pile and the fire was intense when suddenly there was a large explosion and pieces of concrete went flying across the street. Evidently there was an air pocket in the concrete curb and the heat caused it to expand where it blew out a two foot section of curb face.

When we had a bad infestation of garden snails Dad paid us 1 cent for each snail we captured and put in a can of salt which caused them to foam and boil to death. We saved most of our money all year long to buy

firecrackers for the 4th of July and within a couple of days had blown away a year's worth of savings.

In the prologue to this book I mentioned that Dad studied electrical engineering at Troop College. Upon graduation he went to work for Dr. Kilpatrick, an inventor working on developing a perpetual motion machine. His idea was to have an electric motor driving a generator that would produce the power to keep the motor running. Obviously the thing did not work, but they could keep it running for 20 or 30 minutes before friction finally took over and stopped it. People were really ignorant in those days and many were trying to come up with perpetual motion devices. Kilpatrick had constructed a building up in Santa Anita Canyon which housed his device and I went there several times with my dad to watch them experiment. I was always awed by the static electricity sparks that were thrown off the long leather belt running from the motor to the generator. If you got near the edge of the belt blue sparks would jump out and nip you.

Another guy built a large wheel about forty feet in diameter that was mounted on a shaft in the side of a hill up were the Arroyo Seco Freeway (Now Pasadena Freeway) was later built. The shaft pointed to the north star and the huge heavy laminated oak rim was suspended by cables instead of spokes. His theory was that once given a good start the earth's rotation would keep the thing going. It didn't work either.

Dr. Kilpatrick was very fond of me and bought me a \$100 Treasury Bond which Dad put away in the bank and then would take me down to let me clip off the dividend coupons. The good Doctor was a physicist and mathematician of some repute, but it took a child to stump him. My folks often related that one night when he was at our house for dinner I asked him where his lap went when he stood up and where the dark went when the lights came on. He was unable to give me an answer and two weeks later committed suicide by jumping off a ferry boat in San Francisco Bay. However I

don't really feel responsible for his death.

For several years in a row during this period our family along with our friends, the Harris and Birkhahn families would take two week vacations together traveling into Northern California and Oregon. One year we spent a night at a place called Little Lake next to a hill covered with cat tail cactus. After the morning breakfast we kids, Gardner Harris, Phil Birkhahn and I decided to climb the hill which was also studded with volcanic rocks. Near the top of the hill we came across the bones of a goat or sheep that had evidently got jammed between the rocks and died.

This was indeed an exciting find for us and we all began running down the hill to tell our folks. I was in the lead and no one had ever told me of the dangers involved in running down hills. I kept going faster and faster which required larger and larger steps until I was almost flying when I stumbled over one of the rocks and dove smack dab into the nearest cacti. The rest of the trip down the hill was made at a much slower stiff-legged-pace and it took Dad a half hour with a pair of pliers to get all the needles out of me. They said I looked like a porcupine but the humor escaped me at the time.

On a later vacation we went salmon fishing at the mouth of the Klamath River in Oregon and setup camp near the small Indian village of Requa (pronounced wreckwaw). The best fishing was where the river ran into the ocean as you could catch the big one's there as the salmon made their way up the river to spawn.

The technique was to row a boat out into the river and then drift with the current until you were about 100 yards from the mouth of the river where it emptied into the ocean amidst large rolling breakers and masses of foam. Dad and his friend, Abe Birkhahn rented a row boat and took Abe's son Phillip and me to go catch some salmon. As we got to the point where about a dozen other boats were anchored Dad threw out our anchor and when it took hold in the river bottom the boat

swung around with the stern facing the ocean. The roar of the surf was frightening.

We had caught several good sized fish, had eaten our bagged lunches and were into the Oreos when another fisherman came down the river and anchored too close in front of us. When his boat swung around with the current it hit our boat and knocked our anchor loose which began to drag along the bottom. Dad and Abe each grabbed an oar and began rowing frantically against the current which was a mistake and no-win situation. They should have rowed the boat with the current and toward the shore.

In their panic they pulled so hard on the oars that they broke both of them and we were helpless to maneuver the boat anywhere. As we passed an anchored boat occupied by an Indian, they threw Phillip into the Indian's boat and then put me in the next boat we passed that had a fellow in it that looked like Gary Cooper. He immediately pulled up his anchor and headed for a sand bar and pulled the boat and me up on the sand. During this time I had not relinquished my fishing pole and in the midst of the excitement hooked a 20 pound salmon which I managed to land while on the sand bar.

The Indian who had Phillip on board pulled up his anchor and took off after Dad and Abe. He was obviously familiar with the river and knew just what to do. He began rowing down-river and overtook Dad and Abe and then nudged their boat over to the shore about 50 feet from the breakers. That was one more terrifying experience, but one that I did not cause to happen. When we got back to camp word had already reached our mothers on what had happened and they were crying and overjoyed to see us. We found out later that day that two fishermen had been swept out to sea and drowned just the day before.

Roy Harris and his son Gardner had decided to fish up river from a foot bridge so missed all the excitement. They also caught several large 19 pound salmon.

The dads took all our fish to the local cannery at Requa and exchanged them for an equal amount of canned salmon which we took home.

One afternoon when we got back from fishing Phil and I got into some sort of argument over a matter that escapes me and the altercation escalated into a shoot to kill duel with our BB rifles. We each scored several hits but our heavy camping clothes protected us from serious injury, just a stinging sensation when one of the BB's found its mark. Fortunately we did not hit either other in the face or we might have put an eye out. Both rifles were confiscated by our mothers when they found out what we were up to.

On another such vacation we camped at Blue Lake, arriving late at night after dark. While driving around looking for a campsite, Roy Harris drove over an empty sleeping bag, the fortunate former occupant of which was in the nearby outhouse relieving himself.

While at Blue Lake we kids got on a wooden floating ramp that was anchored to the shore. It was quite cold and we all had on heavy clothes and wool sweaters. We got out on the end and started rocking the ramp from side to side. The end was covered with wet moss and very slippery. My brother Bud, who was about four at the time, slipped and fell in the water coming back up under the ramp. We could not reach him so I dove in the ice cold water, got hold of him and pulled him out. He was sputtering and screaming but none the worse for the wear. That was a terrifying experience for all of us kids and we had some explaining to do when we got back to camp soaking wet and shivering.

After going back and reading what I have written so far it sounds like I must have been incorrigible but I did have some redeeming attributes which I shall relate further on if I can remember what any of them were.

CHAPTER II



I was in the sixth grade when the great stock market crash of 1929 occurred leading to the terrible depression of the early 1930's. By this time Bud and I were now calling mother Mom and dad Pop. There was all kinds of talk among the adults about famous people and others jumping out of windows to their death on Wall Street and wealthy people losing their entire fortunes. This did not mean much to Bud and me, but we were very much aware that something akin to catastrophic had happened.

We were among the lucky families however as Pop did not lose his job as so many others did, but took a 50% cut in his salary. By this time he was a trust officer in the Security Bank at Sixth and Spring Streets in Los Angeles where he had been working for a number of years. After the Dr. Kilpatrick fiasco he got a job designing electric refrigeration systems for ice plants and became an architect in the process. He built an office on back of our one car garage, that had a crushed rock floor, and set up a drafting table and desk. The office had a cement floor.

I used to enjoy watching him making drawings using his drafting set and inking in the preliminary pencil lines he had drawn. On his desk in that office he had a glass jar of some kind that was shaped like a wine glass but without a stem and had a flat base on it. The jar was filled with some kind of light blue violet powder that glowed in the dark when it was shaken. I

used to play with that by the hour and was always mystified by the thing. I never did learn what kind of material that powder was. He also had a small glass of BB shot on the desk that he used to clean his ink pens by pushing the point up and down in the BB's. I was absolutely fascinated by his T-square and see through triangles along with the other items and tools he used, including his pencil sharpener. It was a cone shaped thing with a hole in the top into which you placed the pencil end and then twisted the pencil 'round and 'round.

His drafting and architectural ability is what led him to the job at the bank as an appraiser in the Trust Department. He would often have to go out and appraise properties and sometimes would take me along. These included houses, commercial buildings as well as vacant land. I remember one time when we went to Indio for the purpose of appraising a date ranch and we drove on the old wooden plank road through the sand dunes. The sand was always shifting so it was not practical to build a regular road. By using the planks the road could be re-routed as necessary to avoid the sand dunes.

Mom did a great job of economizing during the depression by carefully planning meals that would provide enjoyable left-overs and we ate a lot of chicken and soup. Pop would buy live chickens and then bring them home for slaughter and cooking. There was an old tree stump in the back yard that he used for a beheading block and he would let me watch as he chopped the chicken's heads off. Mom would then dip the body in boiling water which made it easy to pull the feathers off, a job which she sometimes let me do.

One day I talked Pop into letting me be the executioner. I held the chicken by it's legs and laid it's head on top of the stump and then with a hand hatchet I lopped off the head which caused some sort of muscular reaction in the chicken and it jerked rather strongly. This scared me and I let go of the legs whereupon the

chicken took off flying and traveled all the way across the yard until it collided neck first into the wood board fence leaving a large bloody splotch where it hit. That blood stain on the fence lasted for years as a constant reminder of my botched execution.

It was about this time that they bought Bud and me a pair of live bunnies for Easter. One was white with brown trim and the other was white with black trim. I chose the brown trimmed one and Bud got what was left, the black trimmed rabbit. Pop was assured by the person he bought them from that they were both males so we named them Pete and Pat. Mine was Pat and Bud's was Pete. Pop built a rabbit hutch for us and we began the monthly process of going to the feed store for rolled oats and alfalfa.

One day when Bud and I went out to feed and water them we noticed that Pat was pulling fur out of the pouch under her chin and making a nest. You can guess the rest. Pat was a female and pregnant and in no time at all Bud and I were in the rabbit business. We took care not to make pets of the little bunnies that came along with regular frequency because we knew they were destined to end up on the dining room table as an alternate to chicken and pot roast. We did allow a couple of females to reach maturity for use as producing does. Old Pete never had it so good and managed to keep at least one of them pregnant all the time.

As the brood enlarged it was necessary to build more pens and Pop, as usual, was up to the task and in time the whole rear of the back yard was devoted to the rabbit operation. We finally reached the point where our output was more than we could eat so Bud and I began selling some to neighbors. We skinned and gutted them before delivery and made enough to help pay for the feed we had to buy. One Sunday Uncle George and Aunt Mame came for dinner and we had rabbit which prompted Uncle George to launch in to a lurid story about the time when he was in the merchant marine and they ran out of food and had to eat the cats

they kept on board to kill the rats. That really went over big with Mom.

Just at the time we were going great guns, disaster struck. The neighbors across the street had two police dogs, named Nanette and Manfred which they kept in their fenced yard. The dogs were not vicious and we used to go over and play with them once in a while. Anyway, one morning as I went out the back door to feed the rabbits before going to school, I was met by entrails and rabbit remains that were scattered all over the yard. Nanette and Manfred had got out in the night and came over and wiped out our entire rabbit population putting an end to that fledgling business. I remember crying at school and when the teacher asked me what was wrong I said, "The police dogs got all our rabbits."

While I don't recall any bread lines in Alhambra during the depression I remember seeing pictures of them in the large cities like New York and Chicago. I think the west coast fared better than the east in those days. About that time, the then well known wrestler Ed Strangler Lewis, built a restaurant on Main Street in Alhambra and he was always there to greet his customers. We ate there often and I was quite impressed by the burly, big and fearsome looking guy.

When the 18th amendment was repealed putting an end to prohibition in the early 1930's Ed Strangler Lewis was the first in Alhambra to get a license to sell beer. It was a rather weak potion compared to today as it was limited to 2% alcohol. That beer sold for 5 cents a glass and the day he opened his beer sales there was a line of men a block long waiting to get into his place for their first legal glass of beer.

Bud and I were fascinated with wrecks and fires and every night when Dad got home he was greeted with the question, "Did you see any wrecks or fires today?" As I look back I have come to the conclusion that there were either an awful lot of wrecks and fires in those days or else Dad made them up to appease our

appetites for disasters. Mother used to say we were both a couple of Calamity Janes.

As I entered the seventh grade some strange things began happening to us kids. The girls began developing obvious lumps on their chests where their beautiful breasts would eventually be and we boys began getting fuzz on our pubic areas. Our manhood's began growing longer and thicker than the finger size things we were used to and spontaneous erections began occurring without warning, often at the most inappropriate times and much to our embarrassment. We had lots of nightly emissions while asleep, commonly known as 'wet dreams.' This was the beginning of puberty which heralded it's arrival by our cracking voices.

As our sexuality developed so did our interest in the female body with particular emphasis on the area of the genitalia. It was the original days of show and tell, you know, "You show me yours and I'll show you mine." Any time an accidental or intentional glimpse of the private parts of a female happened it was referred to as a 'sight' and we were always asking each other if we had seen any 'sights' lately which led to some really lurid descriptions embellished no doubt by the teller's vivid imagination.

Due to the nature of women's undergarments at the time, there were ample opportunities for 'sights.' Boys would fasten mirrors on top of the toes of their shoes in an effort to look up the girls dresses but the girls, and some women, soon got wise to that effort. Some guys who were old enough to drive autos even went so far as putting mirrors on the floor of the car on the passengers side, usually to no avail. Many of the autos in those days had front doors hinged at the rear so the door swung open at the front and this created many opportunities for 'sights' as the gals spread their legs getting out of the car. Therefore the rule was to always watch for a female parking a car and then get in a position in front of the car for a good look when she opened the door and stepped out. While a lot of sexual

experimenting went on I seriously doubt that we did anything that kids of that age haven't been doing since Adam and Eve began fooling around in the Garden of Eden.

One day, around this time, a kitten we had threw a fit. It ran around crazily, yowling and foaming at the mouth. Pop finally caught it, put it in a gunny sack and drowned it in a washtub of water. When I asked him what caused fits he said, "it comes from playing with yourself." If he was trying to scare me his tactic worked. In those days it was common for people to tell children that masturbation caused you to go crazy or blind. We kids wondered, if that were true, how come the world was not full of crazy blind people? It was definitely not the age of enlightenment and a lot of kids needlessly suffered from guilt as a result.

We used to spend some of our summer vacations at Alamitos Bay in Long Beach where the Harris family had a large bay front beach home. On the ocean side of the isthmus the city had built a long board walk atop a wood bulkhead to keep the ocean where it belonged. Due to the constant moisture the boards had shrunk leaving cracks of a half to an inch between them. We kids dug the sand out from under the walk opposite a vacant lot and then proceed to make a cave under there large enough to sit up in. We would lay under there waiting for women to walk past overhead with the hope of seeing a "sight" up through the cracks.

One day an empty five gallon glass jug with a cork in it washed up on the beach which we picked up and took to our cave for an experiment. It was agreed that anytime we had to urinate we would go to our cave and pee in the bottle to see how long it would take to fill it up. It was finally full before the end of summer vacation and not knowing what else to do with it we would sit there admiring our handiwork. By the next summer the jug had disappeared and I often wondered what the person that had found and taken it thought it was.

Several years before that while Mom, Pop, Bud

and I were driving down to the bay something happened I will never forget. We were on Ocean Avenue when Mom said, "what's wrong with that plane," and we looked up just in time to see a Jenny biplane cross the street in front of us just clearing the telephone lines when it turned, knocked the chimney off a house and nose dived into the vacant lot next door. Pop stopped the car and we ran over to the crash. Pop helped the two guys in the plane out of the wreckage. Both survived OK but the pilot had a broken bloody nose and all his passenger's front teeth were knocked out. That was the first of many plane crashes I witnessed over the years.



Ramona Grammar School before it was destroyed in the 1933 Earthquake. School was built in 1910.



Louise Magill my first true love in the 8th grade. Note the wide belt and pocket flaps on my corduroy pants!

CHAPTER III



At the age of 12 I was fitted with my first pair of eye glasses to correct my astigmatism and suffered the usual and cruel torture of being called "foureyes" by my fellow students and other kids. However, I did not suffer the agony of acne and pimples although I did have occasional sties on my eyelids. It was about this time that our folks decided it would be good for Bud and me to learn to play some musical instruments besides the piano on which we were both taking lessons. I never did turn out to be a good piano player but Bud became very accomplished and mastered George Gershwin's "Rhapsody in Blue" along with a lot of other complicated pieces.

Both Mom and Pop played the piano, Mom by site reading and Pop by ear. Pop was quite an accomplished musician. He played the guitar, mandolin, cornet, trumpet and harmonica. He was also a tenor and sang in the church choir as well as a men's chorus. He organized and directed a fourteen member mandolin club whose members he taught to play and they gave concerts at many places and events. They used to practice at our house when I was little and I enjoyed listening to them.

Bud and I were given our choices of instruments to learn to play and Bud chose the clarinet while I picked the trombone for some reason that escapes me. I think it was because I had noticed in parades that the trombone players were always out in front of the band

and that appealed to the "ham" in me. We all went down to a big music store in Los Angeles to pick out our instruments which our folks bought for us.

They then engaged a young fellow named Tom Memoli as our teacher. He was outstanding and we both became very good at playing our chosen instruments. His father Mr. Memoli, later became head of the music department at Oak Avenue School in Temple City. Pop then taught Walt Mecackrin, a boy who lived across the street, to play the Trumpet. Walt's dad who worked in the oil fields was killed in an accident on the job and Walt's mother supported he and his two sisters by making tamale pies which she sold to neighbors.

As we progressed in mastering our instruments and found some other kids in the area who played the cello, violin and drums, Pop put together an orchestra of sorts and we played at local gatherings and at our church every Sunday. Later when we were in high school we played in the school orchestra and band, but more about that later.

Among my chores was watering the front and side lawns and this was before Pop installed a sprinkler system so I had to do it with a hose and nozzle. Most of the men in the neighborhood who worked in Los Angeles, including Pop, used the Pacific Electric line rather than their automobiles. For one thing the autos were not all that reliable in those days and parking in downtown LA was a problem. As mentioned earlier, the track was just a block from our house. The "Red Cars", as they were affectionately called, were electric and the heritage of Henry E. Huntington who had built a mass transportation system in Southern California in the early 1900's and is better known today for the Huntington Library in San Marino which he established before his death.

Los Angeles was the hub of the systems and from there his red cars (which were painted red) ran east to Cucamonga, Pomona, Pasadena, El Monte, Alhambra and to the various beach cities of Long Beach, Seal

Beach, Huntington Beach and Santa Monica. It was a grand system and contributed greatly to the development of Los Angeles County and Southern California.

One summer Saturday afternoon as I was watering the side lawn, Franklin Paden who was the Assistant District Attorney for Los Angeles and lived up the street from us, came walking by our house on his way home from the red car stop where the tracks crossed Garfield Avenue. He was dressed in white pants, shirt and tie with a tan coat and brown and white spectator shoes. He was wearing one of those flat top straw hats called 'sailor straws,' He said hello to me and unable to resist the temptation I squirted him with water. He complained to my folks of course and I was dealt the appropriate punishment which was a trip to the wood shed with Pop. For some reason the combination of Billy Harker and a garden hose with running water and nozzle was something to give wide berth to and avoided at all costs.

An east-west street named Ramona Boulevard ran parallel to, and on our side, of the tracks. Across the tracks at Garfield Avenue there were a few stores where Mom did some of her shopping. She would telephone her orders and then I would go down and pick them up. These included Beck's Meat Market, Link's Bakery and the Ramona Drug Store. I really enjoyed running those errands for Mom because there was always some kind of reward involved. Mr. Beck would give me a wiener and some of the frost off the refrigeration pipes that kept his meat display cases cold. Mr. and Mrs. Link were always good for a donut and the grocery store would net me a cookie or piece of candy.

The drug store was owned by a Mr. Sanford who was also a neighbor and he could be counted on for a piece of candy or chewing gum. That drug store had a white marble top soda fountain along with several round white marble topped tables and wire lair backed chairs. Mr. Sanford made the best chocolate sundaes I have ever eaten. His ice cream sodas weren't bad ei-

ther. Sanford always stocked a big supply of fireworks and what he did not sell by the 4th of July he would sell to us kids throughout the year. These included all sorts of firecrackers, sons 'a guns, skyrockets, Vesuvian Fountains, burning houses, torpedoes, sparklers, etc.

One day Pop drove his car to work because he had to use it during the day to check on some property. He did not show up at home at his usual time and Mom became quite worried. About a half hour after his normal arrival time at home the phone rang and it was Pop calling from Covina. He had forgot that he used his auto that day and got on the red car for the trip home. He fell asleep on the 20 minute ride from LA and when the street car stopped at Covina the conductor discovered Pop, woke him up and asked why he did not get off at the Garfield Avenue stop as he usually did. Very embarrassed, Pop got off and called Mom. Fortunately we had two cars at the time and she took off in the family sedan to pick him up in Covina. He never did that again.

Pop seemed to have a weakness for gadgets, a trait inherited from him by my brother Bud who displayed the same weakness. Anyway, Pop would spend his lunch hours in the basement of Bullocks Department Store pawing through all the kitchen gadgets and watching sales demonstrations of how to peel carrots, etc. One night he brought home a thing that was supposed to remove peas from the pod. It looked like a little washing machine hand wringer. You inserted the pod between the two small rubber rollers while you turned them with a hand crank. He clamped the thing to the kitchen bread board and called us all in to watch him shell the peas he had picked up at the market on his way home. When he started operating the thing it shot fresh peas all over the kitchen floor and Mom made him take it back the next day.

It was around this time that I came down with an affliction common to most boys of that age. I began falling in love with every little girl in school, but my love

was quite fickle and I would change the objects of my affection on a weekly basis. I enjoyed carrying their books on the walk home from school and just the smell of them. It was a form of infatuation called "puppy love" and nothing serious ever came of it other than my inability at times to concentrate on my school work. I was always sending notes during class to whoever the current object of my affection was that week and would be reprimanded by the teacher when caught.

An infamous kidnapping and murder occurred when I was in the seventh grade. A young girl in Los Angeles, named Marian Davis, was kidnapped and after the ransom was paid her dismembered body was returned to her parents in a cardboard box. The kidnapper, whose name was George Hickman was caught and sentenced to death by hanging. His execution was scheduled for 10 a.m. on a Tuesday. That morning, at precisely 10 a.m., as we all watched the big clock on the wall with a sweep second hand, everyone in the class room dropped their heavy books on the floor at the same time. It scared hell out of the teacher but was our way of commemorating the event.

One Christmas night the families all gathered at the Baylis home where they had a large artificial tree that was heavily decorated with lights and expensive ornaments and loaded with tinsel. The Baylis kids, Ruth and Harry had got a pogo stick for Christmas and it was sitting by the tree. My cousin Allen Bahn Jr. picked up the pogo and started jumping up and down on it near the tree. He suddenly lost his balance and fell into the tree knocking it down and smashing the tree and ornaments. Uncle Allen grabbed Junior by the ear, pulled him out doors and began beating him unmercifully. The other adults ran out and stopped the melee before he did any serious injury to his son. The Allen Bahn family then departed the gathering and went home.

Grandpa Bahn always bought a large live tom turkey a couple of months before Thanksgiving which

he then kept in a pen to fatten up. We kids used to love teasing the poor bird, but Grandpa finally found out and put an end to our fun by telling us we had scared our share of the turkey dinner off the bird and we would not get any of him to eat at the family dinner. In those days no one gave much thought to air pollution and everyone had a backyard incinerator in which they burned their combustible trash. Pop made one out of a 50 gallon metal drum in which he cut some holes in the bottom and then set it on a brick foundation about four inches above ground level to provide a good draft. It was very efficient and would burn just about anything you put into it other than glass or metal.

We had two large sycamore trees in the backyard that shed a lot of leaves in the fall and it was my job to rake up and burn the leaves every week during that time of year. One foggy Saturday morning I raked the leaves up and stuffed as many as I could in the homemade incinerator. Since the leaves were quite damp from the fog I decided they would need some help to make them burn and got a can of gasoline from the garage. I then went into the house and got a wooden kitchen match and poured about a quart of the gasoline on top of the leaves in the 50 gallon drum. When I went to strike the match on the bricks under the drum the match stick broke. I meandered back to the house, got another match, lit it and stuck it under the bottom of the drum. There was an immediate explosion with a loud "hawoomph" that could be heard all over the neighborhood as flaming leaves and a fire ball shot out of the drum and up about 20 feet into the air. Burning leaves began falling all over the place as Mom came running out of the house to see what had happened. We both grabbed water hoses and managed to contain the conflagration before it reached the wood pile. That delay between matches was evidently just the right amount of time to allow the fuel to form explosive vapors. Fortunate I was kneeling at the bottom of the drum when things took off and thus avoided any injury

but learned a valuable lesson.

Some of the neighbor kids had bikes and as a youngster I learned to ride theirs. I got my first bicycle for Christmas following my 12th birthday. It was a Plymouth, painted blue with red rubber tires. I could not wait to take it out to show my friends and after breakfast on Christmas morning I took it out, shot down our driveway, across the street and head on into the curb on the opposite side. The impact blew out the front tire and threw me up on the parkway. With no place to get another tire on Christmas day I was reduced to just looking at and admiring my new bicycle. Over the ensuing years that bike took me just about everywhere around Alhambra. Auto traffic was light in those days so bike riding was quite safe.

In later years I powered it with a Smith Wheel which was a rubber tired disk wheel with a one cylinder Briggs and Stratton gas engine attached to it. The contraption had a frame which attached to the bike's rear wheel axle by a swivel joint so the Smith Wheel could go up and down independent of the bike. This compensated for banking of the bike during turns. The one quart gas tank yielded about a 60 mile cruise at a top speed of 30 MPH. It had two controls that went up to the handle bars by encased cables. One was the throttle and the other was a compression release. To start the engine you released the compression while peddling the bike and when you let the compression back on it would start and you would go put-putting down the street. I bought it from another kid for \$25. There were two other kids that had them and we did a lot of group cruising together. It was great fun, but I finally sold it to another kid for \$15 who promptly went out riding after dark and plowed into the back of a parked car on Garfield Avenue nearly killing himself. He suffered a concussion and messed up face and spent a month in the hospital.

I had a paper route at this time delivering the Alhambra Post Advocate and the Smith Wheel sure made

the job a lot easier. Each month I had to collect the 30 cent subscription price from each of the subscribers on my route. I got to keep 5 cents out of each collection and got 25 cents for each new subscriber I signed up. Not much money, but it was during the depression days and a little went a long way. People were selling apples on street corners for 5 cents each just in order to survive.

Because burglaries were common during the depression Pop decided to install a self made burglar alarm after we were robbed twice. He installed batteries and a loud bell in the attic and wired the whole thing to the windows where he put dowel pins in place to hold the contacts open when the window screens were closed. The system was controlled by an on-off switch in the back porch. If you did not turn the switch off and opened a window screen the bell would ring bloody murder. Mom almost lost her cleaning woman who was deathly afraid of the alarm after having forgotten the switch and set the thing off several times. She finally got so she would not come in the house until one of us made sure the switch was in the off position.

CHAPTER IV



My Grandpa Harker died of a heart attack on June 27, 1921, just a year after my little brother Buddy was born and five years after my birth, so I never really got to know him very well.

One morning, in 1930, as I was getting ready for school Mother answered the phone and then began to cry. When I asked her what was wrong she said, "grandpa didn't wake up this morning," and I instinctively knew what she meant. Grandma Bahn had got up and fixed his breakfast and then went in to the bedroom to wake him up but he was dead, having died of a heart attack in his sleep sometime during the night. He must have gone peacefully because grandma was sleeping right next to him and did not know anything had happened.

There was no work for builders and carpenters during those first days of the great depression and grandpa had taken a job with the city as a street sweeper. The men doing that work used push brooms and it was all manual labor for which they were paid \$5 per day. Not much but it kept food on the table. Such circumstances may have contributed to his death at the age of 68.

A few months before our 8th grade class at Ramona Grammar School was due to graduate we were subjected to a battery of test designed to determine our level of literacy and fitness to cope with the upcoming

rigors of high school. Our parents were evidently concerned and worried about how we would handle the supposed sexual iniquities we would be exposed to in that institution of higher learning and took matters into their own hands.

Mother had a woman acquaintance who fancied herself to be some sort of psychologist. Her name was Dr. Westcott and she had a weird red-headed son Douglas who was either weak minded or slightly retarded. He was very strange to say the least. With the backing of the PTA Mother engaged Dr. Westcott to conduct a short lecture in sex education and it did not involve the birds and bees. It was a little more earthy than that. Due to the sensitive nature of the subject matter it was decided to lecture the boys and girls in separate sessions. So, one day before lunch, the boys were sent out to play in the school yard while the girls remained in the classroom. During lunch hour we boys noticed that some of the girls had funny looks on their faces and tended to avoid us boys.

As our session began after lunch, Mother introduced Dr. Westcott who then launched full bore into the subject at hand. She talked about uteruses, wombs, birth canals, breasts, testicles and penises, avoiding any references to bowels and their movements. Her talk became quite graphic. The finale to her presentation was a description of actual intercourse which she described as, "like putting your finger in your mouth." How more mundane could she have been?

Later that afternoon we boys took great sport in going up to the girls and asking if we could put our fingers in their mouth or walking up to a girl and putting our finger in our mouth, much to their amusement and sometimes embarrassment.

About a year later Dr. Westcott was taking a trip to the east and her son was driving when he lost control and rolled the car several times bringing his mother's life to an untimely end. It was later determined that the cause of his loss of control was due to a severe attack of

kidney stones.

Once a month on a Wednesday night in those days the City of Alhambra held community sings in the high school auditorium. They were very well attended and the singing was led by none other than the superintendent of schools, Forrest V. Route, a portly fellow with pinch-nose rimless glasses and a booming voice. It was a lot of fun to go to those "sings" with our parents and hear a lot of people, who could not carry a tune, trying to follow the mimeographed music sheets handed to them at the door as they came in. A piano played by an old lady was used as the accompaniment. Eventually they found a way to project the words on a large screen set up on the stage and a ball bouncing from word to word to help the audience keep in time with the music.

The first day at high school as a freshman was a most traumatic experience, getting a locker assignment, locating the proper classroom and trying to avoid the stares of the upper class students. We had all heard some hair raising stories about what happened to freshmen but it all turned out to be nothing more than rumors designed to scare the new kids coming into the school. I still have occasional nightmares about not being able to find my locker or going to the wrong classroom. Then there was the rule that we had to dress for gym and shower after. It was kind of embarrassing since I had never been in a room with a bunch of naked boys before.

The thing I hated most about those showers was the older boys snapping at you with wet bath towels. It really stung when you got hit by one and the older guys were not always careful about where they aimed the towel. So called Physical Ed was probably the thing I hated most and sometimes avoided dressing for gym with the result that I got a one hour "W" for every time I did not dress unless I had a good excuse like, "My mother didn't get them washed yet," or some equally lame reason. A "W" meant one hour after school hoeing weeds at the athletic field or some similar chore under

the direction of the field caretaker.

"Pop" Hughes, the field caretaker, was a pretty nice old man who was well along in years and an easy con target. If you really buttered him up you could work for only 20 or 30 minutes and he would sign you off as working for an hour. That "W" thing was something the coaches had dreamed up and it kept the field looking spic and span all year long. You had to return the "W" slip, with "Pop's" sign off, to the coach who gave it to you in order to clear your record.

That first semester in high school was mostly one of confusion as I struggled to learn the ropes and find my rightful place among the student body. If ever there was a caste system it was at Alhambra High. The social structure consisted of two parts; the "Front Porch Gang" and the "Patio Gang." The Front Porch Gang were the sophisticates, the lettermen, the good looking girls, honor roll students and the social climbers who gathered on the front porch of the building during lunch periods, between classes and after school. The porch, which faced Main Street, was in the center of the building and about a third of the building's width. It had a high ceiling that went up to the second floor and large round Moorish columns across the front at the top of the wide concrete steps that went down to ground level.

