

THE SUN SHINES BRIGHT



A KENTUCKY BOYHOOD IN THE GREAT DEPRESSION AND WORLD WAR II

BY CARL FAITH



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The Great Depression and World War II

Carl Faith

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Library of Congress Control Number:	2005901115
ISBN:	Hardcover 978-1-4134-8652-0
	Softcover 978-1-4134-8651-3

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The Index and Glossary appears in a separate volume, "The Sun Shines Bright 2," also published by Xlibris

FRONTISPIECES



**The Faith Family
1942**

Dad	Kathy	Eldridge	Mama	Carl	Billy	Louise	Fred
46	3	26	44	15	2	24	13

(Ages are rounded off)

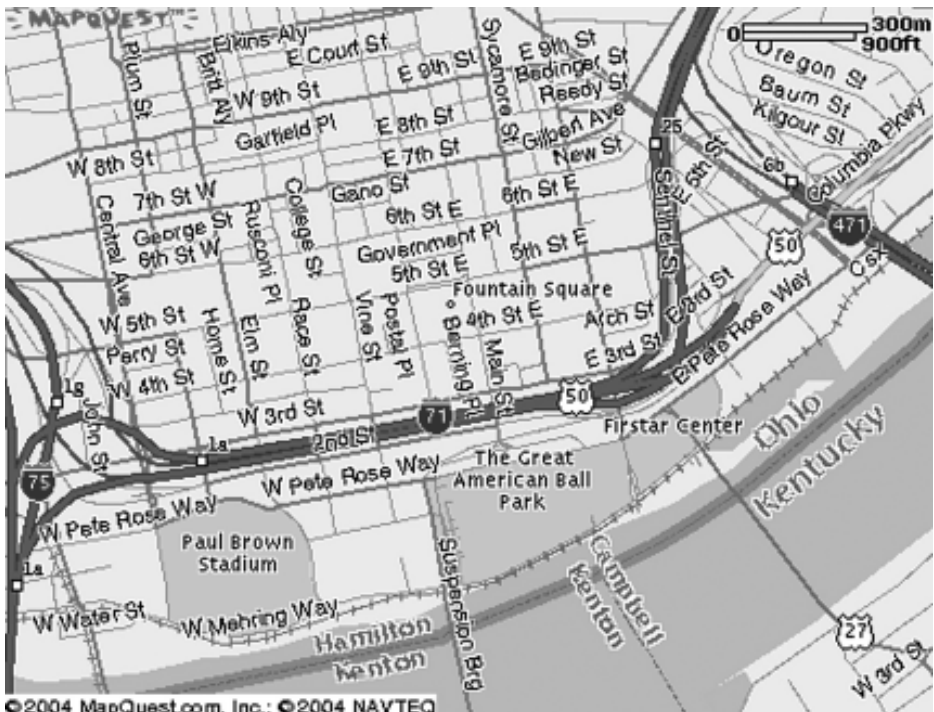
Taken by Eldridge's wife, Mary

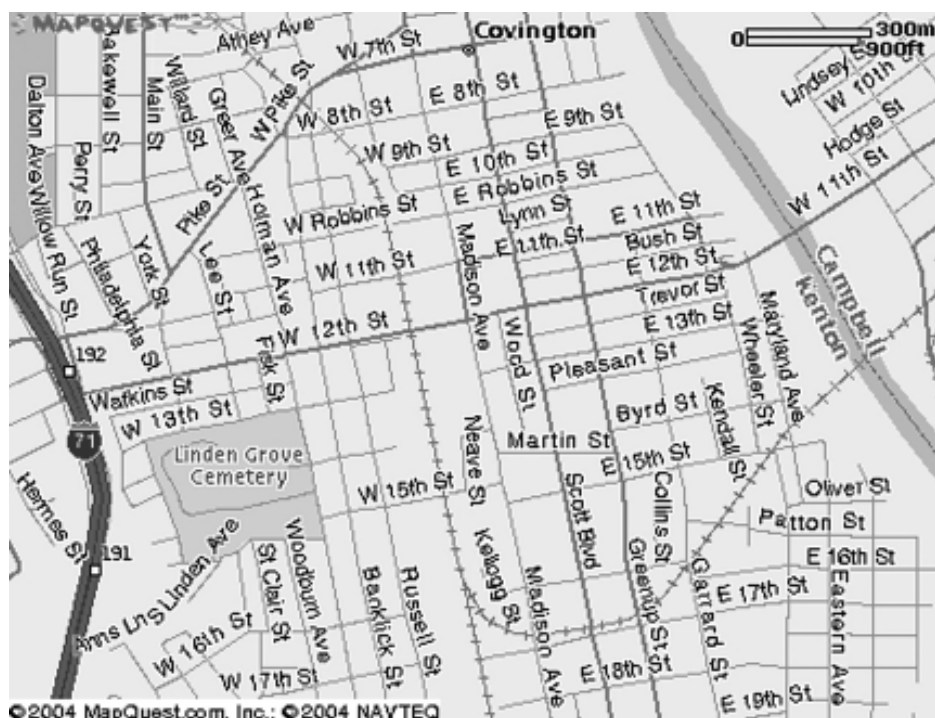
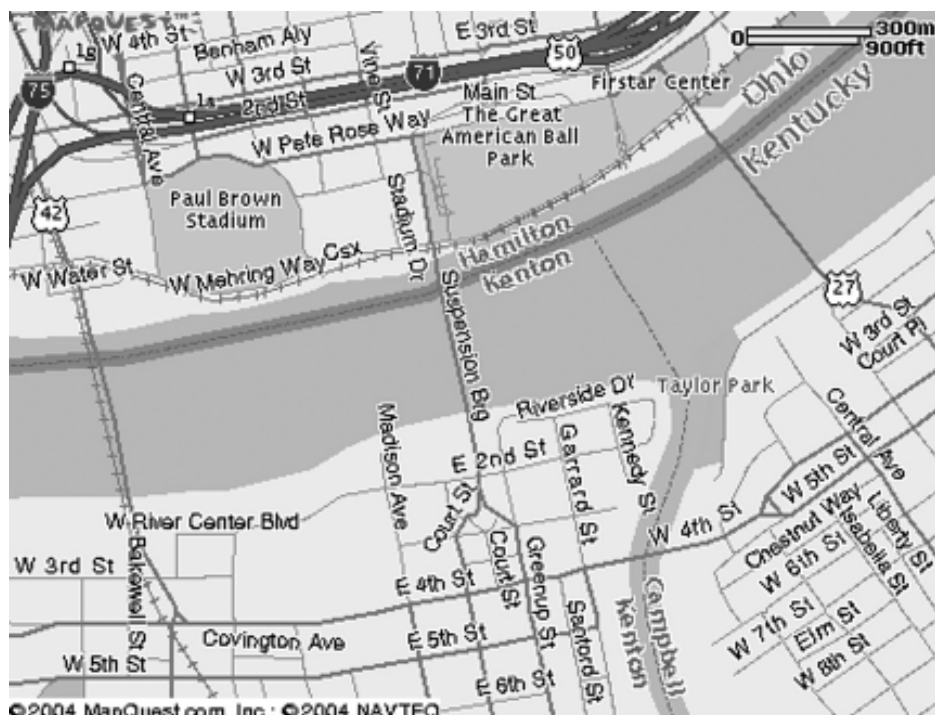
Charlie (not in the photo) was in service in the U.S. Army. Dad was a picture of health, yet died just 10 years later. Mama was always ailing, yet lived 25 years longer. Eldridge looks older than he was because of his studies. Mama is fat, but Carl's ribs jut out!! Billy and Kathy are looking at each other.