The patio was located in the center of the open area in back of the "U" shaped building and faced the gymnasium. The flooring was a mosaic tile and it contained a large 10 ft. by 30 ft. red brick lined fish pond. The Patio Gang were the misfits, financially poorer and low achievers, whose prime recreation was throwing each other in the fish pond. Being the shy type that I was at the time I naturally gravitated to, and became a member of the Patio Gang. I think that I unconsciously felt a little superior to most of them and that gave me a sense of security.

I remember some of the fellows explaining how they could rip the spotlight off a car in 10 seconds flat and the best method of siphoning gas out of someone's

car. A lot of them were constantly in trouble and their sense of humor left something to be desired. Their favorite sport was to run up to some unsuspecting boy, grab the fly in his pants and rip it open, usually ripping all the buttons off at the same time. One day a stray German Shepherd dog showed up and was running around the patio getting handouts from leftover lunches. He disappeared for a few minutes and the next we saw of him he was running back to the patio from the gym wearing a jock strap. I'll have to admit it was a hilarious sight.

In the second semester of that first year I did qualify to be enrolled in the school band and orchestra and had to take my trombone to school every day for band or orchestra practice. I tried riding the bus a few times but it was too uncomfortable and my trombone case was always in someone's way. I finally resorted to walking the two miles from home to school and enjoyed the freedom of not having to conform to a bus schedule and proceeding at my own pace. It gave me time to smell the flowers. I got beat up a couple of times on the way home by the school bullies but the attacks were not enough to discourage me from walking to and from the school.

There was a small and quite pretty teacher, named Miss. Thornton who taught one of the math classes and drove to school in a very little car called an Austin. It was a two seater, that people purchased by mail order, and so small that owners often used the packing crate it came in as a garage. One morning when I was on my way to school with my trombone and about a block from home, Miss Thornton drove by, stopped and offered me a ride. I accepted but we had a hard time fitting me and my trombone in the little car with her. After a bit of shoving, juggling and snuggling we finally made it and I became quite aroused sitting so close to the beautiful young woman.

She pulled up and parked on Main Street right in front of the school and I didn't miss any of the envious

glances I got from the Front Porch Gang as she and I got out of her car. From some of the comments I heard later that day it was obvious that a lot of the kids read more into the incident than it warranted. For whatever reason it tended to raise my status among some of the members of the Front Porch Gang, but not enough to grant me acceptance into their close knit group.

One of my classes at that time was first year Spanish and unknown to us our teacher was a lip reader who taught deaf classes in the evenings. She was really sharp at it and could read the lips of the kids in the back row of the class. She caught me and some of the others whispering snide remarks about her and got her revenge in the end by flunking us which meant going to summer school and taking the course over. I finally got wise and did quite well for the rest of the two years of Spanish. Trouble was I forgot most of it over the years and it only came back to me much later, the circumstances of which will be related further on in this book.

A classmate of mine named Jimmy Edwards used to usher at the Alhambra Theater and after we graduated he borrowed some money from his uncle and opened a movie theater at the corner of Garfield and Hellman Avenues which he named the Monterey Theater. He later changed the name to Edwards. It was the first of his theaters that are known today as The Edwards throughout Southern California.

One large room in the school was used for band and orchestra practice. The only furniture were chairs and an upright piano. There was one little kid, Terry Sterling, who went through Ramona Grammar School with me and was learning to play the piccolo. The head of the music department was a fun guy named "Pop" Ulmer who was also the band and orchestra director. One morning after practice we were fooling around and Pop Ulmer grabbed Terry, opened the lid to the piano and stuffed him inside then jumped up and sat on the lid. We all thought that was very funny, all that is ex-

cept Terry.

I did not belong to any of the clubs, like the debating club, chess club, De Molays, etc., but as I was building model airplanes at the time I did help organize a model airplane club. More about that later.

Evidently my Sophomore year was pretty dull as I can't recall a lot about it other than the fact that I did make the "B" football team and played one season and then gave it up because marching in the band at the games was a lot less strenuous and rough on the body.

There was one thing I do remember about this time but was unrelated to school. As mentioned earlier, my Uncle Raymond was working at the San Marino Police Department. A trustee with the last name of Eggars was assigned to some menial chores around the station as a janitor. Somehow he got hold of a gun and shot his way out of the station and then went to his home and shot his wife to death. A man hunt was started immediately but the berserk fellow eluded capture for over a week and everyone in the area was scared stiff. He was finally spotted in a bar in El Monte and a gun fight erupted when they tried to capture him. He was shot to death in the ensuing battle. Uncle Raymond showed me an 8 x 10 black and white photo of Eggars after his body was taken back to the station. They had pulled up his eye lids and fastened them in place with pins for the photo. I will never forget the picture of that dead guy staring at me with open eyes and three bullet holes in his chest.

Things got a lot better as I developed a greater interest in girls and began going with Peggy Lamb, daughter of our church minister. While my folks were raised as Quakers our church was called the Friends Community Church and the original building had been moved from Monterey Park to a location on Sixth Street just south of Ramona Grammar School. Pop worked on the move which involved cutting the building in half and then putting it back together on the new site.

Mom had organized an all girl Sunday school

class which she taught and provided a lot of fun for the girls. There were about twelve to fourteen of them and they called themselves "The Geisha Girls" a name Mom came up with. I don't think she understood what Geisha Girls were in Japan. Mom and the girls made elaborate Japanese costumes which they wore for special occasions and learned to sing several Japanese songs, but sang them in English. It seemed there were always some of those girls hanging around the house working on costumes and things when I got home from school. A lot of them had gone through grammar school with me.

Anyway, I took Peggy to a school dance and had a horrible time because I hated dancing even though Mom had put me through a ballroom dancing class. I always felt clumsy and awkward, often stepping on my partner's toes. After the dance, our romance cooled and I began going with other girls. I had got my drivers license at age 14 and had use of the family car for special occasions at this point in time. I later had my own car, a 1926 Star Coupester, for which Pop paid \$40.

I had been wanting my own car so Pop said he would get me one if I painted the house and other buildings on our lot during my summer vacation. The buildings were painted bronze green with white trim and it took me all summer to complete the job. The house was a California Bungalow with large overhanging eaves and painting under those eaves with paint running down the brush handle was no fun. We had a family cat at the time, a beautiful long haired silver Persian named Ninita. One day I was high up on the ladder and the cat was laying down below when I lost my balance and knocked the can of paint off the ladder and all over Ninita. The cat screeched and ran all around the yard. Mom came out and we finally got the cat cornered and captured. Mom had a devil of a time getting all that green paint out of Ninita's fur as the poor animal yowled and clawed for all she was worth.

Pop and I spent a couple of months completely overhauling the Star, grinding the valves, putting in

new piston rings, re-lining the brakes and replacing all the wiring, of which there was not much. Auto engines were much simpler in those days. I then painted the car seafoam green and Mom named it my "Green Mari-gold." That car was my pride and joy.

My second cousin, Harry Baylis, who was a couple of years older than me, had been working as a page at the city library for a couple of years and wanted to quit. I was able to get his job and he stayed on with me for about a month of training. The job consisted of putting all the returned books back on the shelves in their proper places. I had to learn Dewey Decimal system which I eventually mastered. I was given a key to the library as I had to do the work when the library was closed. I would go in around 6 a.m. And work until school started at 8 a.m. and then go back at night and work until 9 or 10 p.m. all for the sum of \$25 a month, but that went a long way in those days. Gasoline was 12 cents a gallon and hamburgers were 5 cents each. I was therefore able to keep my car running and my stomach full.

When I really wanted to splurge I would join some of the other high school kids for lunch at Rich's Malt Shop across the street from the school. We had two favorite tricks we would play there. We would carefully remove one end of the paper wrappers on the large drinking straws, dip the closed end in our malts and then blow them up to the ceiling where they would stick. The place resembled the inside of a cave with stalagmites hanging from the ceiling. The malted milks cost 20 cents each.

Our other trick was to take the full glasses of water and turn them upside down very quickly after having put a paper napkin on top of the glass. We would then pull the napkin out and the upside down glass of water would sit there on the table for the waitress to deal with.

At this point I want to revisit Alamitos Bay and the summers we spent there during the prohibition

days. Bootleggers were doing a brisk business in the beach cities and wild parties took place at many of the beach houses during the weekends. We kids would go down the alleys on Monday mornings picking liquor bottles out of the trash cans for what we called our 'whiskey bottle collections."

Over a couple of summers Bud and I had collected some 100 different bottles, everything from beer to scotch and gin. A lot of them came from Mexico and had interesting labels on them, like American Eagle, Panther Piss, White Lightning and Flying Dutchman along with Vat 69, Haig & Haig, Old Crow, etc. I just wish we had kept them as some of those bottles would be worth a fortune today.

Most of the bottles would have a little residue left in the bottom which we called "droppings." We began pouring all these droppings into one of the empty bottles and eventually had two full bottles of an extremely potent mixture. Not the kind of cocktail any bartender would consider serving to a customer. This whiskey bottle collection played a role in a couple of incidents that will be related shortly.

Our cousin, Allen Bahn Jr., was an accomplished musician and could play any instrument he got his hands on except for strings. He was great on the piano, wood winds and brass. Our music teacher, Tom Memoli, organized a bunch of us into a seven piece dance band that practiced every Saturday morning and Allen was a member of the band. The tunes we played included such pieces as, Tiptoe Thru The Tulips, Up A Lazy River, Blue Moon, Caroline and similar popular tunes of the era.

We played for some private parties and some of the impromptu school dances held in the gym. We finally got a summer booking to play for the cotillion classes that the city sponsored in the Rec. Hall at Almansor Park. We would have to play real slow for the beginner classes and then speed up the tempo for the more advanced kids. It was a real kick to see some of those lit-

tle kids stumbling around trying to do the waltz or fox-trot.

Allen and I made a unique instrument using some of those empty whisky bottles. We built a wood frame from which we hung fourteen of the bottles by a string around the neck. We then filled the bottles with varying amounts of water so they would ring different notes when struck with a marimba hammer. We got them tuned for every note of the musical scale by striking the desired notes on piano keys. We took the contraption to school orchestra practice one day and Pop Ulmer was very impressed and worked it in to some of the pieces the orchestra played. Allen played the bottles along with the rest of us and it really sounded quite good. Ulmer decided to work the bottles into a concert we were going to give at a general assembly.

The top of the wood frame from which the bottles hung was six feet from the floor which brought the bottles to eye level. The floor of the orchestra pit was plain cement. At one point as Allen was playing the bottles to the subdued orchestra accompaniment, he got carried away and hit one of the bottles so hard it broke the string and went crashing to the cement floor scattering broken glass and water in all directions. Members of the orchestra got to laughing so hard we could not play our instruments and Pop Ulmer doubled over with laughter. It was a big hit with the students attending the assembly.

I had a lot of other girl friends at that time, too numerous to mention, usually changing every couple of months. It was around this time that Pop began a major construction project at the site of our home. When the empty lot next door went up for sale Pop, and Mr. Richardson who lived two lots away, decided to buy the vacant lot and split it in half between the two of them. Thus they both ended up with very large lots.

Pop's first project was to build a bunk house for Bud and me to replace the playhouse we had outgrown. The play house was about 10 ft. by 10 ft. with a wood

floor and wood sides 3 ft. high. The rest of the sides were covered with window screening and the roof was canvas. It had a screen door entry at one end. The bunk house was all wood with a composition roof and double hung windows plus French windows at the sleeping end where two single beds were installed along with a dresser cabinet. The building which was 12 ft. wide and 30 ft. long had a work shop with large work bench at the opposite from the sleeping quarters. There was also a table and chairs near the center of the room. Whenever Bud or I had friends stay overnight we slept in the bunk house. Our whiskey bottle collection was displayed on long shelves built into the wall opposite the entry door and above that we had hung some old Civil War rifles that Pop had collected.

Normally Bud and I shared the back bedroom, in the main house, which was warmed by an open flame gas heater. One winter morning Grandma Bahn, who had been staying with us, came down the hall in her flannel nightgown on her way to the kitchen and got too close to the gas heater which ignited her gown. She ran into the kitchen in flames and Mom who was in the kitchen at the time somehow managed to extinguish the flames, but not until after it had burned most of the hair off grandma's head. It was a very traumatic experience for Bud and me.

Another time we were awakened one Sunday morning by a lot of yelling in the kitchen and Pop came in and told us to stay in bed. Later, we found out what it was all about. The night before, during a heavy rain storm, Uncle Allen had been drinking and ran out of booze. Being short of cash but still thirsty he went down the street to a liquor store where he smashed the window and grabbed a couple of bottles. He was immediately arrested and Mom and Pop had gone up and bailed him out. For some reason he resented their involvement and came to our house with a gun to shoot our mother. Pop managed to get the gun away and took Uncle Allen back home.

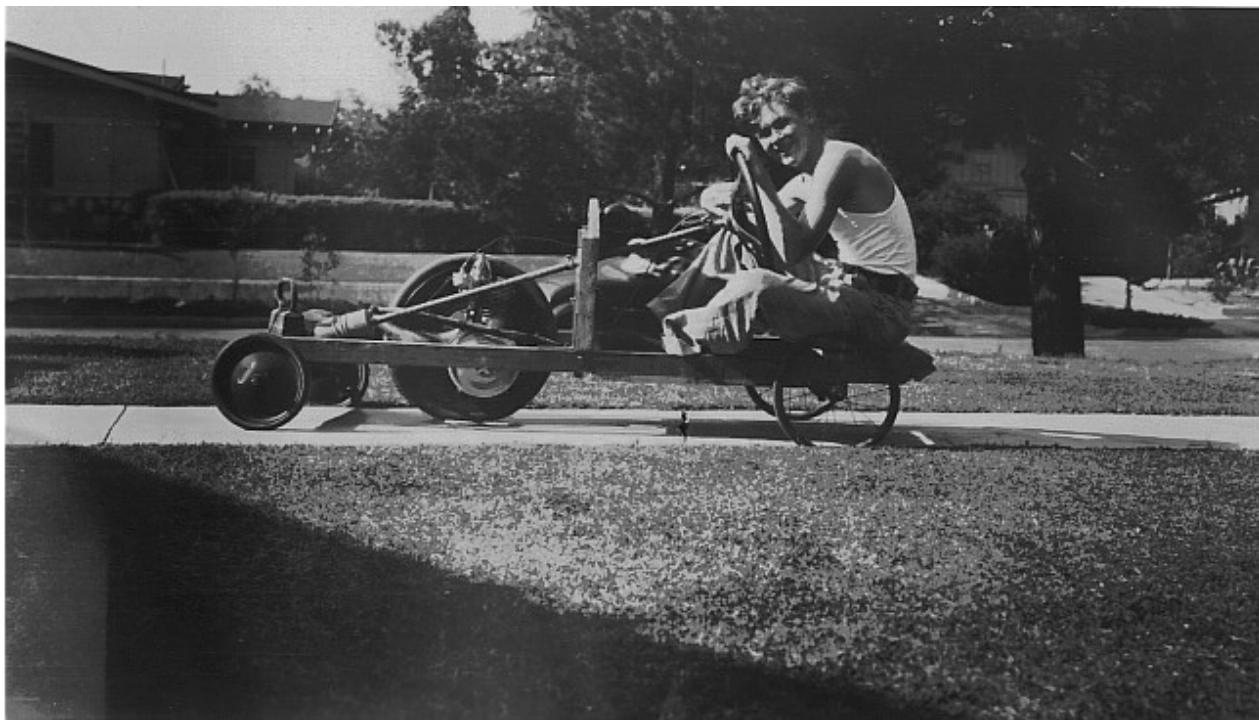
One of our boyhood friends, Terry Stirling, the kid that Pop Ulmer had put in the piano, stayed with us for several months during a time his mother and father were going through a financial crisis. We slept in the bunk house while he was with us and spent our nights looking at pictures in a magazine called "French Follies" that had photos of naked women in it. Mom caught us one night and burned the magazine following a long lecture.



That's me standing in the results of the big 1931 snowstorm in Alhambra. The bunkhouse is to the right and the old original garage with attached woodshed in background.



Me with my first car, the Star Coupester.



My "Chug" powered by the Smith Wheel used on my bicycle.



My dog Ginger in wedding gown.



Ginger dressed as a house maid.

CHAPTER V



About the time I entered my third year in high school Pop began a major project on our property in Alhambra. He moved the old garage to the south side of the lot and replaced it with a two story building that had a three car garage on the ground floor and a recreation room on the second floor. He converted his old drafting office into a wash-room for Mom and painted the cement floor with gray waterproof paint. He actually only used two of the car stalls for autos and the third was made into a workshop with bench and power tools.

The upstairs rec. room was accessed by an exterior stairway and the floor was all hardwood. The walls were paneled in knotty pine and storage closets were built into the two corners at one end of the room. The old garage that was moved became a boat house, but more about that later.

The construction crew consisted of Harry Baylis and his son, Pop and myself, along with one of our neighbors. It took most of the summer to get the building completed and one of my jobs was installing all the composition shingles on the roof. It was a rather scary job as the roof had quite a pitch to it and it was a long way to the ground. The nice part about it, however, was that I could see all over the neighborhood from my high perch.

A few years later Pop bought an old fashioned Brunswick pool table at an estate sale in Riverside. He

got Harry Baylis to pick it up in his Model T Ford truck and bring it to our place. We had to completely take it apart in order to get it up the stairs to its destination which was the rec. room on the second floor where it provided many years of fun and enjoyment for family and friends. I eventually inherited the table and it went with me on all our moves over the years until I passed it on to my daughter, Harriet, who has it in her home in Prescott, Arizona at this writing. Thus the pool table has managed to stay in the family.

My folks had a friend, Homer Snow, who with his brother made documentary movies. Santa Barbara County was experiencing an infestation of mountain lions and hired a professional lion hunter, Jay Bruce, to reduce the lion population. Bruce hunted with a pack of trained dogs that would tree the lions and he would then shoot them and collect his bounty for each lion eliminated. Homer Snow and his brother accompanied Bruce on several of his hunts documenting everything on film. On one of the hunts they found a cute little motherless cub (Bruce had shot the mother) and Homer decided to take it home and raise it as a family pet.

The resulting film they shot that season was outstanding and they began getting bookings to show it at movie theaters all around California. The film was about an hour long and they had a little stage act that went along with it. Homer had named the cub "Bruce" in honor of Jay Bruce and had trained the animal to do a lot of tricks. He would wrestle with it and had trained it to jump over him while he was bending over. It would play dead and roll over on command and was much like a trick dog in that respect. The cub, which by now was mature and full grown, had somehow broken a tooth off and Homer had it replaced with a gold tooth. The lion loved to swim with Homer in the surf, much to the concern of other nearby bathers.

The Snow's got a three night engagement at the Garfield Theater in Alhambra and they stayed at our house. They kept Bruce outside in the back yard

chained to the clothes line and I would go out and play with him right after his dinner of raw steaks at which times he was particularly docile. We really got along fine together.

I was a Junior in high school by this time and on the second day of their stay with us Homer took Bruce up to the high school at noontime in his special built trailer that resembled a circus lion cage. He and I had prearranged what we would do when he got there. He parked the car and trailer right in front of the school on Main Street and a large crowd of my fellow students were immediately attracted to the site. Homer then offered a ten dollar bill to anyone who would get in the cage and wrestle with the lion.

Bruce was yowling and hissing and really putting on a good show and of course there were no takers at which time I volunteered. Homer opened the cage and I climbed in and began playing with Bruce who was already accustomed to me. We put on a mock fight which probably lasted no more than five minutes but was sufficient to impress the bystanders. Needless to say I exited the cage as some sort of fool or hero depending upon how you looked at it, but my status at school was secured at that moment and I was unequivocally accepted into the Front Porch Gang as one of their equals.

Years later, when Bruce became too old to perform on the stage, he was donated to the Flieshecker Zoo in San Francisco where he was killed one night by a zoo keeper who claimed Bruce attacked him. It later turned out the zoo keeper had been molesting him for some reason or other and as a result the keeper was dismissed and had to pay a heavy fine. We were all devastated by the news which made all the papers since Bruce was a celebrity in his own right.

I was really enjoying high school by this time, getting good grades and dating Betty Bettinger whose father was the superintendent of schools in Alhambra. This furthered my status with the Front Porch Gang as I climbed their social ladder.

In the summer of 1933 Pop and Roy Harris took we boys to see the Boulder Dam, now Hoover Dam, which was under construction. We stayed in the only hotel in Las Vegas at that time. It was named the Sal Sagev (Las Vegas spelled backwards) and it was nothing like the hotels there today. The first night at the hotel we met the world heavyweight boxing champion, Max Bear who was in town to watch his younger brother Buddy Bear fight. Next day we went out to the dam site and stood at the bottom of the structure, which was about two-third completed. We stood on ground that would eventually be the bottom of Lake Mead. Today the water depth at that point is 320 feet. So I can say that I stood on the bottom of Lake Mead.

These were the days of the "hot rods" and a lot of us boys were hopping up Model T's, '27 Chevy's, and Model A Fords. The modifications were sometimes quite extensive and included installing Franklin front axles to lower the car and putting Fronty Heads and twin down-draft Winfield carburetors on the engines. Empty beer kegs were converted to pressure fuel tanks with dash mounted hand pressure pumps. Gear ratios were changed and straight pipes installed to eliminate exhaust back pressure. The results were cars that often topped 100 MPH when we ran them through the electric timed speed courses at Murock Dry Lake in the Mojave Desert, now Edwards Air Force Base.

One of the guys in this group, and a fellow classmate of mine, was Sam Hanks who later got into midget auto racing and later in his career won the Indianapolis 500. He then became president of the Indy Speedway and eventually owned a Buick dealership in Los Angeles. Sam was a great driver and well liked among the racing crowd. He also made a lot of money during his racing career.

Alhambra had an annual event called "Hi Neighbor Days," which included a parade and the high school marching band was one of the attractions. Brother Bud was in the band with me and had been experiencing

sharp pains in his side during the practice sessions in preparation for one of the parades. Our folks were concerned but Bud was determined to march in the parade which he did, only to collapse at the end. He was rushed to the hospital where they found his appendix had burst and peritonitis had set in. He was in the hospital for a month during which time we nearly lost him twice.

Somewhere along the line Pop had run across an old Model T Ford coil and gave it to Bud and me to play with. I made an arc light out of it by plugging it into one of the electric wall outlets in the bunk house and using a pair of sharpened lead pencils as arc rods. It really put out a bright light. That Ford coil got us into trouble a couple of times though. We had found out that every time we played with it the radios in the house gave forth a loud static sound. This gave us a great idea on how we could communicate with our neighbor kids by Morse Code.

I found a roll of unused copper wire window screening in the garage and laid it out on top of the wire clothes lines and then hooked it up to the Ford coil and sparked it with the two wires used on the pencils to make the arc light. The first report we got back by phone was from a kid six blocks away who said we came in real strong on his folks radio. This went on intermittently for several weeks until one day while I was transmitting, a white panel truck with antennas sticking up all over the roof pulled up and parked by our house. Two fellows got out carrying some kind of radio direction finders in their hands and headed for the bunk house and my spark gap transmitter. They said they were from the Federal Communications Commission and got a lot of complaints from people regarding radio interference and had been looking for the source for two weeks.

They said at first they thought it was a doctor who lived up the street where he used some sort of electric therapy device on his patients. They then gave me

a strong lecture while trying to keep straight faces and told me I would never be able to get a radio license from the FCC. Needless to say I was scared and thought for sure I would go to jail. I tore down the antenna as soon as they left.

The other thing we did was much more dangerous and could have resulted in serious injuries. A friend of mine, Marshall LaCour, and I decided to make a bomb and set it off from a safe distance using the Ford coil. I had found a two-piece spun brass tube each half of which had rounded closed ends. The two pieces went together with a slip joint where one half fit inside the other. The tube was eight inches long and 3/4 inches in diameter. We got a bunch of Pop's shotgun shells and emptied the powder grains into the two halves and put hose tape around the joint.

At this point we solicited the help of my brother Bud who was eager to assist us. After all, someone had to hold the bomb while I drilled two holes in it for insertion of the ignition wires. Undaunted, Bud held the bomb in his hands. While I used a hand-held electric drill to make holes on opposite sides of the brass tube. With Bud still holding the bomb, I inserted two pieces of square spaghetti radio wire and soldered them in place using a hot soldering iron. We then wrapped the entire bomb with several layers of black hose tape and then took it out in the yard, about 12 feet from the bunk house, placed it on the grass under a heavy wood box and ran two wires from the Ford coil to the terminals we had soldered into the bomb casing.

We then retired to the bunk house and cracked the door a bit so we could witness the results of our handiwork. When the "All Clear" signal was given I pushed the button on the coil. The resulting explosion was ear shattering and the heavy wooden box disappeared in a shower of splinters. It brought Mom running out of the house to see what had happened and made a spot six feet in diameter completely devoid of grass with nothing but bare dirt showing. There were

no remaining pieces of the bomb visible, but two weeks later Kenny Ingham, who lived one block north of us, found one half of the casing in his back yard.

Pop had now been promoted to Trust Officer at the Bank where his responsibilities involved managing trust funds and properties. One of the properties was the Garfield Theater and the theater manager gave us unlimited passes which were good all year 'round. We sure saw a lot of movies and Bud and I began going to all the Saturday matinees. In order to keep the kids coming back week after week they would run serials, usually westerns, that were about 20 minutes long and always ended with the hero going over a cliff or being shot numerous times at close range. Of course you had to go back the next week to see how he survived which he always did in order to keep the serial going.

One of the stars of those serials was the famous actor Buck Jones who would make a circuit of the theaters, where his films were showing, to organize "Buck Jones Ranger Clubs" and enlist members. For some reason that escapes me I had become fascinated with rope spinning and had become pretty good at it practicing in the back yard. One time when Buck visited the Garfield Theater he had a rope spinning contest on the stage that was open to all comers. I won the contest and Buck immediately appointed me Sergeant in his club with the duty of teaching other kids how to spin ropes. Buck Jones died in the well publicized Coconut Grove Fire on the east coast. He along with some 200 other people were trapped in the building and burned to death.

These were also the days of the touring vaudeville shows and the Garfield Theater was on one of the circuits. Five of us kids from the school band had put together a small dance band that played at the matinees to keep the kids entertained before the film started. We began playing for some of the vaudeville acts and sat in the orchestra pit in front of the stage which also included the traditional theater organ. One night a group of

Spanish dancers was the headline act and as we made our best attempt at playing Spanish music this tall slim gal in a red flamenco dress began twirling around when suddenly her shoulder strap broke and her left breast popped out and began flopping around. It brought the house down and a blush to the confused lady's face as she quickly tried to stuff things back in place. We kids nearly died laughing.

I took Betty Bettinger, who was one class behind me, to the Junior Prom and managed to stay off her feet while we were dancing. I had managed to overcome my fear of dancing somewhat by this time. Mom and Pop let me use the family car that night complete with radio and heater. Since it was in the dead of winter and quite cold I had the heater turned on and the smell of the gardenia corsage I had got for Betty began to overcome me. I got an awful headache which tended to interfere with our petting after the prom while we were parked in her folks driveway. I had her home, over her protests, by 11:30 p.m. which was the deadline her folks had set for me.

As the end of the year approached I began looking forward to becoming a Senior and was totally unprepared for what happened that year. I had begun to take part in a lot of student activities and was a member of the group that headed up the student body. By my own appraisal I was a good looking kid and girls seemed to be attracted to me, but I lacked the courage to carry through on many of the unique opportunities that presented themselves.

CHAPTER VI



My Senior year was the most enjoyable of the four years spent at Alhambra High School. I was getting good grades and things began coming my way. I was elected Senior Class President and chaired the student committee that chose our class rings, pins and sweaters. The rings were gold with a black onyx inset upon which sat the bold figure of a Moor soldier and the number 19 was on one side of the ring shank and number 35 was on the other side. The sweaters we chose were powder blue with a white and blue W 35 sewn on the front. Ours was the winter of '35 graduating class and the school was known as the Alhambra Moors. If you still remember your geography you may recall that Alhambra was a Moor City. That's why the architecture of the high school was Moorish.

That was the year we won the CIF football championship and we not only won every one of our games that season but were never scored upon, much to the credit of our outstanding quarterback, Orv Mohler, and a great team coached by George Hobbs who went on to become head coach at Arizona State. Orv Mohler became a star player at USC. While attending USC he took flying lessons at the old Alhambra Airport and earned his pilot license. Two years later he was flying an open cockpit biplane from Alhambra to Bakersfield when he ran into unexpected bad weather in the vicinity of Tehachapi and died when he crashed into a moun-

tain.

That football season at AHS ended on a tragic note however as someone got the idea of our team playing the USC freshman team in an exhibition game. We beat the USC frosh but lost a much liked player in the process. Bob Hart made a flying tackle on a USC ball carrier and broke his neck when he hit the other guy who was bigger than him. Bob Hart died before they could get him to the hospital and his body lay in state in a funeral home across the street from the high school. They let all the kids out one day, a class at a time, so they could file past the open casket. It was pretty horrible and traumatic for many of the younger students. Flying tackles were later outlawed

South Pasadena High was our arch rival and we always played against them on Thanksgiving day. They were the most attended of all our games and there were occasional brawls between students of the two schools. It finally reached the point where they were etching their school initials in lye on each others school lawns. Administrators, realizing things could really get out of hand, decided to stop all future games between the two schools. After those games we would go to Grandpa and Grandma Bahn's house for Thanksgiving dinner. Following dinner, while the ladies cleaned up, the men would congregate in the living room to rehash the game and do a little Sunday morning quarterbacking.

Our Senior class had several fun outings during that last year at the school. One was a train trip to the Salton Sea. Back then the telephone poles, that ran along side the railroad track before the Colorado River flood inundated the area, were still sticking up about four feet above the water. A new rail track had been laid along the shore and that is where our train stopped. We all got out to look at the sea and listen to a lecture by one of the teachers on how the sea was formed. Some of the guys stripped buck naked and swam out to the phone poles where they climbed up onto the cross bars and posed for the girls lining the shore who were

screaming with delight and egging the boys on. It got a little raunchy and the teachers told the boys to get off the poles, swim back to shore and put their clothes on. Things got pretty wild on the trip home and during the ensuing horseplay some damage to the passenger cars occurred. That was the last train outing as the Southern Pacific Railroad executives took a dim view of the way the students treated their train.

Another outing was the unofficial, but traditional, "Ditch Day" when the whole class cut school. It was an accepted practice and plans were made in advance for the event. It was the dead of winter and we all motored up to Mount Baldy to play in the snow. There were some wild snow ball fights and kids got thrown into snow drifts but fortunately there were no casualties other than some of the guys who got quite drunk on liquor they managed to smuggle to Mt. Baldy.

My folks arranged a party for the senior orchestra at our house and most of the members came. They were all over the place, upstairs in the rec. room, in and out of the house and all over the yard having the time of their lives. Some of them got into the bunk house and discovered our whiskey bottle collection. One of them, Bob Ovington an oboe player, found our bottles of drop-pings and took several large gulps of the potent contents. He began choking and then went out in the yard and threw up. He was sick for the rest of the evening and none of the others cared to sample the stuff.

I had become pretty good at playing the trombone by this time and had memorized the tune "One Alone" from the "Desert Song." I was playing it one day in the music room at school while waiting for orchestra practice. Pop Ulmer heard it and was quite impressed. We had a concert coming up the next month and he decided to work my solo with orchestra accompaniment into the performance. So for the next month we practiced that number until we had it perfected. Mom was so excited about it that she bought tickets for a lot of her friends so they could attend.

The concert took place in the high school auditorium and the place was packed. A lot of our family friends and relatives were in the audience. As mentioned earlier, the school was of Moorish architecture, and the ceiling of the auditorium was covered in mosaic tiles. The printed program showed that my solo would be played midway in the concert just before the intermission. When that point in the program was reached, the house lights were dimmed, I stood up and a blinding white spotlight was aimed on me. I could not see the audience so I looked up at the ceiling which proved to be a fatal mistake. I was counting the tiles and becoming hypnotized by the designs as I played along from memory. All of a sudden I came to and did not know where I was in the musical score. I was totally lost and things began to deteriorate at a rapid pace. Pop Ulmer, realizing what was happening, stopped the orchestra and turning to the audience said, "I think Bill got lost somewhere along the line so we are going to start over." With that we went back to the beginning and a very red faced trombonist flawlessly played the most perfect solo of his life. Like they say, "If you fall off a horse, get right back on." My folks were very embarrassed and I was demoralized for the rest of the evening.

That was the last time I ever played my trombone and sold it shortly thereafter keeping only the sterling silver mouth piece that had been custom made to fit my receding chin and under bite. Our Senior class play was "Growing Pains" which was a popular script at the time. I was cast in a supporting role and the leading role was played by a girl named Virginia Bosch who was a member of my mother's Sunday School class and who I first came to know in the first grade at Ramona Grammar School. At that time she was a gangling dark-haired little girl with knocked knees whose mother had her taking dancing lessons. She used to wear her dancing shoes to school which were black pumps with big black bows on them. I never paid her much attention during grammar school but she would often be at our

house working with Mom on some Sunday school project when I got home. She was also in our eighth grade play and an outstanding student.

Two weeks after our Senior play I received a postcard from a talent search outfit in Hollywood saying I had been spotted in the play and they wanted to set up an appointment with me. Mom called them and got an appointment for a Saturday afternoon and became very excited. She took me out and bought me a maroon shirt with white pin stripes and a button down collar. To this she added a white necktie, black slacks and a gray jacket. I guess I looked real "Hollywood." During the trip to my appointment, with Pop driving, Mom kept lecturing me on how I could be in the movies and still live a normal life, that I did not have to start smoking and drinking and become debauched like so many of the movie actors were in those days.

At the appointed hour we arrived at a building on Hollywood Boulevard and went up to the second floor to find a talent office. The building was rather run down inside and the halls could have used more lighting. We found the room number which was painted on the florentine glass in the top half of the door. We knocked and nothing happened so we opened the door and entered just in time to see a pudgy little bald headed guy with dark rimmed glasses scraping the crumbs from his brown bag lunch off his desk. He did not bother to introduce himself but launched directly into the subject at hand. "Let me see you act," he said as he took a business card from his pocket and folded it into a tent and set it on his desk.

"Here's the scene," he said, "the folded card is your mother laying dead on the ground because you left a garden rake against the house with the prongs facing up and when your mother stepped on them the handle flew up and hit her in the head killing her. Now show me some emotion." Well I felt silly as hell as I got down on one knee by the desk and began wailing over that dumb card and emoting for all I was worth. I must have

been good because Mom burst out crying, but evidently not good enough for the fat guy because he thanked us and said I would be hearing from him, which I never did. The next week I mentioned this to one of the other kids that was in the play and found out everyone in the cast had received an identical postcard. So much for the would be movie star!

When the time came for our Senior Prom I had to find a date among the girls in our class because you could not take a lower grade student to the Prom. That ruled out Betty Bettinger who I was still dating at the time. Out of desperation I asked Virginia Bosch, who had become sort of a family friend and whom I felt comfortable with, to go to the Prom with me. She accepted my invitation immediately which should have been a warning to me. We had a good time at the Prom and afterwards with three other couples went to the Biltmore Bowl where Jimmy Greer and his band were playing. The class had chosen the Biltmore as the post prom destination so most of the class was there. The table service left a lot to be desired as the hotel crew did not take kindly to high school kids. As our waiter presented the bill he had the nerve to say, "I hope you will give me a better tip than the kids at that other table." This rubbed us the wrong way so we left him a tip of fifteen cents. I think the total bill for our table was about \$60!

I had made the mistake of getting Virginia a gardenia corsage and experienced the same headache again as the scent made me nauseous. Nothing much happened that night and I had her home and to the front door at the appointed hour. Frankly I was a bit afraid of her dad.

During the last couple of months prior to graduation I had come down with the flu which left me with a bad cough and I was experiencing night sweats. The condition continued and I was running a slight fever most of the time. After graduation, Virginia enrolled in the Sawyer Business School in Los Angeles and I got ready to enroll in college where I planned to major in

aeronautical engineering, but my failing health interfered with those plans.

Things finally got so bad that I could not function properly and had to stay in bed. Mom and Pop became worried and called in a doctor who, after examining me, had a meeting with my folks that ended up with Mom crying and Pop wearing a concerned look on his face. They then got up the courage to tell me that I had tuberculosis and would either have to go into a sanitarium or stay in bed at home for a year or more. I elected the latter and Mom became my untiring nurse for the duration of my cure.

The routine consisted of bed rest, lots of high protein food, medication, sun baths and a lot of love from my mother.

Alhambra City High School

Alhambra, California



Be it known that William Allen Harker
has completed satisfactorily the Course of Study prescribed for
Graduation from this High School and is therefore awarded this Diploma.



In Witness whereof we have affixed our signatures this seventh
day of February in the year One thousand nine
hundred and thirty five at Alhambra, California

H. M. Wene

Principal of High School

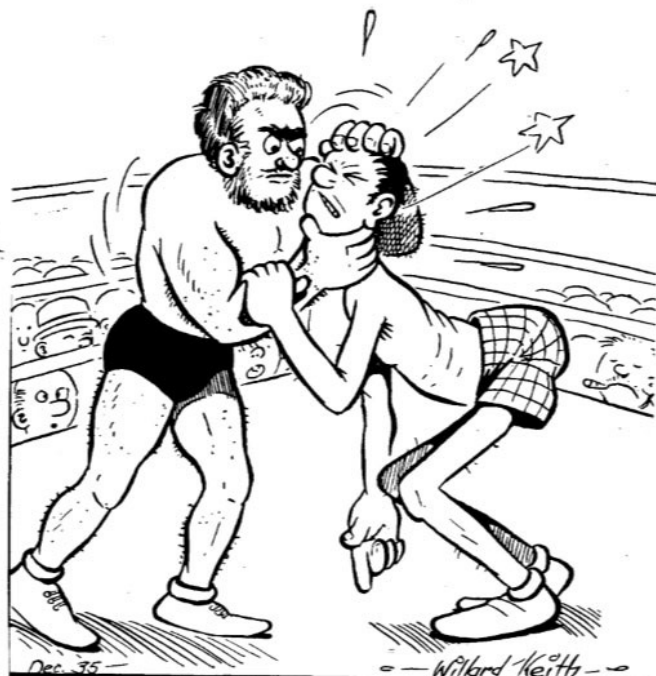
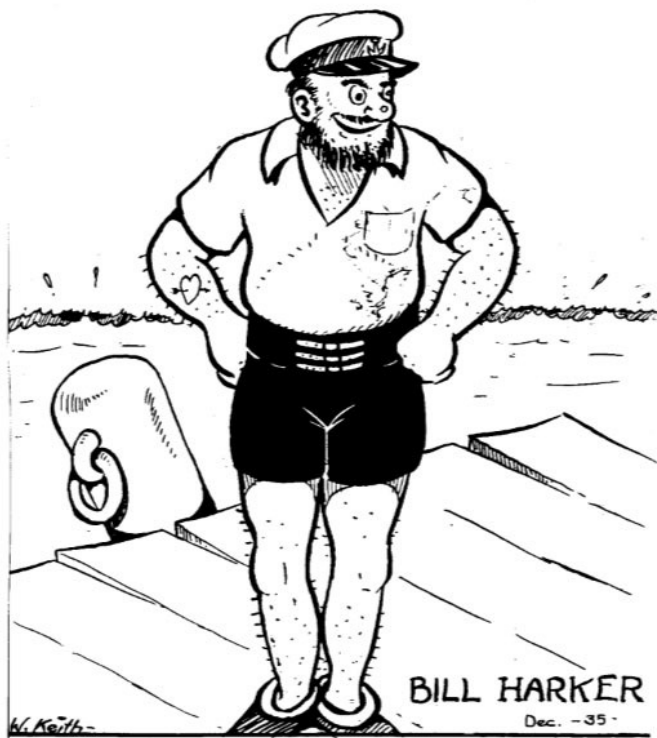
Geo. E. Atkinson

Superintendent of Schools

Charles L. Ayer

President Board of Education

- FIGHTING BILL vs. SACKIE SAM -





My boyhood friend Ted Dearing, right and examples



Cast of our High School Senior Play at a party in Rec Room above the two story garage in Alhambra. I am second from right in back row and Virginia is at right end standing.

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“BACKSTAGE”

Castwell (Director)	Howard Portenstien
Assistant Director	Bill Harker
Script Girl	Geneva Smith
Mr. Kent (Owner of the Show)	Dean Brackenbury
Press Agent	Frank Harriman
Reporters	{ Don Higgins Jimmie Lindsay
Joe (Piano Player)	Glenn Peters
First Chorus Girl	Henriette von Buelow
Second Chorus Girl	Marjorie French
Mimi (Castwell's Wife)	Virginia Bosch
Jane Jones (Cousin from Kansas)	Dorothy Harding
Dionne LaMar (Temperamental Actress)	Muriel Rash
Her Maid	Marion Payne
Hortense	Frieda Patrick
Hairdresser	Eva Faye Harwick

Tom and Dick (Duet)	John Prince Ralph Hodge
Fern and Wesley (Continental)	Fern Smith Wesley Hawthorn
Louise (Solo)	Louise Magill
Stage Crew Stooges:	Leader, Jack Randall
Dick Farrell, Chuck Ary, Eddie Hanson	
Violin Solo	Andy Bertolino
Chorus: Fern Smith, Frieda Patrick, Henriette von Buelow Betty Ray, Janet Coakley, Virginia Potts Jeanne Reppert, Dorothy Doring	
Cab Calloway	Frank Ciarelli
Trio: (Class Song)	Peggy McBride Wadine Siler Muriel Rash

Manager, Phil Chambers
Albert Strinz, Dent White, Jack Hill, Jack Poole

Directed by "Pop" Ulmer

Charles Anderson	Bill Harker	Fahey Smith
Andy Bertolino	Alma Marion Hull	Allan Stark
Doris Clark	Marshall La Cour	Terry Stirling
Jay Crawford	Glenn Peters	Anne Wallace

Affixing of Class Tablet - - - Bill Harker

Program

BACCALAUREATE SERVICE IN HONOR OF THE WINTER CLASS OF NINETEEN HUNDRED AND THIRTY-FIVE OF THE ALHAMBRA CITY HIGH SCHOOL

The Reverend W. W. Kaler, Presiding

PROCESSIONAL HYMN—"Lead On O King Eternal" No. 408
(The audience will rise when the choir enters and remain
standing until after the Invocation.)

THE INVOCATION The Reverend Edward Wright

THE ANTHEM—"Gloria" from the Twelfth Mass Mozart
The Holy Trinity Episcopal Church Choir
Dale Hamilton Evans, Director and Organist

THE SCRIPTURE LESSON— The Reverend N. K. Tully

THE PRAYER The Reverend Holland F. Burr

A CONTRALTO SOLO—"Gloria" Peccia
Miss June Spear, Soloist

THE BACCALAUREATE SERMON—"The Value of a Spiritual
Perspective" The Reverend Theodore R. Leen

THE BENEDICTION The Reverend H. W. Cole

THE POSTLUDE Dale Hamilton Evans, Organist

Officers and Class Advisor Winter Class of 1935

PRESIDENT	William A. Harker
VICE-PRESIDENT	Jack A. Randall
SECRETARY	James R. Lindsay
TREASURER	Richard S. Hore
CLASS ADVISOR	Ruth H. McNeill

CHAPTER VIII



My employment at California Consumers was a seasonal job and I was beginning to wonder what I would be doing next when I received call from the job placement office at PJC. I was told to call U.S. Electric Motors in Los Angeles for an interview appointment and was told they were looking for a time study engineer. I did not know what that was but got an appointment and showed up at the plant which was located on Slauson Avenue near South Main Street. After filling out a job application I was interviewed by the personnel office and hired on the spot. Bud, in the meantime had gone to work for Curtis Color Camera Co. in Hollywood and this meant doing something about transportation.

We sold the Chevy Coupe and he bought a 1937 Nash Lafayette and I bought a 1936 Oldsmobile Coupe. My boss at U.S. Motors was an Englishman named Harvey Langton who had such an accent that I could hardly understand him but we quickly developed a good relationship. Harvey gave me one week of training in taking time studies and then sent me out on the shop floor to take time studies and set piece rates on various production tasks. I soon found out there was a lot more to be learned about this time study business and enrolled in night school at UCLA where I took a course in Industrial Engineering. My salary at U.S Motors was \$80.00 a month. I guess I did pretty good because in no time at

all my title was changed to Industrial Engineer but without any increase in salary.

After about six months on the job I was given the task of developing a layout for a new plant that U.S. Motors was going to build in Millford Connecticut. It was my first experience in plant layout but they liked what I came up with and used it in building the new factory.

After completing my course at UCLA I enrolled in a night course in industrial management at Cal Tech. During all this time Virginia and I were making our arrangements to get married. We set the date for August 3, 1940, and were married by Reverend Wright in the Alhambra Lutheran Church. Wright was later killed in a Jeep accident overseas while he was in the service as a Chaplain during W.W.II. We chose the Lutheran Church because we liked Rev. Wright and it was the church that Grandma Bahn belonged to and Rev. Wright was a friend of the family.

Since we were both working and could not get any time off, our honeymoon consisted of one weekend. We spent the night in the San Clemente Hotel and then drove back home the next day by way of the Ortega Highway and Lake Elsinore. We stopped at the lookout point above Lake Elsinore to take pictures and while there a bee stung Virginia on her back which made her quite uncomfortable and sort of spoiled the rest of the trip home for her.

Upon our return we set up housekeeping in the Alhambra Bungalow Courts on Atlantic Boulevard, next door to the church in which we had just been married. The Court consisted of six little bungalows with three on each side of the center palm lined walkway. Ours was a middle unit and the rent was \$50 per month. It had a bedroom, a combination living/dining room and a kitchen with the bathroom off the kitchen. You had to go through the kitchen to get to the bathroom, the door of which opened onto the kitchen. Not the best of arrangements and probably designed to save on the cost

of plumbing installations.

One of our assignments at Cal Tech was to design labor saving devices and I came up with a rivet sorting gadget for salvaging rivets that had fallen on the floor of the numerous aircraft plants that were building war planes for England and France. At the conclusion of the course executives from various industrial plants were invited to visit and review our projects which we had to demonstrate for them. Among the visiting executives were: Harvey Firestone of Firestone Tire and Rubber Co., William Lear of Lear Industries, a man for the Ford Motor Company and Ray Parkhurst of Vultee Aircraft Company. Parkhurst was exceedingly interested in my project and offered me a job on the spot at Vultee. At his request I went down to Vultee the next day, was interviewed and hired all in the time of about 45 minutes. My starting salary was \$250 a month, three times what I was getting at U.S. Motors. That afternoon I gave notice to U.S. Motors where they immediately offered to double my salary to \$160 per month but that was still far short of the Vultee position and I resigned on the spot from U.S. Motors.

Virginia was earning \$152 a month from her Bank of America job and I insisted that she quit and become a home maker. I was not going to have my wife working as long as I could support the both of us. We had got along quite well with our combined salaries while I was at U.S. Motors and we were living in the Bungalow Court. We were able to go out for a steak dinner and a movie after every payday and also ate well at home on our combined income of \$232. We began looking for a larger space to live in and found a nice little two bedroom house, with a large lot and several fruit trees, on Walnut Grove Avenue in Rosemead for \$75 a month. That is where we started raising a family. We had not been married too long before I got Virginia pregnant in the spring of 1940. We had planned on having children but not quite that soon. The grandparents on both sides were ecstatic and we were excited. Virginia

and I were going to become a family.

She had two siblings, a brother named Dick and sister named Doris. Dick and Bud became close friends and Doris and I really loved each other as brother and sister. On the morning of November 26, 1941 Virginia went into labor and I rushed her to the Queen of Angeles Hospital in Los Angeles where, a short time later, she delivered a little baby boy who, at the time looked like a Jap to me. We named him Richard William Harker after her brother Dick and myself. He soon became known as "Richy" and was a cute little baby boy with large expressive eyes and a continual smile on his face.

The next day I passed out cigars at work and I remember Ken Lehman, the machine shop foreman at Vultee, saying, "So you put the plumbing on the outside." The photo department at Vultee sent a photographer to our house in Rosemead a couple of weeks later to take a picture of Virginia and me with Richy which was printed in the internal house organ called "The Vul-tair."

I brought Virginia and my new son home from the hospital on Saturday, December 6, 1941 and the next morning, while listening to the radio, we heard President Roosevelt announce the bombing of Pearl Harbor. We were now involved in W.W.II as a participant rather than the arsenal of defense for Europe. There were a lot of phone calls back and forth that day between family and friends and we all thought we would make short work of the Japs. Our only experience with them had been the cheap imports of toys and gadgets they manufactured and we assumed the same would be true of their ships and military machines. We were very wrong!

Bud and Dick were soon drafted into the service. Dick went into the Signal Corps. as he had been working for the telephone Company and Bud went into the photo unit of the 8th Air Force as a photographer. I received a deferment due to my employment in a critical

defense industry. The war brought many changes to our way of living such as rationing of gas and food, blackouts, restricted travel and fear of bombings. So much has been written about the war and those days that I will not go into it any further here. I will however mention a few things of possible interest.

Nylon stockings became unavailable and the gals took to painting their legs with a tan makeup to look like hosiery. One job I enjoyed was using an eyebrow pencil to draw a seam down the back of Virginia's legs to increase the illusion. She kept the bottle of makeup in an under-the-sink cabinet in the bathroom and one afternoon while she was busy in the kitchen, Richy crawled into the bathroom, got the makeup and smeared it all over himself and the bathroom floor. This happened just before I got home so I took a picture of him sitting amidst the mess he had created.

When the appropriate time came we got a little toilet seat with a duck on the front of it that sat on top of the regular toilet seat to assist in his toilet training. I never knew how far little boys could shoot their pee until one evening while I was in the bedroom and Richy was on his ducky seat he let loose with a stream that cleared the duck's head and shot all the way into our bedroom. I called Virginia to see what he had done and we both had a good laugh. Richy evidently thought we liked what he had done and mistook our laughter for applause and thereafter would try his damndest to shoot his pee into the bedroom. We finally convinced him that we did not like it and he stopped doing it.

At the time I went to work for Vultee, they were just getting started on changing their manufacturing methods and were preparing to install a conveyor system on the assembly lines. As a result I got in on the ground floor as a member of a team that revolutionized aircraft manufacturing in the United States. One of my jobs was to set the speed of the conveyor lines, always increasing the speed and never the opposite. This subjected me to a lot of booing and catcalls from the men

and girls working on the assembly lines, but I had cut my teeth on this sort of thing at U.S. Motors so it did not bother me too much.

We were building BT13s and BT15 basic trainers for the Air Force which were two place low wing all metal planes. One of the conveniences installed in these planes was a relief tube for the comfort of the pilots. One day I was taking a time study on one of the girls installing this device when she suddenly said to me, "Everyone has heard of Rosie the Riveter, well I'm Rosie of the Piss Tube." It was a rubber hose with a funnel on the end of it and I tried to convince her it was a speaking tube to assist communications between the instructor and the student but she wouldn't buy that.

In 1942 I was offered a position teaching adult night classes at Cal Tech in Production Control. I accepted and the job paid me \$10 per night for 3 nights a week. Some of the fellows in my classes later became executives in the aerospace industry. It was there that I met Trevor Gardner who later became Assistant Secretary of Defense in Washington and he and I started moonlighting, doing consulting work for several small firms that had acquired defense contracts and were in over their heads. Our clients included Day and Night Water Heaters, Plomb Tool Company and Rheem Manufacturing.

One night I was running a time study to set the pay rate on an operation that consisted of testing the airtight seal on 50 caliber ammunition boxes by immersing them under water. Ralph Horn, the old man doing the operation, had been my tennis coach at Alhambra High School and had given me a bad time on more than one occasion. The temptation to get even with him was overwhelming, but I really felt sorry for him and set a rate of pay that would properly reward him for the effort he put forth. When the study was all over I told him who I was and he said he thought I looked a little familiar but could not recall where he had seen me before. I guess he had seen so many kids in

his lifetime of teaching and coaching that we all began to look alike.

Virginia and I had sold my Oldsmobile and bought a 1941 Fluid Drive Dodge which was sort of the forerunner of today's automatic shift cars. You could drive it without shifting. It just moved when you stepped on the gas. By 1942 we had reached the point where we needed two cars so I bought a 1930 Willys Knight Coupe to use for going to and from Vultee which was located in Downey. It had a sleeve-in-valve "L" head engine that required pouring boiling water over it in the winter before it would start. As our financial situation improved we bought our first home later that year, a three bedroom house on Charriet Street in Rosemead.

By late summer of 1943 I had Virginia pregnant again. Her sister Doris had enlisted in the Waves and met an Army Captain named Thomas J. Ferguson who she married. When he was shipped off to the Aleutian Islands Doris came to live with us and was there when I found out I was going to be transferred to Allentown Pennsylvania to train and guide Pennsylvania Dutch people in building the Vultee TBY3 Torpedo Bomber for the Navy. I was scheduled to leave in late December and Virginia was too far into her pregnancy to go with me so she and Doris stayed in Rosemead.

I boarded a United DC3 at the old Burbank Airport on the night of December 28 for a long cold cross country flight to my destination via New York. It was snowing when I got there and I was freezing. The plane had no heater so they gave all of us wool blankets and served us cold box lunches. The day after New Years I checked in on my new job and got a place to stay in a rooming house where some of the other tenants were really weird, along with the two old ladies that owned the place. I went through the blizzard and ice storm of winter 1944 which was a new experience for me and one I won't forget.

On the night of May 24, 1944 while I was speak-

ing at a seminar on war production in Boston, I received a note from the hotel manager that I had a daughter born a few hours earlier out in California. As soon as I got back to the plant in Allentown the next day I began making plans to get out to California. The Company arranged for me to fly out to San Diego the following week in a B24 Bomber that they had converted into an executive airplane. It was furnished like a club car inside with big bay windows where the side gun turrets had been removed. It was a much more comfortable trip than the previous one in the opposite direction and upon landing in San Diego I picked up a Company car and headed for our house in Rosemead.

It was there that I met my new daughter whom we had named Harriet Ellen Harker having decided on that name ahead of time in the event the baby turned out to be female.

Vultee had given me two weeks leave to spend with my family and I made the most of it. I went to the plant in Downey and again passed out cigars and was told that I now had a "gentleman's pair." When the time came to return to Allentown Virginia's doctor decided she needed to rest up some more and advised against her and the two children going back with me. So I took the Dodge and drove back by myself in the record time of four days. I drove day and night and would pull off the road to take cat naps. A very dangerous thing to do and something I would never try again, but I had milked my visit in California for all it was worth and was running short on time.

I left before daylight on a Thursday morning at 4:00 a.m. and when I reached the Arizona border a customs officer asked where I was headed and if I would give a young Marine, who had been wounded, a ride as far as his home town of Oklahoma City. I agreed to do so and in the ensuing conversations with the boy found out a grenade hanging on his belt had accidentally exploded during a skirmish killing his two companions and knocking all his innards askew That night in a

motel room where we stayed he showed me his right side which was black and blue from his arm pit to his right knee. He had just been released from the Naval Hospital in Long Beach where he had spent three months recovering.

Gas rationing was in effect and the rationing board only gave me enough gas coupons to get me to Allentown. They cut it quite thin on the basis of the number of miles I had to drive with not a gallon to spare. I had exactly ten "A" coupons, each of which was good for 10 gallons. In New Mexico I stopped at a roadside diner for some breakfast and the lady running the place asked where I was going and when I told her and showed her a picture I had of my new baby daughter she asked how much gas they had rationed to me and when she found out she reached under the counter and brought out a cigar box full of "T" coupons, each of which was good for 20 gallons and gave me a full sheet of them. She told me they were trucker's coupons and truckers had more than they needed and gave them to her to use as she pleased. When I got to Allentown I disconnected the odometer and had all the gas I needed for a year.

On the morning of the second day I had the car radio on and heard war correspondent Floyd Owens describing the crossing of the English Channel on the way to Dunkirk. It was "D Day" and he was on board one of the boats. You could hear a lot of noise and gunfire amidst the static of his transmission which was by short wave radio. It was quite exciting to say the least. I drove through big thunder storms in Missouri with lightening cracking all around me and arrived in Allentown late Sunday night and reported back to work the next morning.



My '36 Olds at Muroc Dry Lake.



Virginia and my wedding.

CHAPTER IX



Leaving my wife and two children, which included my newborn daughter, behind as I headed east was very difficult for me but family disruptions during the war seemed to be par for the course and I really had little choice in the matter. I at least found some comfort in the knowledge that our folks were nearby and that Virginia had the additional company of her sister Doris staying with her. I'm sure the separation was just as uncomfortable for them as for me.

For many years, prior to my arrival in Allentown, I had suffered from frequent severe sinus attacks. During my high school days they were sometimes so bad that I would have to stay home. Two weeks after arriving in Allentown and facing below zero temperatures with snow and ice all around I had the mother of all sinus attacks which lasted three days and then suddenly cleared up. I have never had any attacks since then and doctors have told me it was due to the change in climate. Evidently the sudden change to cold dry weather turned out to be the cure for my condition.

The TBY3 Torpedo Bomber was not a Vultee design. It was designed by Chance Vought Aircraft Company for the Navy, but they were so busy building their Corsair fighter planes that they could not produce the TBY3 so the Navy put the job out for bid by other aircraft companies. There were several bidders and Vultee won the contract but had no facilities or factory where

they could begin building the plane. The Mack Motor Truck Company had just completed a new plant in Allentown and had not yet moved their production equipment into the building so the Navy confiscated the building and made it available for building the TB3. That is how Vultee managed to get involved in Allentown

There were actually two separate buildings, a two story wood administration building and the concrete factory with a 200 ft. long sidewalk connecting the two buildings. My office was on the second floor of the administration building. The building had two wings and the architects had designed the second wing as a mirror image of the first, thus saving the cost of extra design time and duplicate drawings. The only problem with this was that everything in one wing was just the opposite from things in the other wing and that included the restrooms. One day I had been sitting through a two hour meeting in the other wing from the one where my office was located. As the meeting broke up I had to take a leak real bad and headed down the hall for the men's room not thinking that I was not in my own wing. Without taking the time to check the sign on the door to the restroom I rushed in, unzipped my pants and began looking for the nearest urinal. I noticed the design of the urinal was different than what I was used to but did not have time to figure things out before there was a lot of feminine screaming behind me. I had already started my stream running and could not shut it off so I just stood there red faced and finished the task. I then turned around and apologized to the ladies who, by this time, were laughing and giggling their heads off. Every female face in that restroom was indelibly imprinted in my mind and whenever I would pass one of the gals in the hall they would smile and give me a knowing look. Word soon spread through the building and for a week or more I was the laughing stock of the work force.

For about the first three months we spent our time getting the plant ready for production, installing

machine tools, conveyor lines, stock bins, etc. We began letting contracts out to other firms to build sub-assemblies for us and one contract went to Bud Manufacturing that built railroad passenger cars. They began building fuselage assemblies for us. Another company began building wing assemblies and so it went leaving us primarily as a final assembly and test flight facility.

War time housing and lodging were very scarce in Allentown and so Vultee had set up a housing department to locate rooms and houses for the employees who were not regular residents of the area. Anyone with a spare bedroom could register with that department and the company would soon find someone to occupy it. That is how I ended up in the rooming house run by a strange little old lady named Bertha Shaneberger and her woman friend Edith Schmaltz.

The rooming house was a three story brick building with the bedrooms on the second and third floors. The first floor contained a sitting room, kitchen, dining room, bath and laundry room. The second floor had six rooms, all occupied by Vultee employees. Bertha, her boy friend, Edith and her husband, who was dying of consumption, occupied the third floor. Bertha was a great cook and we had plenty to eat for both breakfast and dinner. My room was quite large and only contained a single-wide bed, a closet, small table with a lamp and a lounge chair.

One night I came home from work and found another bed in my room and was informed another Vultee employee would be sharing the room with me. He showed up the next night with a big wooden box the size of a steamer trunk. His name was Milan Momchilovich and he was a big fellow weighing in at about 300 pounds with a heavy accent. His box was full of Communist literature, books by Lenin and Trotsky and the Communist manifesto. When I asked him what it was all about he said he was a student of political science and was studying up on the Communist type of govern-

ment. I have no idea of how he managed to pass the security checks to allow him to work in a defense plant. He had one habit that drove me nuts. Every night at 9:00 p.m. he would go down to the corner drug store and buy a quart of ice cream which he would completely consume before going to bed and never offered me any. I guess he had to eat the whole thing because we did not have a freezer in our room and it would melt if he didn't eat it all.

He and I started taking flying lessons at a little grass strip airport in Foglesville about three miles from Allentown and we organized a flying club at the plant. We soon had 22 people, both men and women in the club, all learning to fly. The planes used for instruction were J2 and J3 Piper cubs that were powered by either 50 or 65 horse power engines. The Sunday morning that I made my first solo flight was in the Spring and the field was covered with clover blossoms. I had no sooner taken off than I realized I had an unwanted passenger in the plane with me a huge Bumble Bee that kept buzzing around my head. I was so intent on flying the plane by myself that I gave him little heed and as I was turning on final for my first solo landing he must have figured it was time to get the hell out of there and flew out the window. That landing was one of the most perfect I ever made in my many subsequent years of flying.

Because of the war we were restricted as to where we could fly and had to stay away from the Atlantic Coast. I decided to join the Civil Air Patrol in order to get more legal range for my flying. Among our various CAP activities was mock bombings of hidden targets with paper sacks of white flour. Phil Neuwieller, who owned the Neuweiller Brewery, was amongst our members and on one of our practice bombing missions he filled his flour sacks with heavy rocks so they would fall more accurately.

A target had been hidden near a farm house some distance from town and when we located it Phil let

go with one of his weighted flour bags which missed the target and crashed through the slate tile roof of the farm house and ended up on the farmer's dining room floor. The farmer was going to sue Phil for damages but the matter was settled out of court by Phil donating six cases of beer to the farmer's future well being. After that, no one was permitted to add weight to their allotted sacks of flour.



Our first house on Walnut Grove Avenue in Rosemead.



Our house at Summit lawn in Allentown, Pennsylvania.



Richy in Allentown dressed for the winter.

Convair Flying Club Officers



William Fath, president; Pauline Saylor, secretary; William Barker, treasurer; and Joh Yoder, vice president, who were elected to head the Convair Flying club at a meeting last night at the Hotel Traylor.

William Fath, new president of the Convair Flying club last night outlined a program to enroll in the club the almost 1,200 employees at the Consolidated-Vultee plant in Allentown who have had some flying time.

Named to a committee to institute the drive were A. M. Wach, Derwin G. Beishaw and Rachel Conover. The club since its founding early in May has had at least 20 applicants.

Named to the flying time of an enlarged membership a committee was named to draw up a schedule of

available hours for the use of the planes. Two planes are in use at the present time at the Allentown-Bethlehem airport.

Named to the various committees were: Blanche Zummer, Rachel Fisher and Walter Krenn, Jack Sties and Charles Goodrich, Nelson of Consolidated, Milan Monro, Timothy Thomas Palmlitch and Gerold Loewy, advisory and schedules and contracts.

Bigoury Thayer was asked to investigate the possibility of holding a ground course during the winter months.

THE MORNING CALL - Allentown



Our family in Allentown before Jimmy was born.

CHAPTER X



In September of 1944 Virginia got the OK to take herself and the children to Allentown. Doris would accompany her. The transportation department at Vultee Field in Downey got her a private compartment on the Santa Fe. In the meantime, during the period prior to her departure, she had shipped all our furniture and belongings to Allentown via Mayflower Moving Company and had rented our house in Rosemead to a young couple and set up arrangements with a real estate broker to collect the rent for us and keep and eye on the place.