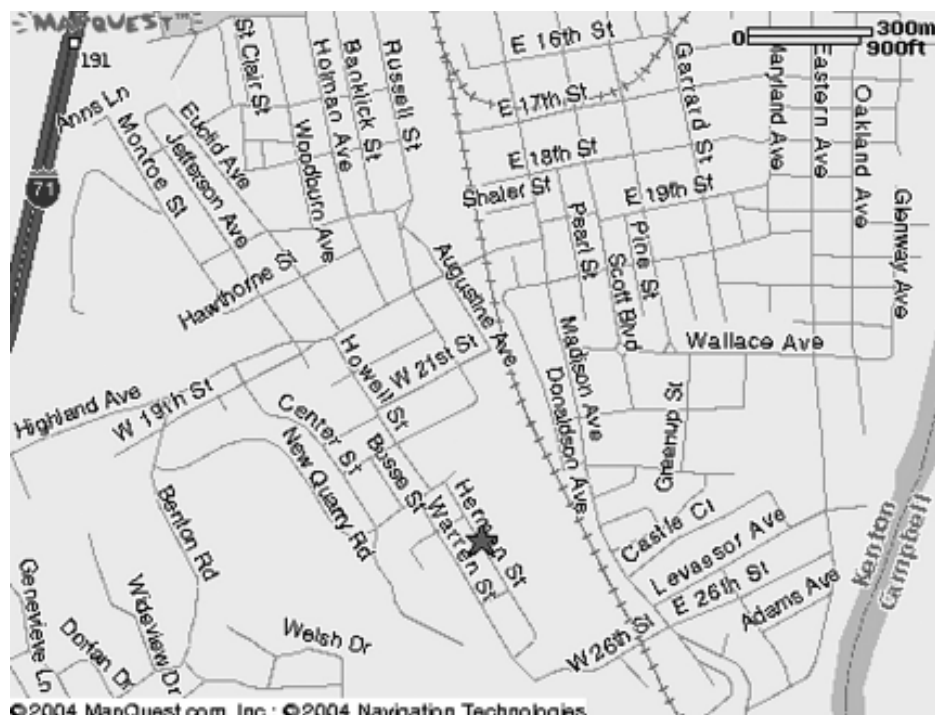


COVINGTON—CINCINNATI SUSPENSION BRIDGE

(Author took Photograph, May 24, 2003)







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The Sun Shines Bright

A Kentucky Boyhood

In The Great Depression and World War II

Carl Faith

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Mary Ann Pingel Unkraut, her daughter Laura, and her son, Rick,

Molly Sullivan and our four sons, Zeno, Japheth, Malachi, and Ezra Wood

Epigraphs:

Man makes no structure that outlives a book—Anonymous

There is a part of everything, which is unexplored

—Flaubert, quoted in James Wood’s Introduction to Saul Bellow’s “Collected Stories.”

The conviction that life has a purpose is rooted in every fiber of man

—Primo Levi, “If This Is a Man,” ch. 7; also entitled “Survival at Auschwitz”

Tis the good reader that makes the good book—Ralph Waldo Emerson, Society and Solitude, Success, 1870; see Bartlett.

Troubles overcome are good to tell, Yiddish Proverb,

—Primo Levi, Epitaph to “The Periodic Table”

*When you put down the good things you ought to have done,
and leave out the bad things that you did do—that’s Memoirs*

—Will Rogers, 1879-1935

The importance and unimportance of the self cannot be exaggerated—R.H. Blyth

*. . . to thine own self be true, / And it must follow as night the day, Thou canst not the
be false to any man—Shakespeare, Hamlet I, iii, 75*

The burden of self is lightened when I laugh at myself—Rabindranath Tagore

*Against the assault of laughter nothing can withstand—Mark Twain, 1835-1901, in
“The Mysterious Stranger,” see Quotationary.*

Life is not what one lived, but what one remembers . . .