With my family about to arrive I had to make some changes in living quarters and the housing department at the plant found me a three story stone house in Summit Lawn on the outskirts of town. It was in a part of the Pocono Mountains and a beautiful spot. Much to my liking, the YWCA summer retreat was right next door on about four acres of land. I had to take a year's lease on the place at a cost \$80 per month. The house was built in 1796 and had been completely modernized by the owner who was a local building contractor of some note. The house had an attached heated garage with a 100 gallon heating oil tank buried in the floor. It had a basement with an electric powered well that produced the clearest and coldest water I had ever seen. The water was so cold it would fog the kitchen water spouts when we drew water during the summer.

The kitchen was all stainless steel and had a

large walk-in refrigerator. The house was equipped with forced air heating and air conditioning. There were seven bedrooms and three bathrooms. We never did use the third floor except for storage. Doris and the children each had their own bedroom and Virginia and I had the master bedroom. To us it was a mansion, we had never had so much room before and the surrounding woods were awe inspiring, particularly in the Autumn when the leaves would turn to brilliant colors. We could look out over Center Valley from our back yard and the Liberty Bell electric car line from Philadelphia ran by just a block from the house. It was called "The Yellow Death" by the locals due to the numerous accidents it had on it's run.

When the moving van arrived I had them put all the furniture in place and all the boxes and barrels of dishes and clothing was just piled in the living room. I got one of the girls from work to go up to the house with me and get all the boxed things put away. The living room had a large stone fire place with the stone facing going all the way up to the ceiling and the actual fire area was gigantic, with a six foot wide opening and a height of four feet. There was no mantle.

The dishes had all been packed in barrels with excelsior and as we emptied them I stuffed the excelsior in the fire place. The girl's name was Bernice Herbert and she ran the employee savings bond department. I had met Bernice at a dinner at the house of one of my mother's relatives from Langhorn who now lived in Allentown and worked at the Vultee plant. The relative's name was Fran Jackson and she also worked in the savings bond department. Bernice's husband, Ed, was in the Sea Bees and stationed in the South Pacific at the time. It took us three evenings after work to get everything put away but the job was made easier by the Dubonette and Brandy drinks I mixed up for our mutual consumption.

On the last night I decided we would celebrate with our drinks and a roaring fire in the fire place. I

had stacked several logs on the hearth. I set a match to the excelsior and it practically exploded. Fire and smoke came roaring, literally, out of the fire place and up the front toward the ceiling. I had not thought to check for a damper and had not noticed the little handle sticking out of the rock fascia. Bernice jumped up and pulled on the handle and things began to calm down but the house was full of choking smoke. We opened all the windows and turned the air conditioning on and to a casual observer on the outside it probably looked like the house was on fire with all the smoke rolling out the windows. Once we were sure there was no more danger I drove Bernice home and she was probably glad to be out of there. I then returned to the house and began cleaning the soot off the ceiling and front of the fireplace rocks. It was hard work but I finally removed all traces of the near disaster.

Within a few days my family, along with Doris, arrived and we had a great reunion. They had used a wicker clothes basket to keep Harriet in on the trip and she was still in the basket when they arrived. For the next few months that basket served as a sort of bassinet, but she soon graduated to a crib. That ensuing winter was the year of the great blizzard and ice storm of '44 and we had a rough time driving as we had little experience with that kind of weather.

One morning I was driving on a country road through farm land on my way to Emmaus when the left front door on a car in front of me open and closed real quick. At the same time the driver made a sudden left turn toward a road leading to a farm house. I hit the brakes but kept right on going and plowed into the side of the other car. The road was so slick that it just spun him around with minimal damage to either car.

The driver of the other car, who turned out to be a farmer who was merely trying to get to his own house, came out of his car cussing and when he saw my California license plate said, "You Godamn Furriners don't know how to drive." He was really mad and was going to

call the police. I said, "Go ahead, you didn't signal, it was your fault." He replied, "Didn't you see me crack the door?" and I said, "Yea I saw it open and close, but what does that mean?" and he came back with, "It means I'm going to turn, you stupid Ass!" With that he got in his car and drove up his drive to his farm house and I took off. I did not wait for the police and he did not have the sense to take down my name, driver's license or vehicle license. I don't know if he called the police or not but I never heard anymore about it. I did however learn that when you saw someone crack their door because they did not want to stick their hand out in the cold air it meant that they were going to undertake some sort of maneuver.

We were invited out to Jack Steed's house for dinner on New Year's day, 1944. Jack was a flying buddy of mine and one of the closer friends I made while in Allentown. He and his family lived on a farm about six miles out of town and it was all country roads once we left town. Virginia and I loaded the kids in the car and took off for the Steed's in a blinding snow storm with visibility down to just a few hundred feet.

We had the car radio on listening to the Rose Bowl game in Pasadena and the announcer, Don Wilson was describing the beautiful weather that day and the purple mountains in the background. It really made us homesick. There was a narrow stone bridge that we had to cross about a half mile before reaching the road into Jack's farm. Just as we entered the bridge, something jumped across in front of us, probably a deer, and I automatically slammed on the brakes which put us into a wild skid. The bridge was only about 30 feet long and the car spun a full 360 degrees and as we exited the bridge we were going in the same direction as when we entered the bridge.

I told Jack what had happened and he would not believe me, saying, "That's impossible, the bridge is too narrow." but when Virginia backed me up he got a tape measure and went out and measured the length of our

car and then said "Come with me." and we drove out to the bridge where our tracks were still visible in the snow. He then measured the width of the bridge which turned out to be four inches wider than our car was long. Jack just shook his head and said, "I wouldn't believe it possible if I had not seen it with my own eyes," whereupon we returned to the house for some much needed drinks.

Another time that same winter Virginia was taking Richy to a doctor's appointment and was going down a hill on the snow covered street when the car started to skid and she made the mistake of hitting the brakes. Completely out of control the car went over the sidewalk and into the basement window of a building. Neither she nor Richy were hurt and a tow truck was summoned to pull our car back onto the street and she shakingly continued on to the doctor's office.

By this time the poor Dodge was suffering a serious case of road rash so I took it to a body shop to have the needed repairs made after which it came out looking like new. We both eventually learned the intricacies of winter driving on the east coast and had no further incidents.



Richy playing in snow in backyard of our Summit Lawn house in Allentown.



Richy warming himself by the fire place in our house at Summit lawn in Allentown.

CHAPTER XI



With most able bodied men away fighting the war, the work force in the defense plants was, for that time, a rather motley mixture of people. There were wives whose husbands were away in the service, widows of servicemen killed in action, men who had come out of retirement, and people who had given up previous jobs for the higher pay and the need to contribute to the war effort.

For example; members of my department included, "Bones" O'Brien who had been the arranger and piano player for the Ted Wheems Band, Bob Rupert the former president of the Mack Motor Company, Jesse Livermore the son of Jesse Livermore, Sr., the wonder boy of Wall Street who had a fortune of several million dollars by age 21 and then lost it all in the 1929 stock market crash and ended his life by jumping out of a New York skyscraper. The Jesse in my department was married to the well know actress and dancer, Ann Miller. Then there was Walter Barling, a famous aircraft designer who had developed a remotely controlled pilotless flying bomb during W.W.I and a four-engined plane that was the largest bomber of its day. He also produced and marketed a series of successful private aviation planes during the 1930's.

With 80% of the production work force consisting of untrained local people who had never even been close to an airplane before it is no wonder we had a myriad number of problems out on the factory floor. The

amount of rework to correct errors was enormous and costs were going sky high. By the war's end we had only completed and test flown three of the planes and had another thirteen in various stages of completion. None of the TBYS saw any action in the war although one of them had been shipped to the South Pacific.

During our first year in Allentown I received an offer to teach adult night classes in production management at the University of Pennsylvania. I accepted the offer for the added income and taught there for the remainder of our stay in Allentown. One of my students was Sam Cohen, a funny little fat Jewish man who had a garment factory in town that made women's underclothes. He would stay after class asking me a lot of questions and I finally found out he was having a difficult time competing with the shops in New York and that he needed to do something to get his costs down. I offered to take a look at his operation and see if I could come up with some ideas. I went to his factory which turned out to be a typical sweat shop full of sewing machines and tubs of garments in various stages of completion. I did a number of motion and time studies and developed a production flow chart for him and then told him what I thought he needed to do. True to his nature, or else in desperation, he effected the changes and suggestions I had given him with amazing results. His production rate jumped up overnight and he was ecstatic. I refused to accept any pay for my service because I really liked and felt for the little guy. From then on Virginia began receiving a regular supply of nylon stockings, panties and other garments. It took her several years to wear them all out.

Drinking was the main method of relaxation and beer was the primary ingredient. The liquor stores in Pennsylvania were all owned and operated by the state and no liquor, other than beer, was sold in the markets or drug stores. There was no such thing as convenience stores in those days. The state issued ration stamps that allowed you to buy one gallon of hard liquor a

month and if you wanted a bottle of scotch you were required to also purchase a bottle of rum. Seems that rum was not popular in that area and it was the only way they could get rid of it.

The annual Lehigh County Fair was held each year at the Allentown fairgrounds and all the local breweries, of which there were many, had booths where they sold their beer. You had to buy tickets at 5 cents each that were good for a mug full. You would see people wandering around with a whole fist full of beer tickets, but no one seemed to be drunk and there were no fights or rowdiness. Pennsylvania also had what they called "Blue Laws" that required all night spots to shut down at 2:00 a.m. during the week and at midnight on Saturdays. No liquor could be sold on Sunday.

As a result of the Blue Laws private clubs called key clubs were abundant. For a deposit of one dollar you would be given a key to the door. The one I joined was on the second floor of a building that had a Firestone store on the first floor. With a key you could go to your club after all the bars shut down and continue your drinking and partying. Most clubs had a Polka Band that played until daylight and also sold sandwiches and pickled eggs. The combination of pickled eggs and beer led to some really smelly farts emanating from people sitting at the bar. Table service beer was only sold by the pitcher full which cost all of 50 cents per pitcher.

Another key club we belonged to was on the second floor of the volunteer fire house. Some nights a whole group of us would make the rounds of several key clubs and then pay for it the next morning. Amazingly there were very few serious auto accidents as a result of all this drinking but a lot of people ended up driving their cars into snow banks in the winter. One night a bunch of us were at a local cocktail lounge and Marie Metcalf, who was psychotic and the wife of one of the department heads, got stupid drunk and accused the bartender of stealing her purse. This ended up with her

husband, Nelson, getting into a fight with the bartender who floored him in nothing flat.

Nelson was in no condition to drive so I offered to take them both home and when we opened their car, Marie's purse was lying on the front seat. By the time I got to their house they had both passed out so I carried Marie into the house, undressed her and put her to bed and left Nelson sleeping in their car. Another of the guys at the bar followed me in his car and then took me back to the party. I had a devil of a time convincing Nelson the next day that I did not rape his wife. Twelve years later Marie killed Nelson with seventeen stabs of a kitchen butcher knife. As far as I know she is still locked up in the women's prison in Tehachapi.

Among the attractions at the Allentown Fair were: horse racing, aerial stunts, carnival rides and the usual assortment of side shows. It was in one of the side shows that I saw my one and only true hermaphrodite. It's name was Alice John and it performed on a stage from which a high curtain stretched to the entrance to the tent. For the performance the ladies were placed on one side of the curtain and the men on the other side. Alice John then gave a lecture on hermaphroditic and proceeded to strip buck naked so all could see her deformity while she performed some indecent acts.

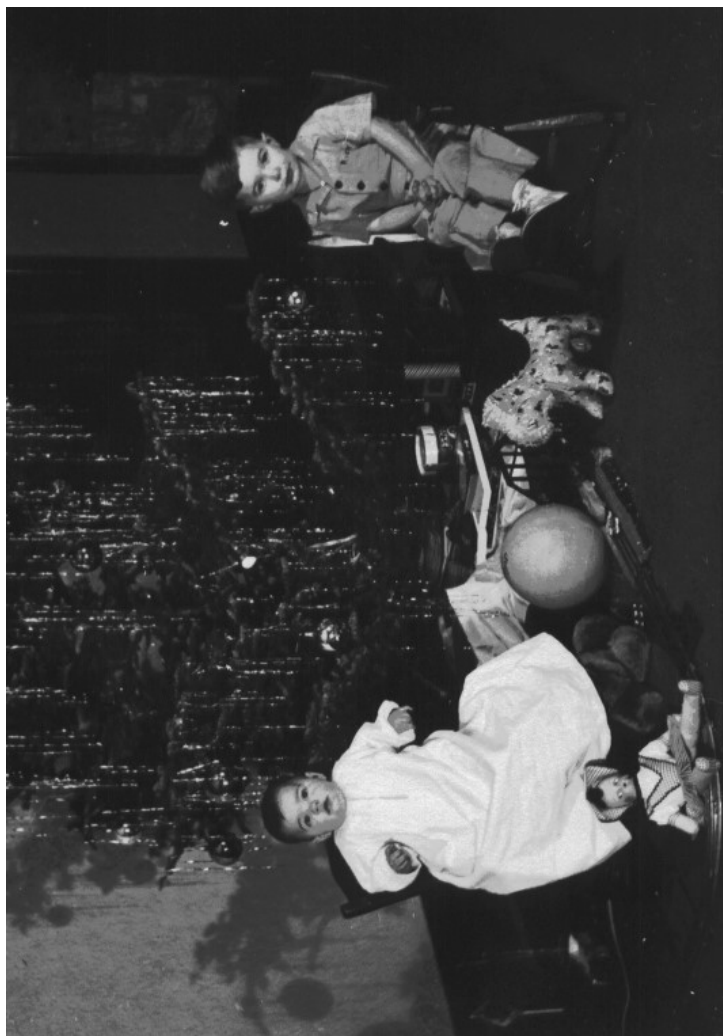
Bones O'Brien was a truly great piano player and entertained us at a lot of our parties. I think he knew every musical score that was ever written and played everything by memory. One of the fellows that worked in my department was Aaron Weiss a little Jewish guy that for some reason took a liking to Virginia and me. He and his wife would frequently stop by our house for an unannounced visit and always bearing gifts of some kind. He would bring nylon stockings for Virginia and toys for our children. I never could figure him out or what his motivation was but put up with it because he was a good hard working individual who came up with many suggestions on improving top management com-

munications with employees.

There was an elderly couple, Harry and Elsie Floyd, who were childhood friends of my mother and living in Allentown. We became fast friends and visited them in their row house quite often where we would spend the evening playing pinochle and eating Elsie's scrumptious apple pies. I learned a lot about my mother's childhood from them.

By early 1945 things were winding down in Europe and that part of the war was over. I had become quite discouraged over the lack of progress being made at the Allentown Vultee plant and began wondering what I would be doing next when I received a phone call from Trevor Gardner out in Pasadena. He wanted to know if I would consider coming back to California and going to work on a very important project at Cal Tech. The pay he offered was good and it did not take me long to make up my mind. I gave two weeks notice to Vultee and began planning for the trip back home. We notified our real estate broker in Rosemead of our plans and asked her to serve notice on the couple renting our house there. We then made arrangements with a moving company in Allentown to cart our belongings to California.

I came up with a brilliant idea on how to save labor in preparing for the move. I told the people in my department that I needed some volunteers and would provide all the beer they could drink. Within five minutes I had all the people I could use. The night before the movers were to arrive we all went up to the house and started the process. The girls packed dishes and breakables while the guys brought all the heavy furniture down to the ground floor. They got the bed mattresses down by sliding down the stairs on them like they were toboggans. That was so much fun that they started hauling them back up stairs for another ride and the girls took part in this. We were all done by midnight and just as we ran out of beer. It was the easiest move I ever made.



Baby Harriet and Richy with Christmas tree in Allentown.

CHAPTER XII



With our suitcases packed and a full tank of gas we departed for California, leaving behind the friends we had made and the fascinating fireflies which we had never seen before moving to Allentown. We decided to go by Washington D.C. on the way home to visit the Capitol and see the sights. Spending the better part of a day there we were able to visit the Lincoln Memorial and the Washington Monument among other things. When we went into the Capitol building the Senate was in session and we were able to peek in on them. It was the end of May and Harriet was now a two year old toddler.

The foyer to the Senate wing had long handicap ramps and Harriet began running up and down them screaming with delight. We were trying to stop her and just as she started down for the second time a door to the Senate floor opened and out walked Senator Dirksen with his head of flowing white hair. He saw Harriet, picked her up and gave her a great big hug. I can't blame him because she was such a cute little thing. He then took her by the hand and walked her up and down the ramp once more before going about his business.

Our drive back to California was a much more leisurely trip than the one I had made in the other direction two years earlier. Richy was now four years old and neither of the kids gave us any problems on the long trip so far as their deportment was concerned except for one time in a restaurant where we had stopped

for lunch. The place was full of older people, what we would later call Senior Citizens, and Harriet suddenly began screaming and crying over some minor incident at the table that had happened between she and Richy. She would not shut up and we were getting dirty looks from the old folks so we finally just got up and left without eating the rest of our lunches.

We stayed one night in a motel in New Mexico that had a cement floor with no carpet or other covering. In the morning, as we were getting dressed, Harriet rolled off one of the beds and landed on her head on the hard cement floor. She cried a bit and then became very silent and her eyes had a glazed look to them. We were scared sick and rushed her to a local doctor who, after examining her, said she had a mild concussion and to keep a close eye on her for the rest of the trip. By the time we arrived in California she seemed to be OK except for a large black and blue bump on her head. Just to be sure however, Virginia took her to our former family Doctor who pronounced her hale and hearty.

The Dodge did not have air conditioning so I had bought one of those car window swamp coolers in anticipation of crossing the desert in the heat of day. It worked alright for those in the front seat but did not do much for keeping the children in the back seat cool so we soaked bath towels in water and hung them over the open rear windows and that worked pretty good. About 11:00 a.m. as we were crossing the desert and in the middle of nowhere we came up on a blond girl in shorts and halter. I would guess she was in her early twenties and had her thumb out trying to hitch a ride. The outside temperature must have been around 110 or so and I started to slow down but Virginia told me to keep going. I often wondered what the girl was doing out there as we had not seen a stalled car anywhere along the way. I also wonder to this day whatever happened to her as it did not appear that she had any water with her.

Our arrival back home was a very emotional af-

fair with grandparents gushing over the grand-children and lots of hugging all around. Since it would be a few days before the moving van arrived with our belongings we stayed with our folks and got our now vacant house in Rosemead ready for occupancy. In the meantime I had checked in with Trevor Gardner at Cal Tech and he set me up in a second floor corner office in the Cheeswright building on Colorado Boulevard in Pasadena and told me the project I was to become involved in was highly secret and involved something that would end the war with Japan. He told me the name for it was "The Manhattan Project" but nothing was said about anything atomic. I was given a "Q" clearance which at the time was the highest level of security and told not to say anything to anyone about what we were doing.

I divided my time between my office, Cal Tech and the Naval Ordnance Test Station out on Foothill Boulevard. I saw some strange pieces of hardware but had no idea what they were or how they were to be used. Two little old ladies had a diner across the street from the NOTS facility where they served breakfast and lunch, mostly to the employees from across the street. The morning after President Truman announced the atomic bombing of Hiroshima a big sign in the shape of a comet appeared over the diner with the name "Atomic Inn" painted on it. Somehow those little old ladies had figured out what was going on in spite of all the security measures undertaken.

V-J Day followed soon after with the Japanese surrender and the end of W.W.II. We were all given the afternoon off and to celebrate I decided to go flying. I rented a small plane from the Heasley Twins at the old Rosemead Airport and was fooling around over a large bean field in La Puente when the engine blew one of its cylinders and swallowed the piston. The engine came to an abrupt halt and the silence was deafening. I was about to have a forced landing and had enough altitude to circle the field once and get lined up with the bean rows. I figured I could put each of the main two front

landing gear wheels on top of a row of beans which I did manage to do but the field was being irrigated and the trenches between the rows were filled with water. The minute I touched down the wheels slid off the rows and down into the mud bringing me to a sudden halt and burying the nose of the plane in the mud. I probably didn't travel more than 10 feet.

I suffered no injuries and climbed out to look around and figure my next move. I noticed I had ended up about 300 ft. from Hacienda Boulevard and a car was stopping along the road. They had seen me come down and end up with the plane's tail sticking up in the air. I went over to them and found the car was full of Filipinos who were on their way to Los Angeles to celebrate the war's end and offered to drop me off at the Rosemead Airport on their way. Once I got in the car and we were under way I realized my mistake. They were all hootin' drunk, including the driver and I soon knew this was to be the most dangerous part of my afternoon outing.

We got to the airport in one piece and when the Heasleys saw me coming back on foot they said, "Okay Harker, where did you leave it?" I told them what had happened and they went out the next day with a flat bed truck and retrieved the plane during which process they did \$500 damage to the bean crop. Somehow the LA Times got hold of the incident and the next day a news article appeared in the local section with a headline that read, PILOT SURVIVES CRASH LANDING BUT DAMAGES BEAN CROP. As luck would have it Mom saw and read the article which of course identified me as the pilot. The story made it sound much worse than it really was and she was terribly upset but glad that I was still alive. It did not seem to bother any of the other family members, including Virginia.

My work on the Manhattan Project did not last long after the end of the war with the Japanese although considerable testing did continue at the Bikini Atoll and other areas in the South Pacific. Ray

Parkhurst called me and said that Drayer Manufacturing in East Los Angeles needed someone with my capabilities so I gave them a call, set up an appointment and was hired to assist in the design of a special tractor for use on terraced hillside farms in Mexico. I worked at Drayer for a few months on the tractor that had adjustable wheel heights so you could raise the wheels on the uphill side of a farm and lower the wheels on the downhill side. This would allow the tractor to be level regardless of the steepness of the hill. The idea was a clever one but did not work well in actual practice as the raising and lowering mechanism was subject to a lot of malfunctioning and too complicated for the Mexican farmers to understand. As a result the project was dropped and no sooner had that happened than Trevor Gardner got hold of me again and said he needed me at Aerojet to work on rocket nozzles.

I went to Aerojet and ended up in the rocket nozzle plant on south Raymond Street in Pasadena just a few blocks from where I had my first job at California Consumers. My assignment consisted of work simplification and development of special manufacturing techniques. Not long after I had settled into that position Aerojet was acquired by General Tire Company and the plant on Raymond Street became known as General Tire of California. I was soon appointed Plant Engineer at that facility with responsibility for all plant layout, facilities and maintenance.



Tooling Department in General Tire of California's rocket nozzle plant in Pasadena. I am at extreme left of photo.

CHAPTER XIII



As the use of solid propellant rockets by the military began to decline we could see the handwriting on the wall and soon received instructions from our parent company, General Tire, to begin looking for commercial products that could be produced in the Pasadena plant. At that point I became a member of a three man task force to seek out a suitable product. We ran big ads in all the west coast papers asking for inventors to bring their ideas to us for evaluation.

We set up an office in the Cheeswright building where we could conduct interviews and look at the various inventions. It was an interesting assignment to say the least. One fellow brought in an electric flushing toilet. Another had an incinerator for burning dog poop. One old man came in with a 1940 Buick sedan that he had modified so that whenever you let up on the gas the brakes were automatically applied. He gave us the keys so we could take it out and see for ourselves. With one of our team driving we started down Colorado Street and at about 35 MPH he let up on the gas and nearly threw us all through the windshield. We immediately ruled that one out. Another fellow came in with a 1939 Ford that he had modified so that the car automatically went into neutral and started coasting whenever you let up on the gas. His reasoning was that it would increase mileage by saving gas. We felt it could create a dangerous situation on mountain roads so scratched that idea.

Small gas engine powered model airplanes were becoming popular at the time so we decided to explore that market and came up with the idea of a rocket powered model. Since Aerojet had been making JATO (jet assisted take off) devices for use in shortening the take off run of military aircraft we gave them the task of designing a miniature JATO bottle.

I then bought a kit for a model airplane with a six foot wing span and gave it to the pattern shop at the NOTS facility out on Foothill Boulevard to build. I had built many model planes as a teenager and figured the job could be done in two weeks at the most. But when it dragged on for over a month I went out to NOTS to see what was holding things up. I could not believe what I found. The pattern makers were all old craftsmen who took pride in their work and had tackled the kit construction as if it were a full sized plane. They had built a 4 ft. X 8 ft. flat top work bench upon which they had built special jigs for assembling the kit that could normally be accomplished on a kitchen table. They were using transits to make sure everything was true. After my visit and a little pep talk they got the thing completed the following week. I must say it was a work of art and probably the finest finished product to ever come out of any model airplane kit. Aerojet came up with the rocket motor we wanted and it was time to test fly the plane.

Dan Kimball, former Secretary of the Navy and now Chairman of the Board of General Tire, happened to be paying us a visit and so we felt it was an opportune time to demonstrate the rocket powered model for him. He was happy as a kid to be invited to see the first test flight. Six of us, plus Dan Kimball, headed out to Azusa and a defunct housing tract that had paved streets and empty lots overgrown with dry weeds as it was the middle of summer.

Someone had thought ahead enough to include a foam fire extinguisher in our assortment of equipment and it was good they did. We set the plane on one of

the empty streets and fired up the rocket engine. The model took off and climbed like a homesick angel and then started to circle spewing forth smoke as it went round and round in ever decreasing circles and increasing speed. On the sixth circle, at about 200 ft. altitude, I noted with concern that the wings were bending up at an alarming angle and on the seventh time around they snapped in the middle and each half of the wing took off in a different direction while the fuselage plunged to the ground under full rocket power. It crashed in the middle of one of the lots full of dry weeds. Dan Kimball grabbed the fire extinguisher and we all headed to the crash site where a small grass fire was already under-way.

Kimball got there first but did not know how to operate the extinguisher. I was right behind him and while we were both wrestling with the extinguisher trying to get it to work we triggered the thing into action just as Kimball looked at the open end of the funnel shaped nozzle. When it went off it sprayed his face and business suit with foam and got some on me also. By that time the others had joined us and somehow we managed to get the fire out before an Azusa fire truck arrived on the scene. We had some explaining to do and afterwards decided to abandon that project as being too much of a fire hazard in the hands of kids. Dan Kimball and I had a lot of laughs over that incident later, but it was not funny at the time.

It was evident we were wasting our time with all these crackpot ideas so decided to do some market research on our own and narrowed the field down to household accessories as the post war housing boom was really getting under way. From there we further narrowed things down to the plumbing and electric systems in new homes. We found there was a lot of room for improvement in kitchen plumbing swing spouts. The only things available at that time were made of cast brass and while functional did not have much eye appeal and were hard to keep clean and bright so we set-

tled on kitchen swing spout fixtures.

We engaged an industrial designer who came up with some very modern looking ledge mounted and wall mounted fixtures from which we picked the design with the greatest appeal. It contained internal plumbing that was all fabricated of brass and copper silver soldered together. This internal assembly was housed in a stamped brass casing that had all flat angular surfaces and would be easy to keep clean. With the OK from our parent company we set about converting the plant for production of the new product line which required plating, buffing, and other special equipment and facilities. We also had to develop a lot of new tooling and special silver soldering equipment that could handle large volumes of parts. Finally everything was ready and we began production.

About this time Trevor Gardner asked me to put his dad to work to keep him out of the local watering holes. His father was a typical tweed-suited Englishman with limited manufacturing skills so I put him to work hand deburring the stamped parts before plating.

We set up a national distribution system where the product could be sold through hardware stores, plumbing supply houses, etc., and the orders began coming in by droves. We had set the suggested retail price at \$10.50 and the swing spouts sold like hotcakes at that price. We had hit upon a veritable gold mine. And then Sears Roebuck came into the picture. Sears wanted to carry the line and gave us an initial order for 10,000 units. We had no sooner delivered those when Sears came back with an order for 20,000 more. By this time we were running two full shifts and had some 200 employees in the plant.

The bubble burst one morning when I was reading through the LA Times and came across a full page Sears ad offering the swing spouts for \$8.97 each. By the time I got to the office there were stacks of telegrams from our regular customers canceling their orders. They could not compete against the Sears price and we

could not offer them a better price because our cost of manufacturing was \$8.50 per unit.

While we were all sitting around trying to figure out what to do next I got a call from George Ford who had worked at Vultee in Downey and was the person who had arranged for Virginia's trip to Allentown via Santa Fe. He wanted me to join him at Joyce Shoes in Pasadena. I told him I knew nothing about shoe manufacturing and he said that would make no difference as he really wanted my help in converting the shoe making operations into a conveyORIZED system, something unheard of in the shoe industry. The challenge was something I could not turn down so I left General Tire of California and went to work at Joyce Shoe Company. The first thing George Ford did was introduce me to Bill Joyce and his wife Fye Joyce who was to become a nationally known footwear designer.

I was given a tour of the plant and was amazed at how antiquated, at least so I thought, the methods of making shoes were. A week after I arrived the plant was shut down for two weeks and everyone was given a vacation with pay. During that two weeks, using their regular maintenance people and some temporary outside help, we completely changed the plant over to a fully conveyORIZED system, not realizing at the time that we were revolutionizing the shoe industry. When the employees returned to work after their forced two week vacation they were totally traumatized by what they saw.

Because of the radical changes made in the various operations we had to establish all new production standards for the work force and I found myself back taking time and motion studies and setting piece rates. The affects of the changes were dramatic and resulted in a large reduction in manufacturing costs and better working conditions for the employees. I was also learning how to make shoes and actually hand made several pairs for myself and Virginia. Virginia really lucked out later because she wore a size 4-1/2 shoe, which happens to be the size of all model shoes used in women's

shoe shows. After the seasonal shows were over Virginia ended up with a lot of sample shoes for fall, spring and summer wear.

On the morning of June 24, 1947 I was listening to the news on my car radio as I was driving to work and heard the announcement that a private pilot and business man from Boise, Idaho, named Kenneth Arnold, had seen a bunch of disk shaped objects flying at high speed near Mount Rainier. It was that report that set off the Flying Saucer craze that is known today as the UFO phenomenon. Thus I got in on the ground floor of that and whatever they are. It was quite a subject of discussion that has never ended to this day.

On February 6, 1948 Virginia gave birth to our third child, a boy who we named James Allen Harker, Jimmy for short. When asked why we wanted another child we would tell people that we already had one of each, a boy and a girl and just had to have another to see which it would be. Jimmy was a perfect little baby, except for the time he got his diapers off in his crib, while we were out in the back yard, and smeared all the bedroom wall he could reach from the crib with his fresh poop. What a mess that was to clean up. He had a smile that resembled Ike Eisenhower's and everyone remarked to that effect.

In the spring of 1948 we sold our home in Rosemead for \$9,000 and bought a new house in Temple City for \$13,400. It had been constructed by a private builder and had never been lived in. It had three bedrooms, and one bathroom, a large living room with end dining area and a large kitchen. It was on a deep lot with a big back yard and separate unattached two-car garage. It was located on the south side of Broadway just three doors from Baldwin Avenue. We later added a fourth bedroom and second bathroom along with a large patio and carport.

That winter Southern California experienced an unusual snow storm that blanketed the area with three to six inches of snow. It changed the appearance of eve-

rything and kids were making snow men all over the place. The schools closed for the day and there were many fender benders because so many motorists did not know how to drive in the snow and ice. Nothing looked familiar and later in the day as the sun came out it all turned to slush and really caused problems

One evening as I was driving along Huntington Drive on my way home from the Joyce plant I saw several fire trucks and a crowd of people in a vacant lot in San Marino. I had no idea what was going on until I got home and learned on the radio that a little girl named Kathy Fiscus had fallen down an uncapped well and rescue efforts were underway. The event received national attention while the rescue efforts went on around the clock for three days. We watched some of it on a black and white TV set that Dad Bosch had bought. It was the first TV in either of our families and had a small screen the size of a postcard but the cabinet was as large as a jukebox.

Two newscaster gave the first, on the spot, remote TV coverage of the rescue. They were Bill Walsh and Stan Chambers and both became famous as a result of the coverage they provided. Unfortunately by the time rescuers reached Kathy she was already dead.

Before long I was appointed Superintendent of the experimental shop at Joyce which was a separate facility devoted to making all the sample shoes for the fashion shows and special shoes for people with foot deformities. That was where I developed a good working relationship with Fye Joyce. Since some of the shoe designs were a bit radical we decided it would be good to "road test" them so I hired two women to wear sample shoes all day while walking the streets of Pasadena. We called them our "street walkers" and had to administer to a lot of blisters at the end of each day.

One afternoon Bill Joyce called me into his office and said he wanted me to layout a factory capable of producing 2,000 pairs of shoes a day. I asked him where the building was and he said it did not yet exist

and for me to start from scratch which I did and within two weeks had the plans on his desk for a 2,000 pair a day factory.

Joyce looked the plans over carefully and seemed pleased with my efforts and then asked, "Bill, do you really think this plant will be capable of putting out 2,000 pairs a day?" I told him I was sure of it and he said, "I'm glad you feel that way because you're going to run it." I then asked where the plant would be and he replied, "In Puerto Rico." I was not even sure at the time where Puerto Rico was and was taken aback at his sudden response and his attitude that reflected his feelings it was a done deal. For the rest of the day I was in a state of shock at the thought of having to move my family and our belongings to some place outside the continental U.S. I dropped the bomb shell on Virginia when I got home that night and we dug out a geography book to find out where Puerto Rico was and learned it was located in the Caribbean not far from Cuba. We also learned it was a Commonwealth of the U.S. and that the native language was Spanish. We then told our folks which put them in a state of consternation, throwing hundreds of questions at us, most of which we could not answer.

Plans were made for me to leave in two weeks with Virginia and the children to follow me in six months. Once again our family would be separated and Virginia would be left with making all the arrangements for moving our things which would go by ship this time. I suggested she start learning some Spanish and we got a set of Berlitz records for her to listen to. I promised to keep her informed by mail and would send her photos of the place she would soon be calling home for who knew how long.

CHAPTER XIV



As the time for my departure drew near I told Virginia to put the pool table in storage as I felt there was too much chance for damage if we shipped it along with our other belongings and I did not know what sort of housing would be available in Puerto Rico. There were a lot of emotional good-byes among family, friends and co-workers. Neither I nor any of them knew when we would see each other again. As I packed a couple of suitcases I suddenly realized I would not see my children or Virginia for six months and felt like calling the whole thing off, but the plans were too far along to change anything.

On the day of my departure and with a sizable entourage following us we drove to Los Angeles International Airport, now LAX, where I said my final good-byes, boarded a United DC4 and headed for New York with a \$50,000 cashiers check in my coat pocket. It was the most money I had ever had on my person and I worried about carrying so much money. The check was for use in opening a business bank account when I got to Puerto Rico. The non-stop flight to New York was uneventful and I admit I was a bit excited about the adventure I was undertaking.

It was dark when we landed at La Guardia Field in New York where I had to transfer to a TWA four-engine Lockheed Constellation for the flight to my final destination. What a change. The plane was full of Puerto Ricans and one woman had a large box of baby

cheeps on her lap which kept chirping for most of the trip which was all at night. Since much of the trip was over water and it was dark there was nothing to see out the plane's windows so I took a nap. As daylight broke I could see we were flying over some islands and the water around them was a light blue and green and very clear.

We landed at the Isla Verde Airport in the center of San Juan around 7:00 a.m. and the moment I set foot outside the door of the plane my glasses fogged up due to the humidity. I also noticed a strange smell. It was the regular odor of all tropical islands but very strange to me at the time. As I headed for the Terminal I saw George Ford waving to me. He had flown down a few days before I did. He had a rental car and we drove around San Juan for a bit and then went to the Condado Beach Hotel for breakfast. I was quite impressed by my surroundings which were both strange and fascinating to me at the same time.

George had gone down ahead of me to set things up for my arrival and during breakfast he gave me a briefing during which he told me the factory I would be setting up was in Ponce on the other side of the island. He said there were some empty buildings in Ponce that we would be using for the Joyce de Puerto Rico facility.

After breakfast we went to meet some bankers, attorneys and government officials by way of introducing me to people who I would be having a lot of future dealings with. Joyce had elected to set the plant up in Puerto Rico to take advantage of the tax free holiday on the island which was designed to promote industrial development by inducing state side companies to locate there and provide much needed job opportunities for the poverty stricken natives. Under this plan companies operating in Puerto Rico were exempt from paying any U.S. income taxes and were also exempt from paying any local taxes.

To help finance the Joyce operation, stock in Joyce de Puerto Rico had been sold to a number of

wealthy and influential families on the island. As President of Joyce de Puerto Rico I was a member of the Board of Directors and accountable to the stock holders as well as the parent company in Pasadena. Having completed all my introductions we left San Juan by car to drive to Ponce which was a three hour trip over mountain roads.

That first trip across the island was a real experience as chickens, goats and kids would run off the road as we approached at what I felt was an excessive rate of speed considering the conditions of the narrow road and all the pedestrians and animals walking around. But George just laid on the horn most of way and we managed to get to Ponce without killing any people or livestock. I had noticed there seemed to be an awful lot of horn blowing while we were driving around San Juan, but that was nothing compared to the din of horns in Ponce.

Our first mission in Ponce was to go to the Bank of Ponce where I was introduced to the bank president, Rafael Calderon, and opened an account in the name of Joyce de Puerto Rico using that \$50,000 check I had been carrying in my pocket. I was much relieved once it was safely in the bank and out of my possession. The rest of the day was spent introducing me to a lot of important people including Ted Moscoso who was the head of "Operation Bootstraps," the term used to describe the effort at industrialization described above.

Fortunately for me everyone I met spoke good English and I did not have to resort to what I could remember of my High School Spanish. That first afternoon we went to the Amelia Hotel where I checked in and rented a room for a month. We then toured the area in and around Ponce which included a trip out to the edge of town to see the buildings I would be converting into the Joyce de Puerto Rico shoe factory.

There were two large buildings that formed an "L" with some 50 ft. separating the two buildings. One end of the long leg of the "L" faced the street and had a sec-

ond floor office area. The short leg ran at right angles behind the long building. An alley ran along one side of the front building to the rear one and a turkey grower had a small operation going across the alley from the buildings. By this time I was getting a bit woozy from all the activity of the day so after George and I had a dinner of rice and beans we went to the hotel to bed down.

I had never slept under a mosquito net before but it was a common bedroom accessory on the island because none of the buildings or houses had window screens. Before going to bed I made a phone call to Virginia and it took about 10 minutes to get the connection through and there was a bit of static once the connection was made. We did not talk long and I just wanted her and the children to know I had safely arrived.

The next day I began following up on some leads that had been given to me the day before concerning several potential key employees I might consider hiring. I began setting up appointments to meet with these people in the hotel lobby for the purpose of interviewing them. One of the first jobs I wanted to fill was the position of plant superintendent. I needed someone who could serve as my assistant and had a good knowledge of the local people. He turned out to be the third person I interviewed that day and I liked him from the start. His name was Jacobo (Jake) Calder and over the years he became my most valued employee and a close personal friend.

With Jake's help we interviewed a lot of people during the rest of the week and ended up filling most of the key management positions. Jake and I spent the next two weeks rounding up office furniture, getting phones installed and buying basic office supplies. At the same time we were negotiating with the Ponce Iron Works for fabrication of the assembly lines we would be installing in the factory. We also had to have curing ovens built, overhead conveyors, material storage racks, spray booths, and a hundred other plant facilities built

to our specifications.

At this same time we were placing orders with state side companies for delivery of sewing machines, leather cutting machines and special shoe manufacturing equipment from the U.S. Shoe Company. While awaiting the arrival of all this equipment we had a crew laying out and striping all the aisle lines and marking where each piece of equipment was to be located when it arrived. Among our first hires were members of our maintenance crew which consisted of electricians, carpenters, plumbers and machinists. They were the nucleus of the manpower required to prepare the plant for eventual production.

I had to revise my layout on the spot because we had two buildings instead of one so I set it up for all the raw material storage and leather cutting to be handled in the smaller building and all assembly work, final inspection and shipping to be done in the larger building.

It had been prearranged that all raw material purchasing would be performed by the Pasadena plant and then shipped to us as none of the materials such as leather skins, fabrics, thread, adhesives and findings were available on the island. We were then to be billed for all materials shipped to us by the mainland suppliers and they would become a part of our manufacturing costs.

As things progressed in preparing the facility for production the need for training employees became of paramount importance and I asked that Helge Ystrom be sent down from Pasadena to assist in the training. Helge was a long time employee of Joyce and knew the processes inside and out. When Helge arrived a few months later I made him Superintendent of Production and promoted Jake to Works Manager.

During all this time I had kept extending my stay at the Amelia Hotel and had developed a good relationship with the hotel staff. Before the six months were up we had the plant turning out 600 pairs of shoes a day and it was time to make arrangements for the arrival of

my family. I found a small house in La Rambla which was a subdivision on the outskirts of town and rented it on a month to month basis with the idea of getting something larger once Virginia was there to help in the selection. In the meantime I had acquired a car and drove to San Juan the day before their scheduled arrival to pick them up. I had been in San Juan the week before to attend the grand opening of the newly completed Caribe Hilton Hotel and that affair was a real bash.

I was at the airport when their plane arrived and it was sure good to see them. At the end of the first three months I had flown back to California on a business trip to the Pasadena plant and had spent a week with my family who were still in Temple City. The day of their arrival I gave them a short tour of San Juan and then got a room for us at the new Caribe Hilton where we stayed for two nights to allow them time to adjust to their new surroundings before heading for Ponce.

The trip across the island to Ponce on the winding mountain road was a cultural shock for the children. Live stock roamed free on the island and they had never seen pigs, goats and chickens crossing a road in front of them to say nothing of the little native kids who ran around stark naked and peed wherever they happened to be standing at the moment the urge struck them.

By the time we got to the little house in La Rambla our belongings had arrived and were sitting by the house in large wood and metal sea-going shipping containers. I got a couple of the maintenance men from the plant to come out and help us unload all the stuff and get it in the house. I had bought mosquito nets for all the beds and had to explain to the kids what they were for. The floors of the house were all ceramic tile and we put our carpets on the floor without any padding underneath. They all had a hard time getting to sleep that first night due to the strange sounds they had never heard before but which are typical of nights on tropical island.

Virginia got up the next morning and tried to open the back door off the kitchen to take a look outside but could not get the door opened. She called me and I found out why. A big cow was lying up against the door. That kind of shook her up.

I then hired two local girls to serve as housekeeper and baby sitters for which I paid them each one dollar a day. One Sunday we were invited out to dinner at the home of some new friends we had made and took the children with us. When we returned home the carpets were all soaking wet. The girls had decided to wet mop the floors and not knowing any better had poured buckets of water on the floors as they were used to doing when mopping tile floors. It took a long time for those carpets to dry out in the humid weather and the place began to smell of mold.

That house proved to be too small for the five of us and we began looking for a larger place which we soon found in a neighborhood right in town called Alhambra. The place we found was two stories with the bedrooms and a bath on the second floor and a large living room, dining room, kitchen and bath on the ground floor. There was a large covered balcony facing the street on the second floor and along with a large rear yard it also had a "Casita," a small house in the rear for live-in maids that had one bedroom and one bath.

It was at this time that we began acquiring a domestic staff which included a cook, baby sitter and gardener. We hired a young woman named Maria as our cook and a teenage girl named Priscilla as a baby sitter. We also hired a gardener named Manuel to take care of the yard. Maria and Manuel each lived in their own homes and Priscilla stayed in the Casita. All of this for the total cost of \$50 per month!

The two older children, Richy and Harriet, were already beginning to pick up some Spanish from other children in the neighborhood and from Maria and Priscilla. We got them both enrolled in private elementary schools because the public schools were not all

that good. Richy was enrolled in the Colegio de Varones, an all boys Catholic school, run by a group of Jesuit Monks. Harriet was enrolled in the Colegio de Lucenio and both of them had to wear uniforms to school.

Richy wore tan pants and shirt with a black tie and Harriet wore a green skirt with white blouse and green bow tie. Harriet's blouses had a little bee insignia sewn on them as the name of her school was bee in Spanish. They both did well in school and began speaking pretty good Spanish.

We were Protestants but that made no difference to the school administrators and no attempts were made in either school to convert our children to Catholicism. By mutual understanding our children were exempt from attending the weekly Mass held at both schools.

I would take each of them to their school on my way to work and then pick them up for lunch which ended their school day. Due to the practice of "Siesta" observed by the natives the lunch period was two hours long.

One day when I picked Richy up he was white as a sheet and looked like he was sick. When I asked what was wrong he said he had attended a magic show at school and that a magician had come out in a fancy costume saying "Abra Cadabra", while a little boy ran around the stage ringing a bell and then the magician sprinkled water all around out of a stick with a ball on the end of it. After some further questioning I finely figured out what had happened.

When the kids in his class went to Mass he would stay in the room studying and on this particular day he got curious and decided to find out where the other kids were going so he tagged along. What he witnessed was the ritual of a Catholic Mass but did not understand what it was all about and thought the Latin spoken by the Priest, was magic talk. To my best memory Harriet never had a similar kind of experience.

It was while living in the house in Alhambra that we went through our first hurricane, one that hit the island in 1949. We watched the storm from the second floor of the house as sheet metal, palm fronds and pieces of wood and other debris went flying down the street like so many pieces of paper. The noise was horrible and the rain was coming down horizontally like out of a fire hose. The power was out for two days and we had to resort to the use of hurricane lamps, several of which I had purchased before the beginning of the hurricane season.

Every time there was a hurricane alert we had to board up all the windows in the factory and send the employees home until the danger was over. We did not suffer any serious damage at either the factory or our home but many buildings were destroyed and some of the seaside roads were washed away.

There were a number of mainland families living in Ponce whose fathers and husbands were operating factories and business there. This group formed a solid fraternity and we all became fast friends, holding our own social affairs that consisted of parties, trips to the beaches, and special events at the Club de Portivo which was the equivalent of a Country Club in the states. The Club de Portivo had a bar which was heavily used and where we all developed a liking for Don Q Rum which was produced at a distillery in Mercedita, a suburb of Ponce. The Club also had a swimming pool, dining area and play area. The entire building was open on all sides but very comfortable all year around due the temperate climate on the island, Puerto Rico being the same latitude as the Hawaiian Islands.

I will never forget the day we all went to the club for a swim and Jimmy, who was just a toddler and had not yet learned to swim, got excited and jumped in the deep end of the pool before I could get his life jacket on. He sunk to the bottom and we had to jump in and rescue him. After that experience he would never go near the edge of the pool without his life jacket. He learned

to swim shortly after that incident.

CHAPTER XV



Things were becoming hectic at the shoe factory. The home office in Pasadena sent Helge Ystrom to Australia to open a plant in Sydney and the Korean War began to have its affect on the operation. Because of the high incidence of Tuberculosis and other debilitating diseases among the island population, I had required pre-employment physical exams of all applicants before hiring them. As a result all employees were in relatively good health. As the Korean War grew, a lot of the younger physically fit men at the plant were drafted into the service.

Other problems besieging us were late delivery of raw materials from the mainland, a general lack of understanding or appreciation for quality among the workers and a cavalier attitude towards meeting production standards. I guess this was to be expected in an industry on the island that paid a minimum rate of 27 cents an hour. In order to stimulate the employees towards better performance I established piece work and group bonus rates that permitted them to earn as much as 50 cents an hour if they put forth the required effort but that backfired on me. As soon as they had earned enough to buy what they needed to subsist for the next week they would just take some unauthorized time off.

This was a problem common to the other industries in Puerto Rico and a group of we industrialist got together with the General Electric distributor on the island and outfitted a trailer with appliances such as re-

frigerators, electric irons, toasters, etc., and then had it taken to all the various factories to display the items to employees. The idea was to get them to buy such things on credit so they would have to make regular payments and therefore would have to put in a full weeks worth of work. That idea did not work either, mainly because of the lack of power distribution to many areas where the workers lived.

In spite of the many difficulties, we had the daily production up to 1,000 pairs a day by mid 1950 and then union organizers from the mainland hit us. They held several meetings with our employees and so did I with the end result that a vote to join the labor union failed by a considerable margin. By the end of 1950 we were up to 1,500 pairs a day and were making huge shipments on a monthly basis. However the spoilage rate and discards were costly.

During this period I was visited by a number of people from the mainland who were considering locating a plant in Puerto Rico. Among them were, Mad Man Muntz of TV and Muntz Car sales, Bill Frawley who founded Papermate Pen Company and a group of executives from Consolidated Cigar. Muntz had one of his cars shipped down to the island ahead of him and he gave me a tour around town in the car which was very advanced for it's time. The visitors also included executives of Bosch and Lombe Optical Company and Built Rite children's shoes.

In early 1950 we moved again to another and still larger house on El Vigia, a high hill that overlooked the town and the ocean. It was a big, all-cement two story house with four bedrooms and two baths on the ground floor which we occupied. The grounds were surrounded by coconut palms, flamboyant trees and hibiscus plants. It was a beautiful spot with an expansive and breathtaking view. There was a large screened side porch and a long covered front porch. The upstairs was occupied by Fred Hawkins and his family. He was the General Manager of the

huge Textron Textile plant in town.

There were both an exterior and interior stairway to the second floor and our kids were constantly going up the inside stairs and trying to get through the locked door to the second floor at the top of the stairs. I finally put a stop to that by telling the kids that there was a mad monk on the second floor that would eat them alive if he caught them. The structure was called "The Trolley House" because it had been built in the 1930's by a group of investors who were planning to install an electric trolley transportation system on the island, an idea that never came to fruition.

Our nearest neighbors were the Seralles family who owned Snow White Sugar and the Don Q Rum plant. Their home was a huge three story Spanish Mansion which was cared for by a virtual army of domestics. Their little boy Tito and our children became fast friends and played together a lot. The Seralles also made sure we never ran out of rum. Squatters were constantly building shanties on stilts on the hill below us and at night you could hear them pounding the things together which were mostly made of discarded lumber, scrap sheet metal and heavy cardboard.

There were a number of small boulders at the base of our lot above the two car garage that was dug into the side of the hill. One day Richy and Tito decided to roll some of the boulders down the hill below us and one of them knocked the stilts out from under a shanty which immediately crashed to the ground. The guy who lived there came up the hill with a machete while he was screaming and yelling and chased the kids into our house and then began threatening Virginia. He was going to have their heads come hell or high water. Virginia called me and I raced home to confront the frenzied man. I had learned that the Puerto Ricans were very expressive in their mannerisms and their bark was often worse than their bite.

After talking with the fellow, who was demanding \$100 cash in damages, I began negotiations which end-

ed in our settling the matter with a gallon of rum that I promptly handed over to him. Rum would settle most problems.

Practically none of my employees had checking or bank accounts and lived day to day on the cash in their pockets. As this was true of most of the working class on the island, it was common practice to make all payroll payments in cash. Therefore, every Friday morning my accounting people, who had figured out how much each employee had earned the week before, gave me a withdrawal slip for several hundred dollars broken down by pennies, nickels, dimes, quarters and bills which I then took to the bank and returned with a couple of heavy sacks full of coins. These were then sorted out in piles for the exact amount for each employee and then placed in little envelopes with the employees name on it. These envelopes also had the hours worked listed on them along with the employees pay rate.

The people received their envelopes at the end of their shift and as they departed the plant they would be besieged by the local loan sharks who had advanced them funds using their pay envelopes as collateral. I hated those guys and would not allow them on the property so they would stand in a group outside the entrance gate in the fence awaiting their prey. The only good thing I can say about them is that to my knowledge they never beat anyone up.

Fishing off the island was excellent and I and several of the fellows at the plant decided we should have a boat. I had a small Johnson outboard motor that I had brought with me when we moved to Puerto Rico so I order a boat kit from the Arkansas Boat Works. It was a fourteen foot flat bottom thing made mostly of plywood. When the kit arrived we found an empty corner on the factory floor and I put the maintenance crew to work assembling the boat. It took a couple of weeks of their spare time and when finished we painted it gray with white trim.

The best fishing was at night when the moon was

full and the preferred bait was cheese. The surface feeding fish were called "Machetes" and resembled a barracuda but were very mild tasting. They averaged three to six pounds each. The fishing gear included rods, reels, a club to kill the fish once boated and the usual bottle of rum. Those fish had a mouthful of needle sharp teeth, hence the importance of the club. The technique was to go out about 200 ft. from shore, drop anchor and then float while sipping on rum and waiting for a bite. We went out many nights and always came back with a boat load of fish.

One Saturday afternoon Jake and I decided to fish off shore near the slaughter house down at the Playa. The blood and guts in the water always drew a good assortment of fish to the area which included Barracuda and Sharks. After we had caught several Barracuda I decided to try the bottom and when I suddenly felt a jerk on the line I tried to reel in my catch but nothing would budge and I thought I was snagged on a rock.

I kept working at it and slowly I could feel something very heavy coming up on my line. I finally got it up to the boat and saw something that I thought was an octopus as I heaved it on board. As I did, Jake went over the side and yelled, "Get out of the boat." I did not realize what was going on until I looked on the floor of the boat and saw I had hooked a six foot long Congre Eel that was heading for me as it snapped it's jaws. I jumped up on one of the seats and began beating it with the club and finally killed it after which Jake got back in the boat. I did not want the thing so let Jake take it home with him.

Earlier I mentioned the long and tortuous drive across the island from Ponce to San Juan. There was an easier way to make the trip and that was by Caribair which had two DC3 round trip flights each day. one in the morning and one in the afternoon. The fare was \$8.00 each way and only took about 20 minutes. That is how I did most of my traveling back and forth which was quite frequent for meetings that I had to attend in

San Juan.

I also flew a Cessna 140 on that trip many times and could make the trip in 30 minutes in that small single engine plane. It was owned by the Seralles family who let me use it whenever I wanted and had given me a set of keys for the plane. All I had to do was replace the fuel I used. It was a two place plane but had a jump seat in the back and so Virginia and I used it several times to go to San Juan to shop and on one trip were able to take Richy and Harriet along on the jump seat. We were slightly over gross weight but made the trip over and back without any problems.

When we moved to the Trolley House on El Vigia, Manuel wanted to continue working for us as the place was within walking distance of his shack. Maria and Priscilla did not have a way to get there so we had to let them go and replaced them with Tassia an older lady who we all came to love. She was absolutely crazy about our children and they soon had her wrapped around their fingers. Tassia lived nearby so housing for her was no problem. She and the kids conversed solely in Spanish as she knew no English and even Jimmy was talking the native tongue. It seemed so strange to hear the children speaking Spanish, although Virginia and I had to use it daily on a regular basis.

I always feared that someday a coconut would fall and hit one of the children while they were playing in the yard, so periodically Manuel would climb up the palms and cut them off. I would then slice off one end with a machete and fill the bowl with rum which, when mixed with the coconut milk and crushed ice made a great drink.

We let Tassia do most of our food shopping as she was great at haggling with the merchants at the Ponce Mercado which was a large open air market in town. She was also a terrific cook and knew the right things to buy for the native meals she prepared for us. The staple meal, of course, was rice and beans of which I never tired. One night after returning from a fishing

trip I had put the Machetes in a back porch sink as Tassia had told me she would clean them in the morning. When I got up the next morning I was surprised to see all the fish cleaned and hanging up to dry on the clothes line. She said to leave them there in the sun for the day and it would make them much better. I doubted the wisdom of her method but it turned out she was right. The sun made them even more mild and tender.

One evening I came home and the house stunk something awful. I asked Virginia what had happened and she told me that Tassia had gone to the market and bought an octopus that she was boiling for our dinner. I nearly threw up on the spot and then got enough nerve to go in the kitchen and have a look at the thing. There it was, tentacles and all in a big pot of boiling water. I was about ready to take the family out for dinner but Tassia told me that it would be, "Muy Bueno," (very good).

Curiosity got the better of me and I decided to let Tassia finish with the dinner preparations. I can't recall what all she fixed to go with it but when she brought it to the table no one wanted to touch the thing so I decided to be a real hero in front of the children and put one of the tentacles on my plate. Then with everyone watching I cut off a piece about an inch long and started chewing on it which was sort of rubbery and caused all sorts of "Uhgs" and "Oohs" from the spectators. Much to my amazement it was very good and tasted a lot like lobster. Virginia finally tried some also but the kids refused to touch it. The two of us ate some of it and the rest we gave to Tassia to take home to her family.



Maria, our Puerto Rican Nanny.



That's me with the boat we built in the shoe factory. Isla de Raton (Rat Island) is in the background and got its name as it is infested with rats.



Mercedita air strip in Ponce. The Don Q Rum plant is at the top of the photo.



Joyce de Puerto Rico display at a trade fair held in Ponce to show products made on the Island.



Industrial Trade Fair held in Ponce Puerto Rico. Note prominent location of the Joyce exhibit.

CHAPTER XVI

In the summer of 1951 several of us sent our wives and children to the mainland to visit with their families. Ford Mason had set up a gum ball plant in Ponce to be near the supply of local sugar used in making his gum balls. He had set up a distribution system for his gum dispensers by having service clubs, such as Kiwanis, Lions, Rotary, etc., place the machines for which they shared in a percentage of the revenue the machines produced. His motto, which was applied on all machines, was "Chew For Charity."

Mason had a private Douglas DC3 which he had outfitted like the interior of yacht on the inside and used for his personal travel between the island and the mainland. The plane had a large painting of a gum ball machine on each side of the fuselage and the words "Chew For Charity." Charlie Powers, his pilot, did double duty as production control manager at the plant when not flying. When Mason found out we were planning to send our families north he offered to fly them free to Miami. They all left early one morning and Charlie let Richy, who was ten years old at the time fly the plane most of the way to Miami. Actually I think he probably had it on autopilot and Richy thought he was flying it. From Miami each family made their own travel arrangements to their respective destinations.

In the meantime, while our families were gone, we fellows were left to our own devices or I should say vices. We did a lot of bar hopping and got into all kinds of trouble including Joe Owens who got shot in the stomach by a jealous Ponce attorney who thought Joe

was getting too familiar with his mistress. Joe was captain of the Ponce Cement Works ship used to haul cement to the mainland. He survived his wounds and finally got a \$25,000 settlement out of the attorney who was never prosecuted because under Puerto Rican law this incident was considered a crime of passion.

One Sunday morning during this time four of us were heading up to Cuamo Springs for a little extra curricula activity with Bill Bailey driving. The other two occupants of the car were Jim Bain and Mitch Malian. We had taken the usual precautions of fortifying ourselves with several sticks of rum (a stick was four ounces of rum in a little paper cup and sold for 20 cents) and as we went down Atoche Street, the main drag out of town, Bill rammed a cart being pulled by a native who was moving and had his entire possessions on the cart, which was not a lot. The left front fender of Bill's car caught the corner of a bed spring hanging over the edge of the cart and as the spring spun around it dumped everything in the street.

A large crowd gathered immediately and they were all screaming "Coche, Coche," which means accident. Some of the poor guys furniture was broken and the fender of Bill's car was dented. The guy was rightfully indignant threatening to call the police. Three of us, Bill, Jim and I, quickly ushered the fellow into a "Colmado" (little store) on the nearby corner and bought him three bottles of rum while Mitch stayed behind to protect the car. The potential problem was thus settled on the spot to the satisfaction of everyone.

Colliers magazine ran a feature story on the industrial development efforts in Puerto Rico and sent a team of writers and photographers to cover the story. Joyce de Puerto Rico was one of the operations they chose to write about and a reporter and photographer spent the better part of a day at our plant. As a result, a color photo of myself and Jake appeared in the magazine along with a story on our operation illustrated with some other photos.

No sooner had our families returned than disaster struck in Pasadena. It was on a Monday morning and Jake came running into my office with a copy of *El Mundo*, the main news paper on the island, and showed me a front page photo of the Joyce plant in Pasadena going up in flames. The plant had been totally destroyed over the weekend including all of the records, even those in the fireproof vault.

For the next few months I made several round trips to Pasadena, Columbus and Xenia, Ohio, and Manchester, New Hampshire where Joyce had subsidiary plants. I gathered all the records I could get my hands on including those in Puerto Rico and we were able, with the help of our suppliers and customers, to reconstruct most of the recent business transactions while Joyce set up operations in a temporary building in Pasadena. We did not realize it at the time but the stage had been set for the eventual demise of the Joyce Shoe Company.

I had bought a 1950 Buick Roadmaster and kept it parked in the yard back of the house on El Vigia under a pair of Flamboyant trees. About 9:00 p.m. one night during a full moon, I heard the sound of breaking glass and looked out to see a couple of guys trying to break into the car. They were fiddling with the lock inside the car trying to get it open. I grabbed my 410 shot gun that was filled with bird shot and fired over their heads. The sound of the pellets tearing through the tree leaves right above their heads was enough to scare them away and we never had anymore of that sort of thing.

In addition to the previously mentioned hurricane we also went through a civil uprising in an attempt to overthrow the government. The uprising was led by Albiso Compos and included an attempt on President Truman's life in the attack on Blair House in Washington. A number of public officials were shot to death on the island, including a policeman who was shot dead right outside the window of my office at the shoe plant.

The insurgents captured a small town named Jailasco up in the mountains about 20 miles from Ponce. They burned the post office and police station and killed the postmaster and the chief of police. As a result the bad guys had control of the town. The National Guard stationed in San Juan got all their tanks out and headed for the besieged town.

The Publisher of EL Mundo asked me to fly a photographer up to the place to get pictures of what was going on. I agreed and the photographer and I took the Civil Air Patrol Piper L4 observation plane that the Airforce had assigned to me and headed for Jailasco. The little silver plane had the Airforce insignia markings on it but was unarmed and we had no guns on our person. We passed the parade of tanks on the way up to the town and could see the smoke, from the many burning buildings, rising ahead of us. The insurgents had set fire to most of the town. As I buzzed the town at a low level so my passenger could get some good photos, people on the ground began firing at us with rifles. I went around and made a second lower pass and everyone scrambled for safety evidently thinking we were going to bomb them. We then got the hell out of there without suffering any bullet holes in the plane. I think the guys on the ground were panic stricken to the point they could not aim their rifles accurately.

About an hour after we left Jailasco the National Guard tanks arrived on the scene and restored order. The photos we took that day appeared on the front page of El Mundo and a number of mainland newspapers as the fracas had captured national attention.

Then there was the saga of Correa Cotto, a chicken thief who frightened half the population of Ponce. He had been put in jail for stealing two chickens but managed to escape and armed with a machete, went on a rampage that included cutting up a couple of the natives. A massive manhunt was orga-

nized and based on reports of his sightings he must have been in a number of different places at the same time. After several days, during which time some people were afraid to venture outside their houses, Correa was reported to be holed up in a sugarcane field on the outskirts of Ponce. Once again the publisher of El Mundo asked me to fly a photographer over the cane field to get pictures of any action that might take place.

As we flew over the cane the police set fire to the field with the idea of flushing him out. We flew around for about 30 minutes but could not spot Correa so returned to the airstrip without anything to show for our effort. However, a couple of hours later, Correa came running out of the cane field and face to face with a policeman who promptly fainted from fright. Correa grabbed the officers gun and started down a service road where he ran into a bevy of cops who drilled some 15 holes into him with their 45's. His body was then put in the back of a pickup truck and paraded around town for the rest of the day. He was just a little squirt, about five foot one and not over 110 pounds.

On one of the religious holidays, the townsfolk decided to have a parade down the main street of Ponce. I think it was Carnival Week but I'm not sure of that. Anyway I had bought a lot of confetti and paper streamers for the event and then borrowed a friend's plane, an Ercoupe, and with Richy aboard we flew at rooftop level down the main drag as he threw the confetti and streamers out of the plane.

The Virgin Islands are only some 80 miles from Puerto Rico and we made several trips over there to visit St Thomas, a U.S. duty free port where there were all sorts of bargains in Dresden China, Irish Linens and imported liquors. I also used the Civil Air Patrol plane on several search and rescue missions looking for missing boaters. I held the rank of Major and was Commanding Officer of the Ponce Squadron of the Puerto Rican Wing of the CAP. On one of our squadron training missions with a CAP Cadet as crew member we had

to locate a simulated crash site up in the mountains and drop supplies by parachute to the people on the ground. Our dummy package landed about twenty feet from the target and for that I received a letter of commendation.