—Epigraph to “Living Tell the Tale,”—Gabriel García Márquez, born 1928

There’s no cure for birth and death, save to enjoy the interval

—George Santayana, 1922, See “The Quotationary”

*What is life? It is the flash of a firefly in the night. It is the breath of a buffalo in the
wintertime. It is the little shadow which runs across the grass and loses itself in the
sunset—“Last Words,” 1890, Crowfoot, Blackfoot warrior and orator, 1821-1890*

*Individuality of expression is the beginning and end of all art—Proverbs in Prose
(Spruche in Prosa), Johann Wolfgang von Goethe, 1749-1832*

Fertilization of the soul is the reason for the necessity of art

Alfred North Whitehead, 1861-1947

*Only when one has lost all curiosity about the future has one reached
the age to write an autobiography—Evelyn Waugh, 1903-1966,
in “A Little Learning”, p. 1.*

*Autobiography is now as common as adultery—and hardly less reprehensible
—Lord Altricham*

The future ain’t what it used to be—Yogi Berra, attributed.

*My life—I have lived its heights and its depths, in bitter sorrow and ecstatic joy, in black
despair and fervent hope. I had drunk the cup to the last drop, I had lived my life. Would
that I had the gift to paint the life I lived—Emma Goldman’s final words in her
autobiography, “Living My Life.” See “Two Jews, Three Opinions”, Sandee Brawarsky
and Deborah Marks, Eds. Berkeley Pub. Group, New York, 1998. (Emma Goldman, aka
“Red Emma”, 1869-1940)*

A novel must be the axe for the frozen sea within us
—Franz Kafka, from a letter to Oscar Pollak, Jan. 27, 1904

What did Hesse write? "Strange to wander in the mist, each is alone. No tree knows its neighbor. Each is alone." We know nothing of one another, nothing.
—John Le Carré (1931—), "Call for the Dead," p.37, 1961

A student, or colleague, of T. S. Eliot said, "We can forget about the older writers, we never ever so much more than they." And Eliot replied,
"Yes, and it is they we chiefly know.
—Paraphrased from memory.

What's past is prologue—Shakespeare, "The Tempest," see
"The Quotationary."

History repeats itself—old saying
What experience and history teach is this—that people and governments never have learned anything from history, or acted on principles deduced from it.
—George Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel 1770-1831

I yam what I yam, and that is all I yam—Popeye the Sailor
One original thought is worth a thousand mindless quotings—Diogenes, the Cynic,
400-365 BC

An autobiography is an obituary in serial form with the last installment missing—
Quentin Crisp in "The Little Oxford Dictionary of Quotations."

PREFACE

*No man is an island, entire of itself;
every man is a piece of a continent, a part of the main;
. . . and therefore never send to know
for whom the bell tolls. It tolls for thee.¹*

John Donne (1572-1631),
Devotions on Divergent Occasions' 1624, No. 17

Troubles over come are good to tell,
Epigraph to "The Periodic Table" by Primo Levi;
also stated there in Yiddish.

*Life is what happens to you
while you are busy making other plans.*
John Lennon

My Doctor: "Forget About Living to a Ripe Old Age"

I began writing this memoir in the fall of 1979 as I was recovering from a heart arrhythmia which my doctor, Dr Marvin Blumenthal, a specialist in heart diseases, diagnosed as "bifasicular heart block." Like so many things, I never heard of it, but when he told me not to expect "to live to a ripe old age", I went into an emotional turmoil, then denial, and finally a kind of acceptance. Still I wondered "Why me?" How could this, essentially genetic disease of nerves that transmit signals from the brain to the heart, inflict a person who did all the "right" things (exercise, weight-watching, enjoyable work . . .)? As so often is the case, worry was doing the most damage, e.g., stress, arrhythmia, and the reluctance to continue the vigorous life that I had. I could not have said what Oscar Levant quipped: "*If I had known that I would live this long, I would have taken better care of myself.*" By choosing better genes, maybe?