One Sunday morning as Virginia and I with the children were on our way to a beach picnic at Guayanica a fellow on a bicycle came down a hill and plowed into the side of our car. He must have been going at least 35 MPH as the hill was very steep. He flew off the bike and went head first into the car knocking him unconscious and putting a big dent in the right hand rear door of the car. The children were frightened and screaming which did not help matters. Someone called an ambulance and they got the guy to the hospital while I went to the police station to file a report. The police then went to the hospital to check on the guy only to find out that he had regained consciousness and bolted out of the hospital. No one knew his name or where he lived and that was the last I ever heard of it. I don't blame him for taking off when he found out where he was because the public hospitals left a lot to be desired.

Mentally disturbed crazy people ran loose around town and were never institutionalized unless they were a danger to the public. One woman used to go around town gnawing on telephone poles while another would go into the Cathedral and run down the aisles while lighting paper matches and throwing them in the air. Then there was George Washington, a tall black man who dressed in bib overalls and had American flags sticking out of all his pockets. He would stand on street corners making nonsensical speeches and waving a large flag he carried with him. He claimed he was George Washington.

One morning I could not get the car started and had my head under the hood checking to see if I could find any loose wires or other trouble. George Washington snuck up behind me and suddenly started yelling

out one of his speeches which startled me and caused me to jump up and hit my head on the hood. He just laughed and continued with his speech as if nothing had happened. I used to talk to him on occasion and we sort of became friends. He was obviously well educated and harmless, but I could never find out much about him as he was living in a dream world of his own.



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CHAPTER XVII



Things began going wrong at the factory. The first inkling of trouble was when we received a return shipment of several hundred pairs of defective shoes from Bullocks Department Stores. I was as much to blame as anyone as I had not been paying enough attention to the final inspection operations. I needed someone to head up that department whom I could trust so I brought Virginia into the plant and put her in charge of that operation. That took care of the problem except for several hundred more pairs that were returned and upset the folks in Pasadena.

About this time there was a near panic in town as word spread about that a group of zombies from Haiti had been spotted down at the Playa near the shipping docks. The schools closed and all children were sent home. My workers begged to be let out early to go home to be with their families and I did let some of the most frightened leave the plant. Next day most of the town was shut down, but the scare lost some of its momentum and things got back to normal in a few days. No, I never saw any of the purported zombies and I doubt that anyone else did. It was just a matter of a bunch of superstitious and emotional natives who believed anything told to them.

One of the machines used in our operations were called "Heel Seaters" and were used to tack the heels to the shoes in one stroke that drove all the tacks in with

one blow. The tacks were loaded into a large hopper on top of the machine and then fed down to the driving points through flexible steel tubes. It was not uncommon for some of the tacks to get stuck in a tube and the cure was to rap the tube with a hard object like a screw driver handle or small hammer.

The operator on one of the machines could not get the tacks free so took a large magnet he kept in his tool box and tried to draw the tacks down by running the magnet down the tubes which in turn magnetized the tubes so all the tacks hung up. I had to remove the tubes and fly them to the Naval Base at San Juan where I was able to use their degaussing machine to demagnetize the tubes. Needless to say I confiscated the heel seating operator's big magnet.

To add to my troubles the National Labor Relations Board gave in to the Unions and ordered that a series of minimum wage hearings be held to determine if the minimum wages by industries should be raised. At that time the minimum wage for the shoe industry was set at 27 cents an hour. I was given a summons to appear as a witness and was sworn in on June 28, 1951 after which I spent three days testifying and subjected to examinations and cross examinations. I have a transcription of the my testimony which consists of 279 pages recorded during the proceedings. The hearings went on for about three months and new rates were set for most of the industries which were to become effective the following year. The shoe industry minimum wage was adjusted upwards by 10 cents an hour.

In spite of these and a lot of other problems I managed to get the business back on track and added golf shoes for Florsheims to our line. Things were not going very well in Pasadena however and I began getting a lot of visitors from the home plant who wanted to get away from the stress. Sort of combined business and pleasure trips. As a result we had to do a lot of entertaining and escorting these folks around the Island which was not bad duty.

Joyce was now an international operation with subsidiary plants in Johannesburg, South Africa; Santiago, Chile; Cranston, England; and Mexico City as well as those in Puerto Rico and Australia along with their domestic plants in Columbus and Xenia, Ohio and Manchester, New Hampshire.

In the spring of 1952 I got word that Joyce Shoes was considering an offer from Red Cross Shoes to buy them out and our future in Puerto Rico was becoming a bit uncertain. I was sent to Mexico City to assess that operation and found it to be marginal and suggested that Joyce close the Mexico facility. The deal with Red Cross was consummated in the summer of 1952 and Red Cross was not sure what they wanted to do with the plant in Puerto Rico. Due to such uncertainty I sent the family back to California. Shortly thereafter Red Cross decided they did not want the plant in Ponce and my board of directors began pressuring me to stay on and run the plant for them. They had the funds to buy it from Joyce, but I was hankering to get back to California and my family.

In mid September I received a phone call from Parkhurst, who was now at Hughes Aircraft Company in Culver City, asking me to consider joining him at Hughes. The salary he offered was four times what I was making in Puerto Rico so it did not take me long to make up my mind. Much to the disappointment of my board of directors I made the decision to close the plant and go back home. It was one of the most distasteful things I ever did, having to layoff all my employees and dispose of the equipment. That was accomplished in record time and by the middle of October I was ready to leave.

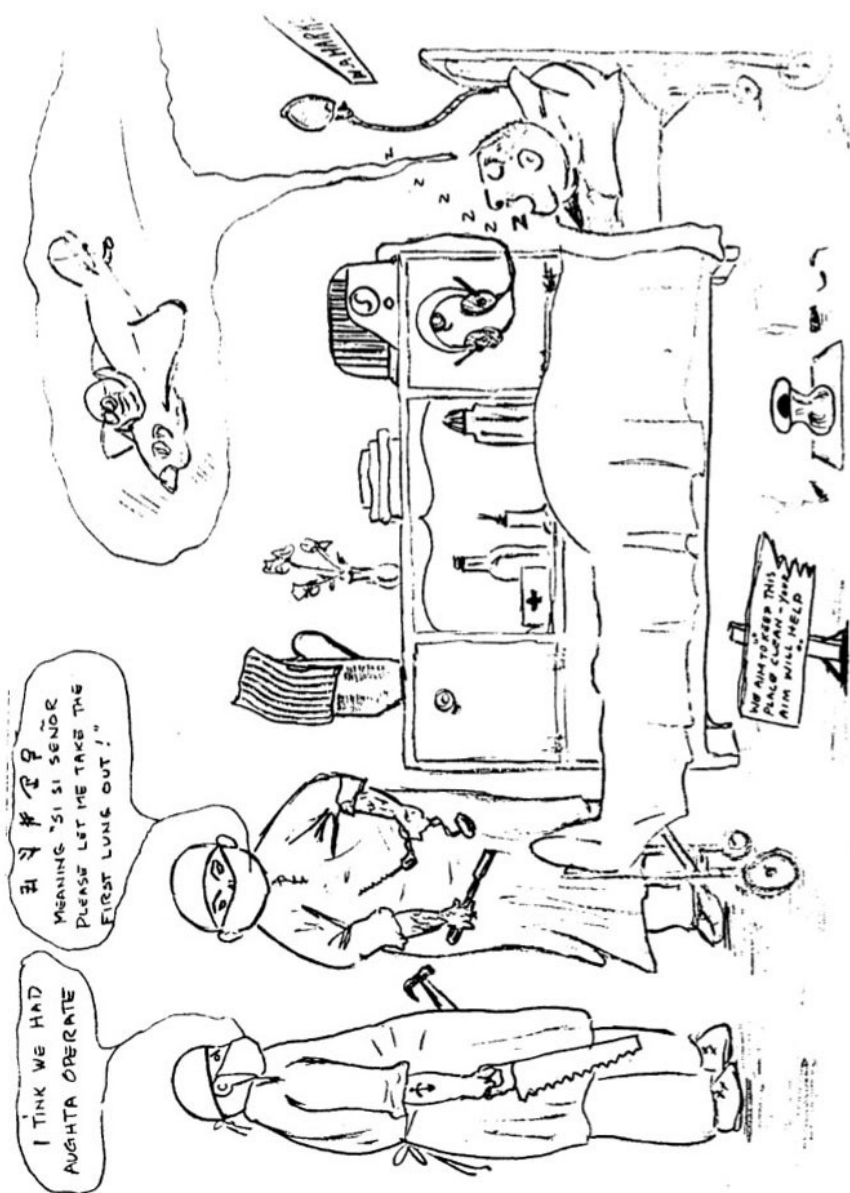
I turned the trip home into a two week jaunt spending time in Cuba, Haiti, Santa Domingo and Trinidad. I had of course shipped all our belongings back to the states via Pope and Talbot Freight Lines. Virginia had been staying with her folks in Alhambra

and the kids with my folks just a few blocks away. They alternated back and forth, much to the enjoyment of the grandparents. We had leased our house in Temple City to the Latter Day Saints as a home for their minister and Pop had taken care of banking the lease payments and looking after the place. It was in excellent condition when we returned to it except it was devoid of any furniture or appliances, all of which were on a ship somewhere between Puerto Rico and California so we set up housekeeping in an empty home. We did have gas and electricity but no phone or refrigeration. We slept on borrowed mattresses on the floor and used an ice chest for foods that had to be kept refrigerated and ate out a lot.

Two weeks after my return to Temple City Virginia's Dad, Bill Bosch suffered a stroke and became comatose. He was in that condition for about a week and then early one morning before any of us were up, Pop knocked on our bedroom window. He had driven over to inform us that Virginia's dad had died that night. Since we had no phone it was the only way he could contact us. The phone company did get us connected up a few days later.

In the meantime I had already started working at the Hughes plant in Culver City and began what was to be some 25 years of a daily commute that took two hours each way. That was four hours out of my day, Monday through Friday, battling for position on the freeways. My position at Hughes was head of the Methods and Controls Department. It was quite a transition from shoemaking to electronics manufacturing and I found the situation both challenging and intensely interesting.

Our belongings finally arrived in a number of those large ship deck freight containers which the trucking company that delivered them dropped them in our driveway and back yard. After we got everything put away in the house I took the largest container and modified it into a playhouse for the children. It was 6 ft.



A BARLOW NURSE

THIS IS NURSE MITTY
WHO'S REALLY QUITE WITTY
AND COMES TO MY BEDSIDE
EACH DAY -

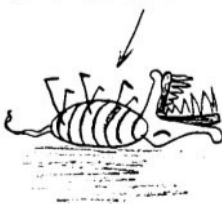
DRESSED IN A WHITE COAT
SHE SHOWS LIKE A GOAT
I WONDER IF SHE REALLY
EATS HAY -

HER MASK IS IN PLACE
AND COVERS HER FACE
WHAT SHE LOOKS LIKE
I DO NOT KNOW -

BUT I'LL BET YOU A DIME
THAT WHEN IT IS TIME
WE'LL FIND OUT SHE
LOOKS LIKE A CROW !



DEAD T.B. GERM



wide and 8 ft. long with a curved metal roof and wood floor. I could stand up inside of it and it served as a playhouse for several years after which I further modified it into a more conventional looking building.

Harriet wanted to become a Brownie Scout and so Virginia started a Brownie Troop. Richy was not interested in that sort of thing but Jimmy was, so we got him enrolled in a Cub Scout Troop. As a result we both became quite active in Scouting and took on more and more. I became a Cub Scout Master and Virginia began working her way up the ranks as a Girl Scout Leader, a Mariner Scout Leader and finally ending up as President of the Sierra Madre Girl Scout Council with responsibility for 6,600 Girl Scouts. We were both community activists and she eventually headed up the San Gabriel Valley United Way drive for which she received numerous awards and recognitions.

Shortly after Christmas of 1952 I had a bad coughing spell and coughed up blood. We immediately went to a doctor who ordered X-rays taken which resulted in a diagnosis of TB. I could not believe I had it again, but the X-rays showed it to be a new infection, something I had probably acquired during my time in Puerto Rico where the disease was prevalent. Arrangements were made to have me admitted to the Barlow Sanitarium near Dodger Stadium in Los Angeles. After a year at Barlows I was pronounced to be OK and the TB arrested so I went back home and back to work at Hughes. This had placed a tremendous burden on Virginia who, in affect became a single parent overnight. She contacted all our creditors, explained the situation and arranged for payment plans that she could handle on our limited resources. My fellow employees at Hughes took up a collection and gave us \$1,000 which was a lot at that time and helped see us through a trying period in our life.

Temple City had started the annual Camellia Festival a couple of years before our return from Puerto Rico and in her first parade Harriet rode on the Girl

Scout float as the teacher in the Little Red School House. Jimmy also rode on a Circus float and was dressed as a Lion Tamer. From then on we were involved in every one of the festivals, building floats in our yard and helping decorate several other floats. The Camellia Festival was a production of the Temple City Chamber of Commerce to which we belonged. In 1976 I was named General Chairman of the festival which was to be my last major contribution to the community.

In 1959 an attempt was made to incorporate Temple City and I was a member of the Incorporation Committee that worked to get the support of the residents. That first attempt failed and we tried again the following year. At that time I decided to run for the City Council that would be voted into office along with a favorable vote on incorporation. This time the effort paid off and the people voted to incorporate. The initial election returns indicated I had won a seat on the Council, but when the absentee ballots were counted I lost by a meager 4 votes. The new City Council then appointed me to the Planning Commission on which I served two years as chairman. After serving four years on the Planning Commission I again ran for a seat on the Council and this time easily made it. I sat on the Council for eight years and served two terms as Mayor of Temple City. On my second election to the Council I received the most votes of everyone running for the office at that time.

When I first went to work at Hughes Aircraft the company was making airborne radar units for the early jet fighters. Over the years the products expanded into the large radars for the use of ground based military units and navy destroyers and aircraft carriers. I made many trips to Washington, DC to give presentations at the Pentagon and the Naval Academy. My department had developed an audio-visual system for use on the production lines and for training of military users of the many Hughes systems. This business took me to England, Sweden, Chile and Mexico to make presentations

and asses the possibility of having the product produced in those countries.

My experiences while working for Hughes Aircraft were among the most interesting of my lifetime, particularly as the company became involved in the space business with the construction and launching of the very successful Surveyor which landed on the moon and sent back the first photos of the lunar landscape. This was followed by a series of communication satellites and deep space probes for which the company was famous.

In 1976 after a little more than 25 years of commuting I decided to retire and did so in June of that year. Back in 1956 I had suffered and survived a severe heart attack which had me in intensive care for three weeks followed by three months in St. Lukes Hospital in Pasadena and then three more months of taking it easy at home before returning to work. In 1965 we became involved in the Student Foreign Exchange Program and were privileged to have a Swedish boy named Goran Tollback live with us while he attended his senior year at Temple City High School.

During the year that Goran spent with us we were his foster parents and he was a regular member of the family on an equal basis with the other kids in our house. He was a really nice boy and the kids all got along great together. He was with us during the famous Watts riots in South Los Angeles which we all watched on TV as it was happening. It was not the best picture of American life and took a bit of explaining to him as to how such a thing could take place in America. It was a sad day for all of us when we had to say good-bye to him. He and the other students in his group were to tour the United States on their way back to New York prior to leaving for their home lands.

Three weeks after he left us I had to make a trip to New York for the Hughes Company and took Virginia with me. Unbelievable as it sounds, we were walking down 42nd Street on an afternoon break and heard a familiar voice call out, "Hey Mom and Dad." It was Go-

ran who was on a sightseeing trip of the city. We only had a couple of minutes to talk with him and made the most of it.

Temple City had established a Sister City relationship with the little town of Magdalena in Mexico and when a group of us went down there for a visit we took Goran and the other foreign exchange students, who were staying with local families, along with us. Believe me that was an experience they will never forget. It was a traumatic change from life in Southern California.

Two weeks before Christmas of 1967 I was able to spend two days with Goran and his parents at their home in Sweden while on business for Hughes. Goran's father was a physicist at the nuclear plant in the Baltic Sea and he arranged for me to visit the facility where I was treated like visiting royalty. Goran later told me that my visit resulted in his father seeing parts of the operation which he had never witnessed before. Goran's folks just could not do enough for me and his father told me that everyone put their shoes in the hall outside the bedroom door at night so that is what I did only to find out the next morning that they had been shined to a high polish.

A year after Goran left we applied for and got another student from Turkey. His name was Adil Aslam and he was the exact opposite of Goran who was a nice mannered and quiet sort of kid. Adil on the other hand was a wild Turk with flashing black eyes and a keen ability to get into all sorts of trouble, but he was basically a good kid who just needed close supervision. Both boys turned out to be successes in their chosen fields. Goran became professor of English at Lund University in Stockholm and Adil became an accomplished architect in Istanbul, Turkey.

Our next foreign guest was 27 year old Mohammed Khatah who was a High School principal in Lahore Pakistan and stayed with us for six months while taking special courses at USC. He never went back to Pakistan where he was supposed to take over as Superintendent

of Schools. Instead he went to Columbia University for a graduate course and ended up as head of the Chemistry Department. Having these young people from other countries and cultures living with us was a rewarding and educational experience for all of us.



Goran Tollback, our foster son
from Sweden.



Our Turkish foster son Adil taken in
Istanbul after his return to Turkey.

CHAPTER XVIII



During my term as mayor of Temple City I wrote a weekly column for the Temple City Times under the byline of "LIKE IT IS.", which proved to be very popular with readers. It was my way of establishing and maintaining a line of communication with the residents. Subjects included, among other things, how the city government worked, responsibilities of the various departments and the inter relationships with other surrounding communities and Los Angeles County. When I retired from the City Council, Helen Schrader, editor of the newspaper, presented me with a bound book containing all of the columns I had written. I still have the book and enjoy reading it from time to time to help me recall how things really were in those days. I find it interesting to note that things have not changed much over the years.

In 1967 I developed polyps on my vocal chords and had to have them removed in a delicate surgical procedure. I was not allowed to talk for three months and had to communicate by hand written notes and head nodding. This made my job at work and on the city council a bit difficult but I came through it OK and when I was finally allowed to talk was relieved to find my voice had not changed into a fog horn.

Virginia was elected to the Temple City School Board and soon became president of that organization resulting in a local joke that the mayor was sleeping with the president of the school board. We were both so

busy with these involvements that we had a slate board and chalk hanging on the wall of the service porch so we could leave messages for each other. Looking back I regret that these activities took so much time away from our children during their developing years. It must have been hard on them and I now wish we had spent time with them during those years. In spite of this we did have a fairly close knit family and thoroughly enjoyed the times and activities we had together.

Jim and some of his friends started a rock band and used to practice in the garage. I made them keep the garage door closed to protect the neighbors but in spite of this we had several visits from the police in response to neighbors complaints. The band got to be pretty good and played at the LA County Fair in Pomona on Temple City Day. They also got an extended engagement playing at the Ice House in Glendale and finally reached the point where they were to enter into a contract in Idaho. Their manager was to fly up to Boise with one of the band members to negotiate the contract and the band members, including their girl vocalist, were all staying at our house. It was wall to wall sleeping bags in the living room for several days.

On the weekend the two were to fly to Boise I had taken our plane and flown up to Merced to attend the annual antique aircraft fly-in and on my way back Sunday afternoon, as I was over Pasadena above a thin overcast, I suddenly saw a huge black mushroom cloud of smoke come up through the overcast in the vicinity of Azusa and I assumed a gas station or something had blown up or was on fire. I was in radio contact with the tower at the El Monte airport at the time and heard someone come on the air saying there had been a mid-air collision between two planes.

When Virginia picked me up at the airport to take me home we had the car radio going and learned that an Air West Jetliner had been hit by a military jet and both had crashed in Duarte. When we got home the kids were all very upset because they thought it was the

flight that their two friends were on. That sad fact turned out to be correct and they died along with everyone else on the plane. It was a very trying time for all of us including Virginia and myself as we had gotten to know the kids well while they were staying with us. The kids were determined, however, and went on up to Boise where they played at the hotel for a long time.

In the meantime, Harriet had been married and presented us with two neat little grandchildren, Craig and Carrie. Rich was busy with an aviation ground school he established in Burbank and had acquired a red headed wife and a silver Corvette. Jim married a girl in Boise and they gave us another grandchild, Kimberly.

In 1971, I noticed that Virginia was eating a lot of Tums to relieve stomach pains after every meal and finally talked her into seeing her doctor who erroneously diagnosed the problem as an ulcer. She received treatment for the supposed ulcer until she was finally diagnosed as having colon cancer. Surgery in 1972 found the cancer rather wide spread and it was followed up with radiation and chemotherapy. She got well enough to go back to work at the bank where she was employed at the time and was able to continue working for about six months when the cancer began getting the upper hand and she passed on in August of 1972. One of the most difficult times of my life was that day when I had to notify our kids that their mother had died, even though we all knew the situation was terminal.

Virginia was buried in Rose Hills Cemetery in Montebello where I bought two grave sites side by side. The head stone on mine is already in place with my name and date of birth etched into it. It is just waiting for me give up the ghost so the date of my death can also be etched onto my head stone. As things stand now they are going to have to wait a while before completing that last task. I'm sure not of a mind to hurry things up for them.

Following Virginia's death I entered into a period

of being a widower which I did not like at all. I was getting invited to dinners by well meaning friends and neighbors who for some reason always seemed to have a single unattached woman present. They were match-makers doing all they could to get me hitched, but I had decided I needed no help and at the right time would do my own choosing. In the fall I dated a couple of local gals which mostly involved taking them out to dinner just for the company of a female to enjoy the good food with me.

The time of my own choosing finally came in January of 1973 when I attended the Chamber of Commerce mixer and saw Evelyn Taylor, who was a former friend of Virginia, dressed in a pink outfit with her dark copper colored hair piled up high on her head. I made my move and asked if she had anything to do after the mixer to which she replied in the negative. So I took her to the Embers in Arcadia for more drinks and a steak dinner during which time I learned she was going through a divorce from her husband George who I casually knew. We dated a couple of times and then, on a rainy night with wine, cheese and apples in front of a warm fire in the fire place I seduced her. That seduction scene was right out of a Hollywood production and was later written up as the feature story in the Valentine Day issue of "Country Life", a slick magazine published in Southwest Riverside County. I received a number of compliments following its publication.

They say the second time around is the best and I was about to find out if that is true. Evelyn had eight children the oldest of which was the same age as my youngest. Her kids and mine had all gone to school together and were somewhat acquainted. Of course her kids were anxious to see what this guy she was dating looked like so she invited me up to her house on Val Street in Arcadia for dinner. I had a pipe in my mouth as I knocked on the front door. Her youngest daughter, Patty opened the door and as I stepped inside a little guy named Johnny, who was four years old hit me in

the face with a pillow knocking my pipe and burning tobacco out of my mouth and onto the deep white pile carpet on the living room floor. I was shocked and rather upset and embarrassed but we got everything cleaned up with no damage to the carpet. As we were sitting down enjoying one of Evelyn's famous baked bean dinners a mutual acquaintance knocked on the front door to deliver some papers to Evelyn. When she saw me there she blurted out, "How nice that I had found someone to feed me." I think she was surprised to find me there and then realized what she had said and became quite embarrassed but we just laughed it off.

Word rapidly spread around town that we were seeing each other. Here we were with eleven kids between us and were falling in love with each other. Things came to a natural conclusion with my proposal and her acceptance. We were married on July 27, 1973 on our patio. Dress for the day was casual with only family in attendance. She and three of her kids moved into our house in Temple City. My kids were all out on their own by this time. Rich was living in Sylmar, Harriet was married and living in Baldwin Park and Jim who had been in the Vietnam War, was in Boise, Idaho.

Jim took his basic training at Camp Ord near Monterey and was shipped out to Vietnam in January of 1968 where he served in the Armored Division of the First Infantry Division known as the Big Red One. Virginia and I took Mom Bosch, who the kids called "Gramme", along with a cute little blonde girl named Pat Yoder, up to see him while he was at Fort Ord. After he shipped out we sent him a tape recorder of which we had a duplicate at home and we kept in touch by mailing recorded messages back and forth. Some of his recordings were quite dramatic as they were made in the heat of battle and you could hear all the gunfire and noise in the background. Much to our relief, Jim came home in one piece although with the Purple Heart, and was the object of a big welcome home party in Temple City.

All of Evelyn's kids had also flown the coop except for the three we setup housekeeping with in Temple City. They were Patty, Jimmy and Johnny and their ages were 12, 9, and 4 respectively. Her other children were Jeanne, Georgia, Robert, Donny and Sandra. So there I was, ready to raise another family, hoping to avoid the mistakes I made on the first time around. At the time of our marriage Evelyn was an area manager at May Department Store in Los Angeles while I was busy at Hughes Aircraft. I would pick her up on my way home from the plant in El Segundo. During my tenure at Hughes I was one of a three man committee appointed to find a location for a new Hughes Facility which was to become the Ground Systems Division. The three of us spent several weeks looking at potential property from Santa Barbara to San Diego and chose the Sunny Hills Ranch in Fullerton where Hughes then built a one million square foot facility.

While Evelyn and I were courting I had a 12 speed bike that I would ride up to her house in Arcadia. The May Company had a sale on bikes and she bought three ten speeds, one each for she, Patty and Jimmy. Johnny rode in a box we fastened to the back of Evelyn's bike. We did a lot of fun riding with the kids to picnics in a park in San Marino and other local points of interest.

When Casual Corners opened a store in the Fashion Square Mall near the Santa Anita Race Track in Arcadia, Evelyn was given the job of Store Manager. While at the May Company she got the idea of growing bait worms from one of her co-workers who was growing and selling them at a good profit. It sounded like fun to me and I became a worm farmer setting up growing bins in the back yard in Temple City. They were called "Wonder Worms" and the name was copyrighted. At this same time we invested in video game vending machines and had them in locations all over Southern California. I had also established a bait worm route that included bait shops from Lake Castaic to Newport

Beach. These two enterprises kept us on the road a lot of the time and were intended as a source of retirement income. They did provide us with a tidy income for a few years but then the great worm business that was sweeping the country went into oblivion and newer video game machines made ours obsolete. We eventually got out of both businesses.



Evelyn and I pose with the Minister after he tied our knot in Temple City.



Evelyn and me toasting each other at our patio wedding in Temple City.

**YOU ARE ALL CORDIALLY
INVITED TO ATTEND A
NO HOST**

**COCKTAIL
PARTY**



TO HONOR :

BILL HARKER

*RETIRING AFTER **23** YEARS
WITH HUGHES AIRCRAFT CO.*

TO BE HELD :

JUNE 25th 1976

AT THE :

5:00 P.M. - UNTIL

HACIENDA HOTEL

SOUTH STARLIGHT ROOM

525 N. SUPULVEDA

EL SEGUNDO, CA.

CHAPTER XIX

As I start this chapter it is Mother's Day 1999 and my thoughts go to Harker Family Mothers past and present. Our mother died on December 5, 1954 of stomach cancer after a long time of suffering. A nurse was hired to care for her at home during the day and after her death we found a lot of her jewelry and other valuables missing and assume the nurse made off with them as Pop was away at work all day. Mother was buried in the San Gabriel Cemetery, where her first child and her mother and father lay, along with other of her relatives and friends. A few years later Pop married a single lady who lived next door and whose name was Dorothy. They had a church wedding in June and I gave Pop away at the ceremony.

Pop and Dorothy continued to occupy the family home in Alhambra for a number of years and then moved to Leisure World in Laguna Hills. At Leisure World he joined the Inventor's Club where he invented a pair of self illuminating eye glasses for reading along with some other gadgets of questionable commercial value. He was also captain of the Laguna Hills Shuffle Board team which played in tournaments all over Southern California. Pop died in 1988 at the age of 101 years, was cremated at his request and his urn was also buried in the San Gabriel Cemetery next to our mother.

Just 39 days before starting this chapter my brother Bud died after a fairly short bout with cancer in his esophagus and upper stomach. Fortunately he did

not suffer long and passed away peacefully. At his request, he was cremated and his wife Charlotte, daughter Carol, son Larry and I scattered his ashes on the ocean off San Diego on April 30, 1999. The loss of my brother leaves me the sole surviving male Harker of my generation in our family. The Harker name will be carried on, however, through our sons and grandsons, i.e.; Rich Harker, Jim Harker and his son Brenden and Larry Harker and his son Eric. I have sort of jumped ahead of myself in the telling of this tale, but the above events weighed heavily on my mind and I wanted to get them out of the way so I could continue this writing in a more orderly fashion.

In 1976, after fighting the freeway traffic for some 24 years I decided to take advantage of the early retirement plan offered at Hughes Aircraft and hung it up in June of 1976. There were two important elements of our lives during the period of the 50's, 60's and 70's during which time we owned several boats and an airplane. Since these "Toys" involved a lot of experiences worth telling about I have chosen to cover them as epilogues to this book in order to avoid a lot of confusion. You will find them at the end of this book under the titles, "The Boating Years" and "The Flying Years." We had bought the airplane, a two-place low wing craft called an Ercoupe in July of 1967 after selling our last boat.

Virginia and I enjoyed weekend flights to new places for lunch or breakfast from the El Monte Airport where our plane was based. One of these trips took us to a new master planned development about to get under way near Temecula to be called Rancho California. We found it to be an attractive place with a great potential. After Evelyn and I were married we drove to Rancho California with the kids to see the place as I had told her a lot about it. We both thought it would be a neat place to live in our retirement which, at that time, was somewhere off in the future and the more we thought about it the more convinced we became that it

was the place we wanted to spend our retirement years.

We bit the bullet in 1974 when we purchased a three acre Avocado Grove in Glenoak Hills, a residential/agricultural area east of Temecula. We spent our weekends down there with the kids. While I went out to work on the grove, Evelyn and the kids spent their time in the Rancho Inn Motel on the edge of a small lake where they could fish and play. Our property was very hilly and had a graded pad for a home on top of the hill. We engaged an Orange County Architect to design a house which we planned to build on the site and in the meantime purchased an adjoining three acre parcel planted with Avocado trees.

Following my retirement from Hughes in June 1976 we put our home in Temple City on the market and sold it for \$63,000 a nice profit over the original cost. We then moved to Temecula and set up house-keeping in a two story condominium where we lived for the next six months and made a lot of new friends. During that time I spent my days working on the grove and expanding the worm operation which I set up on the building pad. Before we got around to building our dream home we had an opportunity to sell the property to an Orange County Orthodontist for double the amount we had invested in it. With the proceeds from that sale we bought a six and one half acre Grapefruit grove just a short distance away and also in Glenoak Hills. It had a 3,100 sq. ft. single story house, a large barn, corral and a sizeable pond.

We then moved from the condo to the house on the citrus grove and I set the worm operation up in the barn. The boys got into the FFA and started raising steers, a goat and a couple of pigs. The place also had a chicken pen and we got a rooster and several laying hens. It was great having fresh eggs for breakfast along with pink Grapefruit picked off our own trees. We bought a small one story condo for Evelyn's mother who moved to Temecula with us. She lived there until she developed Alzheimer's disease at which time we sold her

condo and moved her up to live with us in the big house on the grapefruit grove where she stayed until her death.

After the first year we had a swimming pool built on the place from which we got a lot of enjoyment and exercise and where we did a lot of entertaining. The large home was a great party place. The livestock kept our freezer full of good pork and beef and we all ate very well. Fresh produce was available at a fruit and vegetable stand not far away.

It was while living on the citrus grove that we had two Japanese girls staying with us for awhile. They were exchange students from Japan and one was the daughter of a farmer and the other girl's father ran a junk yard in Kobe. They were both sweet kids and I taught them to play pool at which they both became quite adept. We hated to see them go when they left for home.

We had both led such active lives while in Arcadia and Temple City that we vowed to become uninvolved in Temecula. While on the City Council I also served on the LA County Sanitation District Board and on the Transportation Committee of the Southern California Association of Governments (SCAG), and president of the San Gabriel Valley Pilot's Association that was credited with saving the El Monte Airport from destruction by developers who wanted the land for a low income housing project. We were both involved in a lot of the Chamber of Commerce projects and programs.

Within two weeks our vow was broken. The Chamber of Commerce in Temecula held a meeting in the clubhouse at the condos we had moved into just two weeks before. Curiosity got the best of us and we attended the meeting to see what it was all about. It seemed they needed a name for the Chamber and spent all evening arguing about what it should be. Remember, at that time the area was called Rancho California, but the town was Temecula. They finally settled on the name "Temecula Valley Chamber of Commerce," and we

contributed to the input expressing our views. Before the meeting was over they had signed us up as members. Thus began the road to our greater involvement than ever before.

My kids were all grown and out on their own at the time we moved, but most of Evelyn's kids decided to follow us to the promised land. Jeanne and her first husband along with her son John moved to Temecula. Georgia and her first husband and son Eric moved to an area just outside of Temecula. Robert and his first wife moved to the adjoining community of Murrieta and Don also moved to Temecula and later married the recent widow of a fellow he worked for that was killed in a tractor accident.

I kept busy taking care of the ranch, the worm farm and our vending machine business, but Evelyn fast became bored with the inactivity and opened a public relations and marketing firm with a lady friend and neighbor who also lived in the condos. The business was named "The Three Marketeers" and immediately began getting accounts. Jeanne and her husband opened a quick print business in an office next to The Three Marketeers, Don got a job as a tow truck driver and Robert hired out as a gardener. Georgia's husband went to work as an auto mechanic. Sandra stayed in the San Gabriel Valley.

By the end of the first year we were also members of the Temecula Town Association and became very active in that organization. At the time they had no headquarters and held their meetings in a local restaurant, "The Swing Inn." The Town Association owned a long strip of land that had been donated to them by the developers of Rancho California. It was along the old right of way of the Santa Fe Railroad. The Association decided to erect a building on the land that they could use as a meeting place and I became member of a four man crew that built a 3,600 sq. ft. metal building with a concrete floor over two weekends. In order to avoid a lot of problems with the county we built the structure un-

der a permit for a barn and it soon became affectionately known as the "Tin Barn."

While The Three Marketeers was in business it was moved to larger quarters and we began publishing a slick magazine called "County Life" to which I edited and contributed a lot of articles. I joined the Rancho California Lions Club and Evelyn joined the Lioness Club. I was also a charter member of the Temecula Moose Lodge. By this time we were busier than we had ever been back in Temple City and these were supposed to be our retirement years.

Several times during my working years I had been called for jury service but never had a chance to actually serve. I received two summons while working at Vultee Aircraft and the Company got me excused both times. Later at Hughes Aircraft I was again summoned twice for duty at the Superior Court. One time the Company got me excused and the second time I almost made it but the defense attorney had me excused due to my having been an LA County Reserve Deputy Sheriff. It was not until after our arrival in Temecula that I finally got to serve on a jury and the circumstances were a bit unusual.

Three weeks after we had settled in the condo I was out at the trash bin emptying some waste baskets when I was startled by a man clearing his throat behind me. When I turned around I saw a fellow standing there in something that looked like a boy scout uniform. He said good morning, then introduced himself as Sam Hicks the local constable and asked what I would be doing the following Friday morning. When I replied, "Nothing", he said he wanted me to serve on a jury at the local Three Lakes Courthouse and to report for duty at 9:00 a.m. It turned out that Sam and his wife Kelly lived in the condo across the street from us and Evelyn had already met them. Sam's daughter was president of the Chamber of Commerce and local postmaster. We had met her during the aforementioned Chamber meeting in the condo club house.

I reported for duty at the appointed hour on Friday morning and along with eleven other jurors was sworn in. Except for myself, all the others were friends of Sam and long time residents of Temecula. I was the new kid on the block. The presiding judge was Bill Bailey who was both a young judge and comedian. Sam read the charges and we went to work. The case involved two kids from Orange County who were in their early twenties and were falcon fanciers. They had brought their birds to the area to work them out along the Murrieta Creek that runs through Temecula. One of the falcons killed a Cinnamon Teal duck out of season and the kids made the mistake of putting the duck in their car. They were caught by a game warden and charges filed. We the jury deliberated for about 45 minutes and decided to fine each of the kids \$10 along with a restraining order prohibiting their ever bringing their falcons to Temecula again.

Sam and I soon became good friends and he began writing articles for our magazine "County Life," Sam was born and raised in Jackson Hole, Wyoming and in his early years worked the family cattle in summer and winter. Later he began a career as a guide for hunters. It was during this time that he met Earl Stanley Gardner, author of the Perry Mason books. In 1937 Gardner bought a ranch in Temecula and lived there while writing his books. A short time later Gardner brought Sam and his family to Temecula to work as manager of the Gardner Ranch. As bulldozers began leveling the Temecula countryside in 1967 as preparation for the Rancho California development, Sam and some other cohorts decided it was time to document the early history of Temecula before it was lost in antiquity.

With this in mind a group made up of Sam, Bill Cox, Al Newhart and Tom Hudson began publishing a little quarterly magazine called "The High Country." The publication was an immediate success and soon had a distribution of over 6,000 subscribers, including such prestigious entities as the Smithsonian Institute, the

Huntington Library and most of the universities and colleges in the continental U.S. There were also a number of overseas subscribers. I soon became fascinated with the history of the area as I had visited it with my dad in the early twenties to take part in some cattle drives from a ranch in Murrieta to the Temecula slaughter house. As a result I began writing stories for The High Country. During my years at Hughes Aircraft I had authored a number of articles for technical trade magazines and along with my weekly columns in the Temple City Times had developed an acceptable writing skill.

Sam, who was also the last constable in Riverside County, took his own life with a gunshot to his temple in 1979. Bill Cox became fascinated with pyramids and took off for Egypt and Al Newhart faded from the scene. Sam's daughter Nancy and I, along with Tom Hudson, managed to keep the magazine going and I continued writing stories for the publication. In 1982 Tom Hudson, at the age of 86 and with failing eyesight, also took his own life by gunshot to the head. After Tom's death, Nancy and I kept the thing going for another year and then she turned it all over to me. I continued to publish the magazine until 1985 when I had to stop due to lack of time. I now have a small business of selling back issues to collectors.

In 1981 I was given the position of Executive Director of the Temecula Valley Chamber of Commerce and began building up the membership which was 69 when I took over, of which only 20 were current on their dues. In 1986 the membership had reached 679, all current with their dues. At that time I left as General Manager of the Chamber to go into another new line of business. Evelyn and I bought Rancho Travel, the original travel agency in Temecula. The next year I was elected to the Board of Directors of the Chamber and served two years as treasurer. Evelyn had sold The Three Marketeers and the County Life magazine to a couple of young fellows who soon failed in the business.

Three years later, after having enjoyed a lot of family trips and cruises, we sold the travel agency and I took over as General Manager of the Temecula Town Association which position I held for the next five years. In 1985 I was appointed to the Riverside County Aviation Commission and the Airport Land Use Commission and served eight years as chairman of both commissions. During that time the new French Valley Airport was established in Temecula.

For three years, from 1977 to 1980, Evelyn and I published a local weekly newspaper named "The Rancho news." It had a large circulation, not only in Temecula but was also mailed to subscribers in many other states. It was also sold through news racks and local stores.

My position was Managing Editor and Evelyn was Publisher and Circulation Manager. We had three employees as well as several contributing writers and used our kids to help out from time to time. I had my own editorial page with which I had a lot of fun and used to express my opinions on many matters of local concern.

We ended up selling the paper to the riverside Press-Enterprise which still publishes it.

While serving as General Manager of the Town Association, I also hosted a monthly half-hour television program titled, "Temecula Talks," which was sponsored by local businesses. Format of the show was informal interviews with local dignitaries, long-time residents, business people, city officials and representatives of various non-profit organizations. The show covered local history, upcoming events and in-depth discussions of issues affecting the local community such as elections, traffic problems, fun raising events, and special holiday activities. The show ran uninterrupted for three years and my name and face became well known in the local area.



Evelyn and me after we moved to Temecula.

CHAPTER XX



We eventually sold the travel agency and I decided to run for a seat on the Chamber of Commerce Board of Directors, was elected and served a couple of years as Treasurer of that organization. Upon completion of my term on the Chamber Board I decided not to run again and was given the Chamber Lifetime Achievement Award for my many years of service to the Chamber and my community.

After my retirement from the Chamber, I took a position as General Manager of the Temecula Town Association in which capacity I served for five years. When I left the Town Association we started our last business venture called The Harker Group. It was an event planning and coordinating firm and during the several years we ran the business we put on Air Shows, Rodeos, Street Fairs, Rod Runs and similar events. Evelyn was the founder of the first hot air balloon races in Temecula, which later evolved into the annual regional Temecula Balloon and Wine Festival.

In the meantime our son Jim Taylor began working for a local animal hospital at Lake Elsinore and decided that he wanted to be a veterinarian. He lived in an apartment that was part of the hospital complex and was on 24 hour duty caring for the animal patients. It was then that he acquired a little cocker spaniel pup which he named "Missy" who now lives with us. Jim finally informed us he was gay and moved to Cathedral

City near Palm Springs where he and his boy friend bought a house. He later told us he had tested HIV positive and in July 1995 Jim died of AIDS. We were both with him at the end of his life. This was followed by the death of Sandra a few months later, from a heart attack, in October of that same year. Four years earlier our grandson Eric was killed on his sixteenth birthday by a drunken motorcycle driver in Eric's home town of Steamboat, Colorado.

This was a very traumatic time for us and is still a hard thing for us to deal with. A couple of years after Jim's death, his friend Michael with whom he had lived, sold the house in Cathedral City and moved to Florida at which time Jim's dog Missy became ours. In 1986 I was appointed to the Old Town Temecula Historic Preservation District Local Review Board and have served the last four years as chairman of that City Commission. It is our responsibility to see that the circa 1890 to 1920 architectural ambiance of the Old Town of Temecula is preserved.

Back in 1985 after several moves to different locations around Temecula we settled in Heritage Mobile Home Estates where we are finally enjoying something resembling retirement. In 1997 I was elected to the Temecula Town Association Board of Directors where I have been serving as treasurer of the Association. I spent a year on the founding Board of the Temecula Valley Film Council which sponsors the annual and well known film festival in Temecula.

After moving to Heritage Park, I finally satisfied a life long curiosity by making three visits to nudist resorts around the valley. I found it to be a relaxing and interesting experience that was not at all sexually arousing. The sight of a bunch of pot bellied people running around naked leaves a lot to be desired.

In the past month we attended two weddings, Jim Harker's second marriage in Boise, Idaho and Rich's fifth marriage in Cambria, California. Our son John and his second wife Leanne just moved into a

new home a short distance from our place. As of this writing we have kids in the following locations:

Jeanne in Las Vegas, Nevada with her husband Bob, Patty in Exeter, California with her husband Dan, Georgia in Steamboat, Colorado with her husband John, Don in Sutherlin, Oregon with his wife Paula, Robert in Washington, Rich in Cambria, California with his wife Bobra, Harriet in Prescott, Arizona with her husband Roger, Jim and his wife Mary in Boise, Idaho and John and his wife LEEANNE in Temecula. At this time we have nineteen grandchildren and seven great grandchildren either by birth or from the various marriages. I will not attempt to name them all here but the mix is twelve boys and fourteen girls. If you also threw in all the ex-wives and ex-husbands along with those listed above it would truly constitute a crowd. In spite of it all, including the ups and downs over the years, we are a happy and healthy family. I am sometimes awed when we all get together and I realize that I and my two wives are responsible for it.

Today is June 15, 1999 and I've sort of come to the end of this life story. I'm sure I will think of other things as time goes on that I should have included but I believe that I've provided enough for you to figure out what makes me tick. Since this is my first attempt at a thing like this my question is, how do you stop it? Do you keep on writing until the day you die? I don't think so, but I still have a number of years ahead of me and more living to do, so do I write a sequel in five years from now? Maybe, if there is anything worth passing on to my family. On second thought you will all be living those final years with me and will know what I'm up to and doing. On that note I am going to bring this thing to a close, probably much to your relief. In doing so I have one final comment. It has been a wonderful and exciting life that has brought me much joy. I just hope you have enjoyed reading this as much as I have enjoyed writing it.

I love all of you!

EPILOGUE



As indicated previously I have chosen this epilogue to recount two important phases in my life, namely, The Boating Years and the Flying Years and I will cover them in that order. Believe me, while they played a significant role in my life, they did not take priority over my family. Rather they involved the family and we all enjoyed the experiences they brought to us. So let's get on with it.

EPILOGUE



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THE BOATING YEARS



As near as I can remember my interest in boats began in the bathtub when I would play with toy boats and dream of sailing on the high seas. Later as I grew a little older I began making my own small boats carved out of balsa wood which I played with in a large washtub filled with water. The first one I made was powered by a small piece of camphor ice fastened to the bottom of the boat beneath the stern. The boat was about five inches long and the reaction of the water on the camphor ice caused a sort of boiling action which propelled the boat forward. It would go round and round in the tub until all the camphor was used up at which time I would attach another piece. Later I built some larger balsa boats, about ten inches long which were driven by either side paddle wheels or stern paddle wheels. The paddle wheels were driven by twisted rubber bands and they worked quite well.

My next efforts involved model sail boats that I made but could not use very often due to the lack of ponds or other suitable bodies of water in our neighborhood. I finally ended taking them down to Alamitos Bay in Long Beach and sailing them there during our summer vacations. I was about twelve years old at the time. The really big event, however, occurred in the mid 1930's when Pop came home one night with a used 2-1/2 HP Johnson outboard motor that he had found somewhere in Los Angeles. Pop spent about a week's

worth of evenings overhauling the motor and then one Saturday he filled a 50 gallon drum with water and clamped the motor to the rim, filled it with gas, pulled the starting cord and it roared, or rather putted, to life much to the excitement of Bud and myself. It was nice to have that motor but it was rather useless without a boat to put it on.

Herman Fingerly, a German immigrant lived across the street and became a good friend of the family. He was a master craftsman and retired pattern maker who had been head of the pattern shop at the C.F. Braun company in Alhambra. Herman offered to help us build a boat if we would supply the materials. Several days were spent with him as we designed the boat of our dreams, a 10 foot flat bottom row boat which we were going to build entirely with redwood. We set up our operations in the family garage and within two weeks during summer vacation we had a respectable example of a sea going craft.

Much to Herman's credit he merely acted as instructor and supervisor, insisting that Bud and I do all the work with the result that we not only had a pride of accomplishment but we also learned the basics of wood working which we used to advantage throughout our lives. We painted the boat white with green trim and named it "Ginita," a convolution of the names of our pet dachshund "Ginger" and our cat "Ninita." We used that boat for several years down at Alamitos Bay. During the winter storm of 1935, Second Street became flooded from curb to curb, overflowing onto the sidewalks and parkways.

Bud took the boat two blocks up stream and then floated down the street much to the amusement of the neighbors. I took a photo of him as he passed our house and it was printed on the front page of the Alhambra Post Advocate. A tribute to our fine workmanship and design, the "Ginita" was still afloat in the pond on Gardner Harris's ranch in Woodlake, California when we visited him last year. In the interim he had given the

bottom a coating of fiberglass. His kids played with the boat for years in the pond up there.

Due to its small size the boat would only accommodate two people and we let Pop know that we needed a bigger boat, so one Saturday he took us to the Hollywood Boat Company in LA where we found the boat of our dreams. It was a 14 foot all mahogany decked runabout built by the Indian Boat Works. The rear cockpit had a steering wheel and outboard motor well. The front cockpit had two sliding deck pieces that could be used to cover it up when not in use. Pop bought the boat for us and we towed it home on a trailer that came with it and set about giving it a new coat of varnish. We named it "Ginita II" and had many hours of pleasure driving it around the bay and also the LA Harbor.

Pop built a boat house next to the garage where we could keep it out of the weather when not in use. That boat house later became the garage for my first car, my Star Coupester. As Bud and my interests became involved in other things such as photography, cars and girls, we used the boat less and less and Pop finally sold it but we kept that old outboard motor and I took it with me when we moved to Puerto Rico where it was used to power the fishing boat we built in my shoe factory plant as I described earlier in this book.

Several years after Virginia and I were married I began thinking of boats again and the fun we had with the two Bud and I had. When Grandma Bahn died she left me an inheritance of \$400 and shortly after I saw an ad in the paper for a 12 foot Performer glass outboard for sale complete with trailer and motor. The asking price was \$500. Our children were now old enough to take boating with us so I talked Virginia into the idea of going over to see the boat. It was in good shape and had a 16 HP Evenrude motor. After a due amount of haggling with the seller we got the complete outfit for \$450 for which I used my inheritance plus \$50 of my own.

I painted the boat white with red trim and we named it the 'Flying Fish.' We had it for a number of years and had many fine times with it but as the kids grew older it got a bit crowded and I realized we needed something bigger.

Then one evening as I was driving past the Trojan Boat sales yard on Lakewood Boulevard I spotted something that caught my eye. It was a 21 foot Trojan cabin cruiser with two 30 HP Johnson outboard motors, had an enclose head, a well laid out galley with forward bunks and a large after deck. Asking price was \$3,200. Again, I talked Virginia into looking at it and we made an offer of \$2,500 plus the "Flying Fish" in trade. Our offer was accepted and two weeks later I towed the "Flying Fish" to the Trojan Boat sales yard and returned home with the new big boat. It took up most of the driveway and was the envy of the neighborhood. I decided to repaint the inside and put a new coat of varnish on the mahogany deck, gunnels and rear seat in the back deck. As I began cleaning it out I found all sorts of goodies left by the previous owner. It had obviously been used as a party boat and I found two bottles of unopened Jack Daniels plus an assorted collection of unused condoms. There was also a camera, cooking utensils, dishes and life jackets, so I figured we had got a real bargain. We named our new boat the "Umgwadi" which caused a lot of people to ask what the name meant and I came up with all sorts of crazy meanings.

After several weeks of working nights and weekends I had the thing looking like new and it was time to try it out. I chose a trip to Catalina as a shakedown voyage. We launched the boat at the Pierpoint Landing in Long Beach and headed for Avalon. Needless to say the kids and I were excited and Virginia was apprehensive and became more so as we entered a fog bank after about 20 minutes from leaving shore. Using the compass and dead reckoning I held to a course that I hoped would lead us to Avalon. I did not say anything to Virginia and the kids, but felt we were hopelessly lost. I

told the kids I would give 20 cents to the first one to see the island and immediately had three pairs of eyes up front straining to see something in the fog. Suddenly, Harriet cried out, "Dad, what's that big building?" Sure enough right ahead of us was the Casino at Avalon and I became an instant hero with my family.

Later, we made many trips to the island while the boys, Rich and Jim rode up front shooting at basking sharks with their 22 rifles. At this time I was at Hughes Aircraft and was one of the founders of Hughes Aircraft Employees Boat Club. We took part in many events, such as predicted log races, harbor tours and accompanied the first outrigger canoe race from Catalina to Newport Beach. It was this boat that we used in the two crossings of the Sea of Cortez in 1956 and 1957. Those two crossings were well documented in Pacific Outdoor News and in Ray Cannon's Book "The Sea of Cortez" and would fill a whole chapter in this book.

In reviewing the Umgwadi Log Book I find that by September of 1961 we had logged 3,367.5 water miles, had spent 419 cruising hours and used 2,514 gallons of fuel. As so often happens in boater's lives, we began looking for something larger and in 1963 placed an order for a 28 foot Pearson Yacht powered by two 180 HP V8 Interceptor engines. The purchase price was \$12,500 but they gave us \$2,000 for the Umgwadi which they took in on trade. We placed the order in February and our boat was due to be delivered in July with Serial number 32. July came and went and no boat. This continued for several months more and we kept getting the run around, all sorts of excuses. When I threatened to cancel our order the truth came out. President Johnson had placed an order shortly after we did and he got priority. As a result he got our boat and we got the sister ship serial number 33 which arrived in November. This boat carried 120 gallons of fuel, had a 50 gallon fresh water tank and was extremely well equipped. It's cruise speed was 25 knots and I could pull five water skiers with it. We fitted it out with a sea

water circulating bait tank, an eight foot sabot dinghy with sail and small motor, and an electric anchor hoist.

While we had the Umgwadi we rented a slip at Cal Yacht in San Pedro to get the monster out of the driveway and to avoid trailering it every time we used it. Later we moved it to a slip in the Long Beach Marina near Alamitos Bay. The slip was bigger than we needed but we had been on a waiting list for a long time and took the larger slip when it became available. When we got the Pearson, which we named the "Caledonia", the slip size was perfect for the new boat.

We had a lot of fun with the Caledoni fishing for Yellowtail, Albacore and Marlin and taking friends and relatives for cruises. We made numerous trips to Cat Harbor at Catalina and every Easter vacation we cruised to Ensenada in Baja, California where we always stocked up the ship's stores with good liquor. As the kids grew older and followed other pursuits they gradually lost interest in boating and we began to realize that the boat was beginning to own us rather than the other way around. It required constant care and upkeep whether we used it or not. Virginia and I finally reached the painful decision that it was time to get rid of the heavy stone around our necks and we put the Caledonia on the market, eventually selling it in 1967 for \$7,500, a hell of a depreciation over a four year period! However, those boating years were something we would not have missed for love or money. We also learned the truth behind the saying that the two happiest days in a boat owner's life are the day he buys it and the day he sells it.

With the sale of the Caledonia I turned my interests back to flying.

THE FLYING YEARS



I can't recall when I first became fascinated with aviation and airplanes, I do remember seeing them flying overhead when I was very small and imagining that the cross bars on telephone poles were low flying planes. My earliest recollection is going up with my dad to the balloon field in Arcadia during W.W.II. It was where the Santa Anita Race Track is now located and where they were training army signal corps. men to fly in tethered observation balloons. There were also some old Jenny biplanes in which they were training pilots. All I can really remember is that airplanes held a certain awe for me.

After the war, in the early twenties, barnstormers used to visit our area and land in empty fields around Alhambra. One such group took over an empty bean field three blocks from our house and the planes would come very low over our house on their way to landing. The outfit stayed at the field all summer and my dad would take me up with him on the weekends to watch the activities which included wing walking, parachute jumps and scenic rides along with some basic aerobatics, such as loops and barrel rolls.

One of the afternoons when we were up there a guy in puttees and a white shirt suggested he take Dad and me up for a pleasure flight. Dad gave in, and with me riding in his lap in the front cockpit of a Jenny, we had a short flight over our neighborhood. It was not until later that I learned from Pop that the pilot was the

famous American Ace, Eddie Rickenbocker. The complete story of this flight is featured in Issue 57 of The High Country magazine.

I remember drawing pictures of airplanes and nailing pieces of broken wood shingles together to resemble something like a plane and then running around the yard with them while imitating the sound of an engine. When I was nine years old mother subscribed to the American Boy magazine for me. The magazine had a section on rubber band powered model planes and gliders which got me started on building and flying model airplanes. They were built from scratch following the plans published in the magazine as there were no such thing as model plane kits on the market at that time.

Then, in 1927, Lindberg flew solo across the Atlantic Ocean and became a national hero. This feat greatly sparked my interest in aviation and flying which I still have to this day. As I grew older my modeling skill improved and I was soon building flying models that won a number of contests that I entered. This was fun and the next best thing to actually flying a real plane which experience was to come to me later in life. Mother had always forbidden me to go up in a plane so the rides I did take as a kid were always done on the sly. When I moved to Allentown Pennsylvania the opportunity to take flying lessons arrived in the form of a yellow Piper Cub on a grass field with a flight instructor who was a truck driver by vocation. I soon soloed and began logging the necessary hours to qualify for a private pilot license which I received in 1945.

Once I had my license I began taking Virginia and the children up with me in planes that I rented for the occasion. I also flew a lot of friends as well as Pop who made many flights with me. Our mom, however, would never go up with me. She was deathly afraid of flying machines. Phil Birkhahn also had his pilot license and he and I did a lot of flying together all over Southern California. I also took some of my co-workers

at Hughes Aircraft up for rides. When we moved to Puerto Rico I became Commanding Officer of the Ponce Squadron of the Puerto Rican wing of the Civil Air Patrol and had a military plane at my disposal. I also had the free use of three other planes owned by friends in Ponce. One was a Luscombe Silvaire and the other two were an Ercoupe and a Cessna 140. I did a lot of flying around the island both for fun and on official CAP business and Virginia and I used the Cessna for shopping trips to San Juan on the opposite side of the island.

When we sold the Caledonia I began shopping for a plane and found a mint condition Ercoupe at the Torrance Airport which was for sale by a young fellow on his way to Vietnam. He was asking \$3,000 for it but was in a hurry to sell and I took advantage of that and offered him \$2,600 cash on the spot which he gratefully accepted. The owner's pilot license had expired so I talked a local pilot at the airport to go up with me to check me and the plane out after which I took off for El Monte Airport near our home in Temple City. I then rented a tie down space that had just become available. The previous week the former occupant of that space had crashed his Navion into the bluff at the approach end to the runway at the airport on Catalina Island killing himself and his wife.

I did not like the circumstances under which I got the tie down space but they were at a premium and it was the only one available.

I flew a lot of hours taking family members and friends up for rides, including our grand children, Craig and Carrie. One time I flew them up to Apple Valley to visit the Roy Rogers Museum. Virginia and I made a number of flights to Catalina and I also flew there with Phil, Rich and Jim. On the way over about ten minutes from the airport I would get on the radio and order lunch, usually buffalo burgers and baked beans. They would then have the meal waiting for you when you landed. It was pretty neat.

Virginia and I took a number of cross country

trips that included one to the Carlsbad Caverns, one to New Orleans, a couple to Boise, Idaho, up to Solvang, over to Lake Havasu, a couple of trips to Las Vegas, to Bakersfield, Porterville and Woodlake and up and down the state. One Fourth of July night I flew the kids, Jim and John, over the fireworks display at the park in Arcadia so they could look down, instead of up, at the skyrockets. It was quite impressive.

I had taught Virginia how to fly the plane once in the air, but not takeoffs or landings. Later we attended the AOPA convention in Las Vegas where she took the Pinch Hitters course and learned to takeoff, land, navigate and use the radio. Later, after Evelyn and I were married, I taught her how to fly the plane, once in the air, and we went to the AOPA convention in Palm Springs where she also took the pinch hitters course. As a result, if I ever became incapacitated during a flight, they were capable of getting to an airport and safely on the ground.

One of the fun things Evelyn and I did was to fly up to the Moonlight Fly-in at Porterville where we slept under the wing of the plane after a night of partying and got up the next morning to watch the air show and to participate in some of the activities such as flour bombing, ribbon cutting and balloon bursting, all performed with our Ercoupe. It was Evelyn's first flight with me and we went up after dark and she did not know enough at that time to be scared or else she trusted me completely.

In May of 1973 I fulfilled a lifetime dream and flew the Ercoupe solo from coast to coast, a two week trip that took me to Florida, up the East Coast to New England and then back by way of the Great Lakes and Colorado. I visited friends and relatives along the way and often slept under the wing at small airports and crop dusting strips. It was an experience I will never forget, particularly the afternoon that I had to outrun a tornado in Nebraska. I barely made it by the skin of my teeth and beat it into the airport in Kearny where I and

the plane were quickly ushered into a hangar. The tornado passed one half mile north of the airport.

After we were married Evelyn treated me to a paint job on the plane and it looked like new when I picked it up at the paint shop in Corona. When we moved to Temecula I based the plane at Ryan Field in Hemet for about a year until the old Rancho California Airport, that had been closed, reopened for business at which time I got a tie down space in Temecula. The plane came in handy while we were publishing the Rancho News and I used it a lot to take aerial photos of local floods, fires, etc.

As we got busier in our various ventures I had less and less time to fly and finally sold the plane in September of 1979 for \$2,300 cash plus a kit to build a Weedhopper Ultralight plane. Today used Ercoupes sell for \$16,000. I never got around to completing the Weedhopper and traded it to the local Radio Shack owner for a 35 mm Pentax Camera outfit for Evelyn.

A review of my log books show I logged a total of 1,100 hours flight time I flew approximately 110,000 miles and probably spent several thousand dollars in fuel, maintenance, insurance, and tie down rentals. However, it was worth every penny of it and I would do it all over again if I had the chance. While at Hughes I got some time as co-pilot in the company twin engine Aero Commander and in actor Robert Cummins' V-Tailed Bonanza. In 32 years of active flying I logged time as pilot in command in 24 different makes and types of aircraft, both two and four passenger planes.

In recent years I have been getting a little time in Ultralight planes and hope to eventually build myself one. There are many fine kits on the market which are easy to build and fly.

As a final note on my flying years I wrote the following poem titled, "The Aging Pilot."

THE AGING PILOT



On silver wings he soared up high,
It was his joy in life.
Above the many traffic jams,
That caused him so much strife.

The purring engine up in front,
Was music to his ears.
The thing just ran for hours on hours,
And this allayed all fears.

The clear blue sky and air so clean,
With puffy cotton balls all 'round.
Was something never seen,
By others on the ground.

Alone up there in his little plane,
It seemed like another world.
A place where man was meant to be?
Where wings had set him free?

Or was it just what man could do,
To realize his dreams.
By overcoming gravity,
Through artificial means?

The works of man so far below,
Looked like little children's toys.
While green and quilt-like farms,
Were evidence of poor men's toils.

Little ponds shined like mirrors,
Reflecting light from the sun above.
Streams and rivers marked their path
Making their way through dirt and grass.

Hills were merely bumps below,
While mountains reached quite high,
In a mighty gallant effort
To snatch him from the sky.

But he was wise to nature's ways
Always keeping on his toes.
Ready for any ill winds
That in his way might blow.

He flew high and low, fast and slow,
Above the tortured earth.
Enjoying every moment
That provided him with mirth.

He could go where 'er he chose
North, south, east or west,
Using all his instruments
To go the way he thought best.

One time he flew from coast to coast
A cross-country trip he cherished most.
Close calls he had for sure,
In spite of which he did endure.

But as the years went by
They began to take their toll.
As his vision blurred
He knew he was growing old.

They put eye glasses on his face,
To slow the fading vision's pace.
And little gadgets in each ear,
So others voices he could hear.

Three pills a day keep him alive,
With vitamins he's fortified.
But hang it up he will not,
Although his plane someone bought.

Now much to his delight,
He can continue flight.
The answer to his plight,
Is a low performance ultralight.

Now if this story sounds familiar,
Or to another one that's similar.
True this one has got to be,
As the aging pilot is none but me.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS



A special word of appreciation to my daughter Harriet Burger who did all the work of putting this book together and also to all of those who provided us with information, dates and photos. If it were not for their help this book would not have happened.

INTRODUCTION TO THIS SECTION



While going through various boxes of family photos, cartoons and memorabilia searching for appropriate illustrations for this book, I ended up with much more than could be used without detracting from the book itself and probably confusing the reader. Therefore, after much editing of numerous items I came up with the following, which are presented in album form with identifying captions. They were chosen because they illustrate things that were mentioned in the text of the book, but may not appear in the exact same order as referenced in the book.

It is my hope that this added photo section will provide additional intimacy to the story of my life.

By the Author



My mother at her desk in the L.A. Times Building when she was advertising manager for the Hamburger store, later the May Company and now Robinsons/May. This was before the building was blown up by terrorist's dynamite.



Pop at the wheel of his first car, a Tourist made in Los Angeles.



My parents' second car, a Buick.



My parents' third car a Dort that Mom traded to a salesman for an electric sewing machine.



I was one happy baby.



What a sweet little boy Billy was.



Mother was really proud of her little boy.



Me with my first birthday cake.



Mother dressed me as a girl for this photo with my Dad.



Me at age seven with cousin Alberta at Redondo Beach.



Bahn/Harker families. Back row: Pop, Uncle Allen, Grandpa Bahn, Uncle Raymond. Front: Bud, our mother, me Cousin Allen, Aunt Gertrude, Cousin Evelyn, Grandma Bahn and Aunt Barbara.

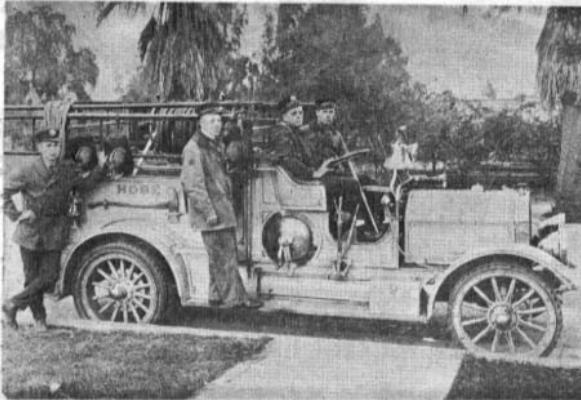


Left to right: Cousins Allen and Charles Bahn, brother Bud and me.



Brother Bud dressed for Halloween. I'm in the background.

Water Pressure Problem Fire at Hotel Plagued 1908 Firemen



WORK HORSE—"Old Betsy" was the only motor truck in the Alhambra Fire Department in 1905. But she served well when called upon by her proud keepers.

When the gong on the fire house pealed three times across the dirt streets and clapboard houses of the little village of Alhambra, every household had a standing order in 1908: Turn off all yard sprinklers and cease all irrigation of gardens to maintain water pressure.

And, when the first note of the bell rang out, whether it was day or night, members of the volunteer fire department dropped whatever they were doing and raced to the scene of the blaze.

That's the way it was just 45 years ago when Alhambra's only fire protection was "Betsy," a hand-cranked, motor-driven, solid-tired fire truck, a horse-drawn hook and ladder wagon and a handful of volunteers who put out fires for the fun of it.

And that's the way it was as dawn began lighting the east the day before Christmas, 1908, when someone noticed smoke pouring from the third floor of the elaborately-furnished Alhambra Hotel on the northwest corner of Garfield Avenue and Main Street.

Amid the entries of excited,

ornate wooden hotel and Alhambra's earliest major fire was beyond control. It was an inauspicious beginning for a fire department scarcely two months old, but it did result in the City providing a trailer hitch for the hook and ladder wagon as the time-consuming horse could be dispensed with.

Built in 1887 at a cost of \$32,000 and furnished at a cost estimated at \$10,000 the Alhambra Hotel probably burned down because someone indulged in too much pre-Christmas celebration. But, whatever the cause, there were some sad-eyed males in Alhambra on Christmas Day pawing dejectedly through the still-smoking ruins in search of their monogrammed shaving mugs which had been kept in neat racks in the barber shop on the hotel's first floor.

Loss of the Alhambra Hotel, in all fairness, hardly could be counted as a black mark against the new fire department. Its four men, scarcely an adequate crew for a major fire, hardly had time to become acquainted with their new

first committee on fire protection in April, 1906, the late Frank L. Hilton, who later became fire chief and then the first city manager.

Hilton and his two fellow committeemen, J. F. Hal and S. F. Wuest, proposed a \$12,000 bond issue—which was a lot of money in those days. They were the most surprised men in town when it passed by the heavy majority of 179 to 21.

With this money, the city purchased a lot on north Stoneman Avenue for a fire station, erected the building, bought Betsy, a ladder truck, several alarm boxes and a fire bell—a sad commentary on the present value of a dollar!

C. F. Striffler was appointed as the first fire chief, and his first men included R. M. Woolpert, C. C. Williams and F. J. Benson. A. F. Hall was appointed assistant chief in May, 1919. Striffler resigned as chief a short time later and Hall was moved up to the top spot. He was succeeded by George L. Yelland, who later was to become secretary of the Board of Education and School District bus-

first engine-propelled trucks this area."

Yelland recalled that such as used for winter drive in the East and North were necessary to give Betsy tread over Alhambra's muddy, unpaved streets.

In 1908, fires were extinguished by water charged with soda bicarbonate to build up its pressure. "It put out the fires all right," Yelland chuckled, "but it did have a tendency to eat holes in any bricks that got in the way."

A fire alarm was given in 11 days by "two blows struck 15 times on the fire bell with 15 valves of not less than three seconds between each two blows," according to the City's first fire ordinance, adopted Sept. 15, 1908, alarm was followed by other 1 of the bell designating the number corresponding to the location.

While the fire chief, or who was closest to the fire station cranked up Betsy, members of volunteer crew dropped what they were doing and raced on auto or horseback to the fire.

The ordinance that set up Alhambra's volunteer fire department finally was repealed by actment of the City's 80-page prevention ordinance. Although old ordinance had dropped, disuse and had been superseded by other fire ordinances, it had been actually repealed.

The same story goes for ordinance 271, also adopted on 15, 1908, that set the fire chief's salary at \$1 a month, per quarter, and required him post a \$1000 bond before he qualified for the honor and that went with the job.

In 1911, Frank Hilton, whose name may be found threaded through the history of the fire department, was appointed to a water committee by the Board of City Trustees. That same Yelland resigned as chief and per Pugsley was appointed in place.

Weed cleaning on all property had long since been required by City laws, the fire which was passed in 1907, but fireworks weren't later here until March 16, Alhambra's small volunteer department just couldn't top longer with the many fires caused by the bombs, torpedoes and non crackers synonymous with Fourth of July when Alhambra was young.

On July 6 of that year, just days after Independence Day, citizens voted \$31,000 more bonds to buy a modern fire

The Alhambra volunteer fire truck dubbed "Betsy."

17 Friday Evening **17**
DECEMBER

Alhambra High Shool Auditorium

DON'T MISS THE

HARKER MANDOLIN CLUB
MUSICAL

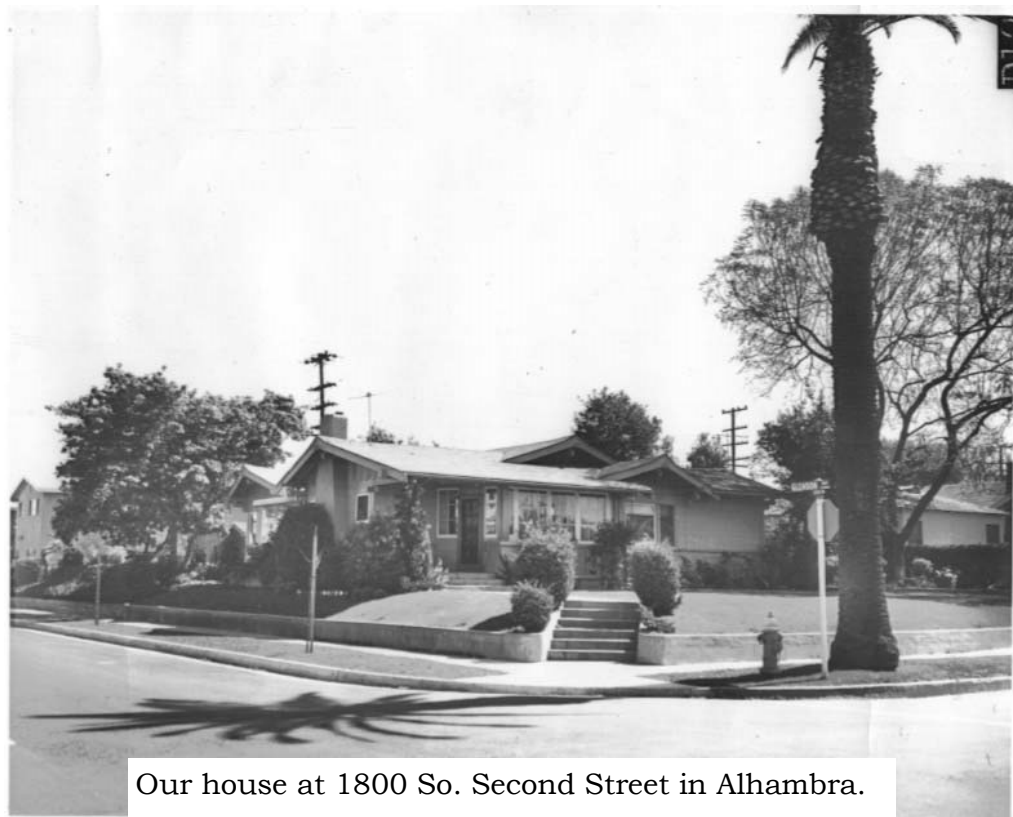
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FULL ORCHESTRA SELECTIONS.**

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ALHAMBRA DRUG STORE
1st and Main Streets, Alhambra

17 Friday Evening **17**
DECEMBER



Our house at 1800 So. Second Street in Alhambra.



Alhambra High School Band in the school patio. I am third from right in back row. Little guy in front row is Terry Sterling who Pop Ulmer, center, stuck in the piano.



My mother's Geisha Girls Sunday School class. Virginia Bosch is in the center sitting and Peggy Lamb is standing at the far right.



The cast of our High School Senior Play, "Growing Pains." Virginia, who had the lead role, is sitting in the dark dress at right of photo. I am standing in the middle of the ascending stairs.



Virginia with baby Rich taken a few days after he was born.



Virginia and me with our first born son Richy. Photo taken by Vultee Aircraft photographer and published in the Vultair Magazine.



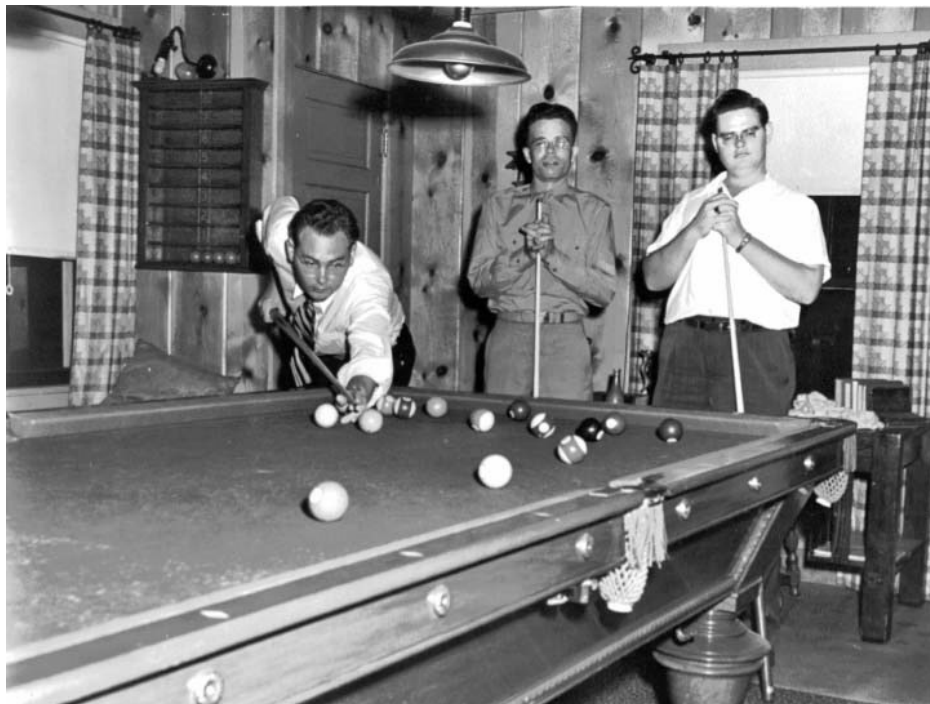
Harker/Bahn family gathering. Standing: Cousin Evelyn's husband Carl, my brother Bud and his wife Charlotte. Next sitting: Cousin Charles Bahn, Cousin Evelyn, Aunt Gertrude, Grandma Bahn holding Bud's daughter Carol and our daughter Harriet, my mother and dad and me holding son Jimmy. Front row: Uncle Allen, our son Richy and Virginia.



Foothill Camera Club exhibit. Second photo from left in top row is one of mine.



My dad and mother taken about 1935. The used bricks they are standing on came from the ruins of the old Ramona Grammar School.



The family pool table in the Rec Room above the three car garage in Alhambra. Left to right are myself, Dick Bosch and my brother Bud.



Rich, when a senior at
Temple City High School.



Harriet, when a senior at
Temple City High School.



Jim, when a senior at
Temple City High



Left to right are: Goran Tollback, Virginia, me and Jim.



The boat that Bud and I built under the supervision of Herman Fingerly. I'm in the bow, Virginia is in the stern and my cousins, Ruth and Bud Baylis, are in the center.



Our first motor boat that Pop bought for Bud and me. Cousins, Ruth and Bud Baylis are on the front and Virginia and I are in the rear.



Son Jim with our first family boat named the
“Flying Fish”



Full speed ahead in the Umgwadi.



Our last boat, the Caledonia.



Aerial view of the Trolley House on El Vigia, one of our homes in Puerto Rico. It is the two story building in the lower left center. You can see the garages built into the side of the hill below the house.



Aerial view of the Joyce Shoe plant in Ponce, Puerto Rico. The plant consisted of the two white buildings to the right.



Richy and Harriet in front of our first house in La Rambla wearing their Puerto Rican school uniforms.



Richy, Harriet and Jimmy in the back yard of our home on Charriet Street in Rosemead.



Ponce Puerto Rican Rotary Club. I am second from right standing in back row. I later became President of the club.



Rich, dressed as Maverick at our house in Temple City.



Jim and his first rock band in Magdalena, Ba-



Jim with his girl friend Pat Yoder shortly before he went to Vietnam.



Son Jim during his service in Vietnam.



Jim upon his return from the Vietnam War.



Pop and his second wife Dorothy taken in 1982.



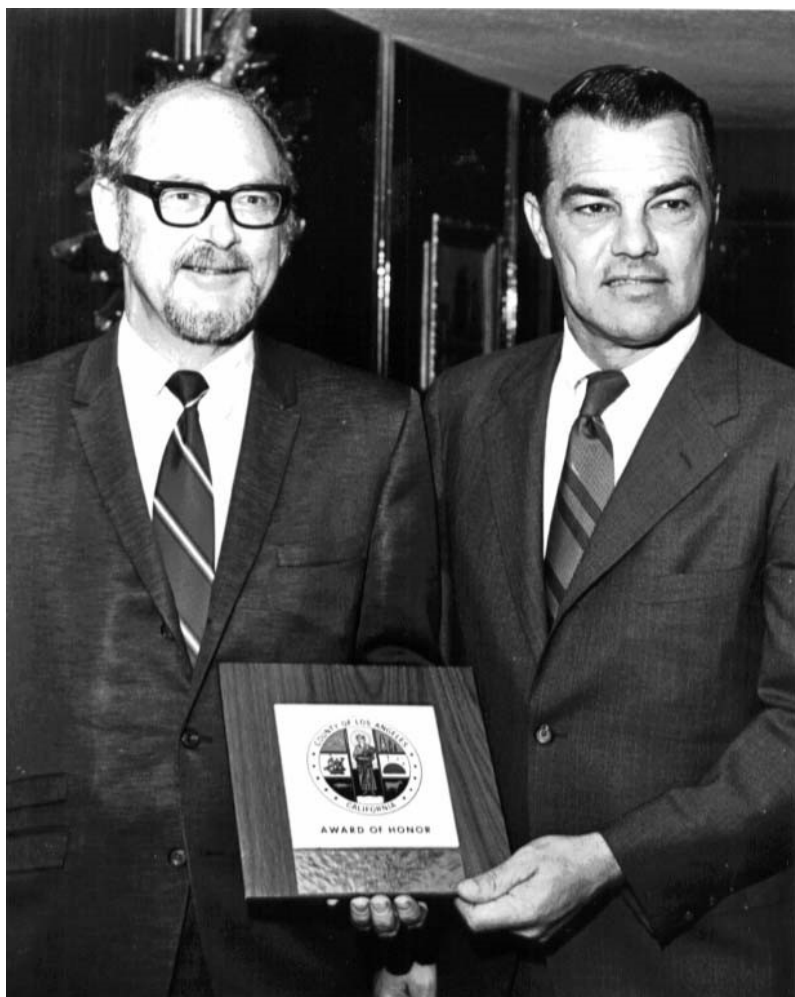
Virginia and me with the Tournament of Roses Royal Court in 1967.
We are in front row center of the group.



That's me, second from left as a member of Temple City's first Planning Commission. I later served as Chairman of the Commission.



Here I am, as Mayor of Temple City presenting Supervisor Frank G. Bonelli with the City's Plaque of Appreciation.



Here I am receiving the L.A. County Award of Merit from Pete Schabarum, First District Supervisor.



Educators visiting Hughes Aircraft Company learn from W.A. Harker, Manager, Videosonic Systems Division how Hughes uses the system to increase productivity and learning.

★ Temple City Times

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SUNDAY, JANUARY 9, 1972

VOL. 51, NO. 3

Harker to Retire From City Council

**12 Years
Of Service
End in April**

More than 12 years of dedicated community service will come to an end in April when Bill Harker steps down from his seat on the Temple City Council.

His term, along with that of Councilman Jack Tyrell, expires this year. Harker says he will not be a candidate for re-election. Tyrell has not yet made a decision.

In a formal statement of intent released to this newspaper, Harker said, "With the next city election coming up in April it has been necessary to reach a decision with respect to my future plans since my present term on the council expires at that time.

"After lengthy thought and consideration I have resolved the matter to my personal satisfaction and now wish to make my intentions known. I will not be a candidate for re-election.

"It has been a privilege to have served Temple City during the past 12 years and to me personally it has been a very rewarding experience.

"During the period between now and April I shall continue to apply myself to matters that come before the City Council as I have no desire to become a victim of the Lame Duck syndrome."

Councilman Harker worked for incorporation prior to

Plans and Reminiscences

No Matter What, Harker Will Manage to Keep Busy

By HELEN O. SCHRADER

Bill Harker may be retiring from the Temple City Council, but that doesn't mean he'll be retiring from life.

In fact he's undertaken another voluntary assignment that will be taking up whatever time he can spare from his position at Hughes Aircraft.

He has served for several years on the board of trustees of Casa Loma College, where, among other things, the first paramedics were trained. Out of that college has grown another, Miller Community College, which specializes in courses not available elsewhere.

He's on the board at Miller and in addition is serving as treasurer, which for most people would be a full-time job. Among the exotic training offered at Miller is polygraphy, or the art of interpreting lie detecting tests; cardiology, questioned documents or handwriting analysis, and legal secretarial training.

The college is chartered by the state and offers both a two and a four year degree. To Bill Harker, working with an expanding college is an exciting challenge.

Eight years as a councilman have supplied him with excitement and challenges, too, of a different type.

One of his favorite stories concerns an incident during



BILL HARKER

An irate citizen called him at home one night during the dinner hour. "All irate citizens call either late at night or when you're having dinner," Harker says. The caller complained at considerable length that his trash hadn't been picked up that day and he expected the city to do something about it immediately.

Rising nobly to the occasion, Bill asked for the man's address and said he would be over immediately to pick up the trash himself. The man was embarrassed and began to back down. "No hurry," he said. "I probably put it out after the trash man went by." And he hung up.

over being surprised at the kinds of matters that bring people out to council meetings. "Dogs probably lead the list," he said. "We had quite a time with entertainment licenses, too, for a while. The oil well controversy had them standing in the aisles.

"They'll hear the case they're interested in and then leave even though other items on the agenda will often have a greater long-range effect on their lives and pocketbooks."

Few Temple City councilmen, Harker thinks, have ever come in to office with any particular ax to grind. However in time they develop their own personal crusades. Among those he mentioned were parking meters, gun laws, reverse bays on service stations, law enforcement, the youth commission and sidewalks. His own personal involvement has been airports. Maybe, that's because he and his wife, Virginia, fly their own plane out of El Monte Airport almost every weekend.

Semantics in ordinances can really cause problems. He recalls one the city attorney drafted when the topless bars first became popular. Of course Temple City wanted no such establishments within its confines. However the wording of the ordinance got so technical that it was finally shelved. "We were all



Evelyn, shortly before our marriage.



Evelyn's children taken shortly before we married. Left to right they are: Back row, Robert, Georgia, Donny, Front row, Sandra, Patty, Jeanne, Jimmy and John.



Evelyn and me at Pop and Dorothy's house in 1973.



Our Ercoupe plane taken at Porterville. Virginia is lying under the wing.



Our first home in Temecula, on the grapefruit grove in Glenoak Hills.

STAR-NEWS

PAGE C-1V—PASADENA, CALIFORNIA, TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 25, 1975

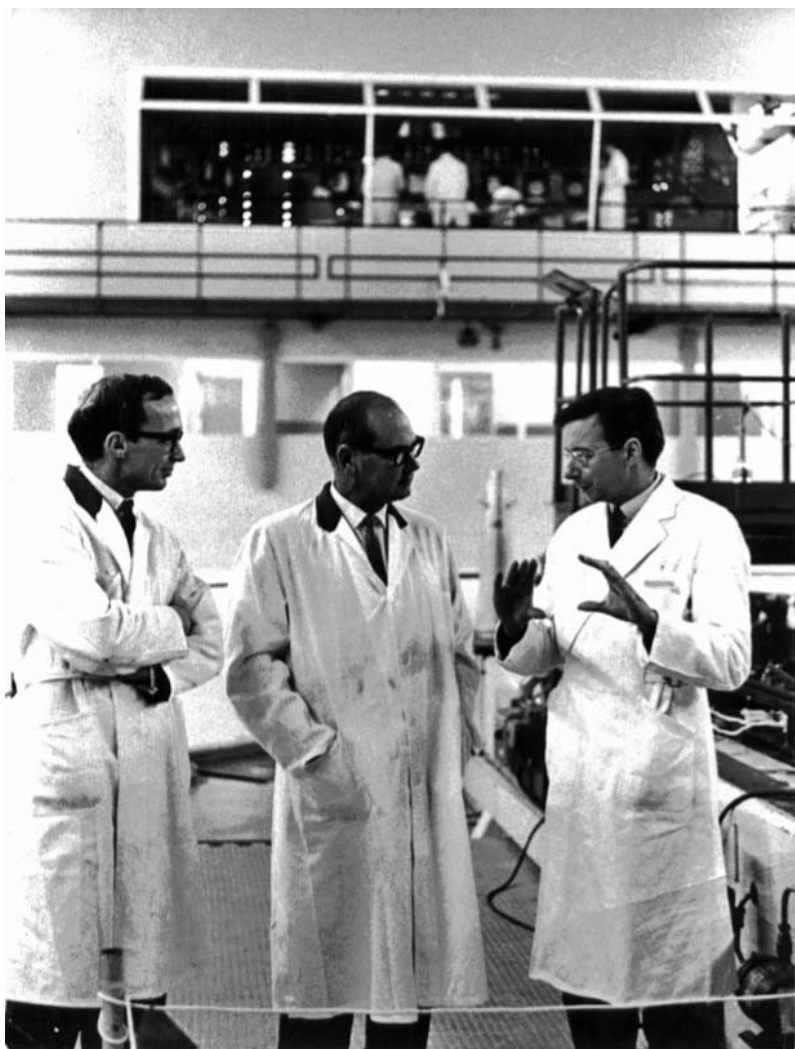


WORM FERTILIZER — Bill Harker adjusts the drain for the excess moisture in his worm "farm." It is bottled and sold as fertilizer for indoor plants.

Temple Citian Wormed His Way Into Paying Business



One of the point of sale Wonder Worm display boxes that we placed in bait shops throughout Southern California.



This was during my visit to Sweden's Atomic Energy facility in the North Baltic Sea. I am in center of photo.



Evelyn with our Ercope plane at Desert airport.



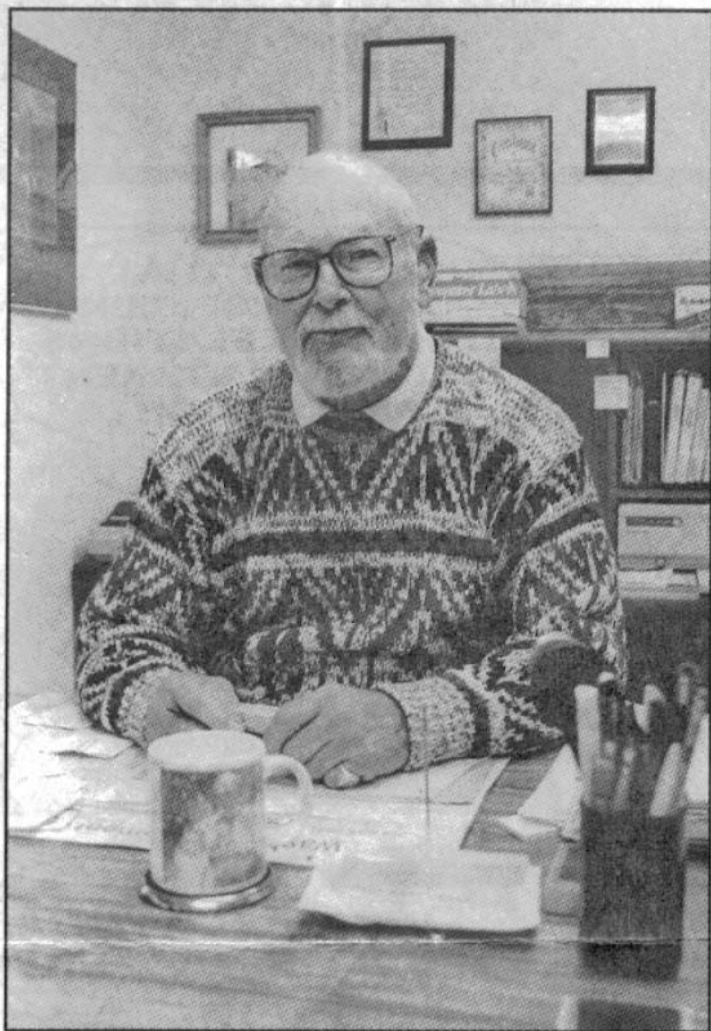
Pop and Dorothy with his 95th birthday cake created by Penny Harker.



The Harker side of the family at Pop's 95th Birthday party. Left to right standing: Bud, his wife Charlotte, our son John Taylor Harker, Pop, Dorothy, Bud's son Larry, Harriet's son Craig, Rich's daughter Caroline, daughter Harriet (expecting Lori), her husband Roger, her daughter Carrie, Evelyn, me, Rich's wife Penny, Bud's daughter Carol (expecting Darren), and her husband Ron. Kneeling is Rich and the two little girls are Harriet's daughter Lisa and Carol's daughter Devin.



Evelyn with our Ercoupe plane at the Palm Springs Airport.



Staff photo by Shaun Hall

Bill Harker is set to retire from his post as head of the Temecula Town Association.

Town Association manager to step down after 5 years



Clockwise from above: 1) A Pristine morning allows for a gorgeous view of snowy Mt. San Jacinto from Rancho California Rd. 2) Mayor **Karel Lindemans** installs 1996 Temecula Chamber Board of Directors. 3) Passing of the gavel from outgoing president **Terry Gilmore** to new president **Joan Sparkman**. 4) "Lifetime Achievement Award" recipient **Bill Harker**. 5) **Vic Shubin, Sid Gitthens, Dana Ballard and Phyllis Barton** at Pictus Orbis. Phyllis, who is a columnist for TVP is also editor of the upcoming release of *Bloodwater*, an action thriller novel which takes place in Temecula. (See page 9)

Bill Harker giving his acceptance speech after being awarded the Chamber of Commerce Lifetime Achievement Award.



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by Roy Morrissey

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Archaeological excavations indicate that Temecula—at the crossroads of the Southern Immigrant Trail—is the oldest town in California still known by its aboriginal name.



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Illustrations by Roy Morrissey



The Harker Clan gathering following Dorothy's death. Bud and me are in the front row. He is at the right. August 1998.

RANCHO TEMECULA'S TOWN PAPER



FOR THE BEST IN REAL ESTATE

See Pages 6-12



NEWS STAND LOCATIONS:

Rancho Market
Bonsall's Hardware
Culsey Kluge-Temecula
Rancho Concessions
Temecula Post Office
Perry's Ice Cafe
Rancho California Golf Course
Bonsall's Country Club
Temecula Market
Pine City Shopping Plaza
Marriott's Country Club
Rancho Oaks
Alpha Beta-Fallbrook
Carmichael's Club-Fallbrook

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NEWS

TEMECULA, WINDSOR, AGNES AND SURROUNDING AREAS

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VOLUME 11 NUMBER 40

TEMECULA, CALIFORNIA 92590

October 20, 1978



SEVERAL HUNDREDS OF THE WATCHING SING FOR ONE OF THE MANY TRACTOR RACES HELD AT THE TEMECULA COMMUNITY PARK.

Tractor Races Make Big Impression

THE RANCHO TEMECULA Community Center and parking lot were filled with people and tractors for the annual tractor races held at the Rancho Temecula Community Center on Saturday, October 14. In many ways this night very well be remembered as an annual tradition in Temecula, and to the local people. The races were held in the parking lot of the Rancho Temecula Community Center, and the races were held in the parking lot of the Rancho Temecula Community Center.

Teachers File Suit Against Temecula School District

RANCHO TEMECULA Community Center and parking lot were filled with people and tractors for the annual tractor races held at the Rancho Temecula Community Center on Saturday, October 14. In many ways this night very well be remembered as an annual tradition in Temecula, and to the local people. The races were held in the parking lot of the Rancho Temecula Community Center, and the races were held in the parking lot of the Rancho Temecula Community Center.

Candidates Vega-Morton

AWARDS RECEIVED DURING MY ADULT YEARS
IN THE FORM OF WALL PLAQUES
AND FRAMED CERTIFICATES

PLAQUES

- 1961 Hughes Aircraft Company for Patriotic Service.
- 1963 KCLA for Civic Forum Participant.
- 1964 Temple City for Municipal Government Service.
- 1970 Temple City for Community Leadership and Service.
- 1972 Temple City for Outstanding Community Service.
- 1972 Los Angeles County Award of Honor.
- 1982 Temecula Valley Chamber of Commerce for Outstanding Commitment to Community.
- 1985 Mt. San Jacinto College for Outstanding Service to the College Foundation.
- 1986 Mt. San Jacinto College for Service to College.
- 1989 Temecula Valley Chamber of Commerce for Community Service.
- 1991 City of Temecula Bill Harker Appreciation Day Proclamation.
- 1991 City of Temecula 75th Birthday Appreciation.
- 1993 Temecula Valley Film Council Founder Appreciation.
- 1995 Temecula Citizen of The Year Nominee.
- 1996 Temecula Valley Chamber of Commerce Lifetime Achievement Award.
- 1996 Burger Family Lifetime Achievement Award.

CERTIFICATES

- 1958 Orange County Management Conference for Workshop Chairmanship.
- 1959 Society for Advancement of Management for Furthering Purposes of the Society.
- 1964 Temple City Boy Scout Troop 174 for Services Rendered.
- 1968 Casa Loma College for Service as Advisor to the Board of Regents.
- 1969 Temple City Lions Club For Presentation Services.
- 1976 Temple City Chamber of Commerce for Outstanding Community Service.

- 1979 Inland Valley Region Lions Clubs for Conducting Annual Speakers Contest.
- 1979 Valley Public Radio for Support as Director of the Station.
- 1982 Kiwanis Club of Temecula/Murrieta for Presentations.
- 1985 Special Olympics for Support of Their Program.
- 1985 Volunteer Center of Riverside for Task Force Support.
- 1985 Rancho California Business and Professional Women for Outstanding Community Service.
- 1986 Mt. San Jacinto College Foundation for Outstanding Service to the College.
- 1987 Exchange Club of Rancho California for Community Service.
- 1988 Rancho California Lions for Invaluable Services.
- 1991 Friends of French Valley Airport for Planning Future Aviation Needs.
- 1991 Sun City Lions for Invaluable Service Rendered.
- 1993 Riverside County Municipal Courts for Services.
- 1994 Temecula Valley Museum for Loyal Volunteer Service.
- 1995 Temple City for Participation in Construction of City Bandstand.
- 1996 City of Temecula for Efforts Leading to Incorporation.
- 1997 Riverside County Office of Education for Judging History Day Competition.
- 1999 City of Temecula for Volunteer Services.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR



William Harker, better known as Bill and Dad to his family and many friends, is a retired aerospace executive who writes things now and then as a hobby and to keep his mind occupied. Over the years he has written a number of technical articles for trade magazines, editorials and columns for newspapers as well as documentary television scripts. He has also tried his hand at Cowboy Poetry with questionable results.