¹ Ernest Hemingway borrowed "For Whom the Bell Tolls" for the title of his 1940 novel about the Spanish Civil War. "If we win here, we win everywhere. The world is a fine place and worth the fighting for and I hate very much to leave it." (*ibid.*)

What My Doctor Didn't Tell Me

More puzzling is why Blumenthal didn't tell me that with a pacemaker, eventually implanted in 1987, others in 1994, 2001, and 2003, I could continue to live a normal life, as so many others have done, and which I did afterwards, even though I am now pacemaker dependent for my life. Of course, I could have been a lot worse. An mathematics friend, Charles Goldberg, died of a heart attack playing soccer, a sport he diligently played weekly, without even making it alive to the hospital. Pertaining which, an M.D. told me, "This shows that God has a sense of humor!" a ghouliness which reminded me of three cartoons each depicting a gravestone in a graveyard, one with the epitaph "Never sick a day in his life, and now this!" The second with the inscription "Why me?" A third depicted a gravestone with: "I sued the tobacco companies and won!"

Another friend, Cliff Spector, at the Institute for Advanced Study in Princeton in 1960 died two days after we swam together at the YMCA pool. We had a race, which he won, my backstroke against his freestyle. The next day he went into the hospital, and died of unsuspected Leukemia. He was no more than 30 years old.

Everybody knows horror stories like this, and others who went to a hospital for an ostensibly minor, selective operation, and mysterious died there, so multiplying examples would not serve any purpose.

Richard Pryor, Don Marquis, and Me

My case was more like that of Richard Pryor (but not as bad): After he discovered that he had Multiple Sclerosis (MS), he said to *Entertainment Weekly* in 1993, "It's the stuff God hits your ass with when he doesn't want to kill ya—just slow ya down," quoted by Hinton Als in an article, "A Pryor Love," in the September 13, 1999 issue of the New Yorker, and reprinted in "Life Stories: Profiles from the New Yorker. (See Bibliography.)

Don Marquis, poet, essayist, and author of the hilarious "archy and mehitabel," about a cockroach (archy) and a cat (mehitabel)—several lines of which I quoted in Chapter 1—was a humorist, poet, and essayist of note, who nevertheless had "an utterly sad life." (The quote is by Laurie Morrow in her introduction in "Cold Noses, Warm Heart," to a short story, "Public Character," by Marquis about dogs.) In contrast to Pryor's remark, God "zapped" Marquis really hard. One would be lucky to escape life without almost every dear person in one's life—brother, father, children, and a wife dying prematurely, as they did in Marquis's. (See the Index and Glossary at Marquis.) *One thing for sure: no matter how badly one has it; there are others far worse off.*

Abraham Lincoln: “I Am the Loneliest Man in the World.”

A book, “Lincoln’s Melancholy: How Depression Challenged a President and Fueled His Greatness” by Joshua Woolf Shenk demonstrates this homily. Lincoln’s life had no end of tragic events: his infant brother died; when Abe was 9, his mother died; his father was cold and violent; when Abe was in his 20s, Ann Rutledge—said to be his first love—died of typhoid, after which he threatened suicide, and neighbors went on a suicide-watch. He married Ann Todd, said to be a manic-depressive, and by all accounts, they were a miserably unhappy couple. Two of their sons died in childhood—from the review by Anita Gates in Jan. 16, 2006 NY Time of the History Channel’s “Lincoln”—based somewhat on Shenk’s book. In addition to the above, Lincoln was assassinated by John Wilkes Booth at the prime of his life. Lincoln said with truth, “I am the loneliest man in the world.”

Dr. Guerrati, Dr. Beattie, and Luciano Rossi

To while away the hours of my enforced idleness I began thinking about my life, and, not surprisingly, of my origins. The vortex of my thoughts was Mama, to whom, as I have acknowledged in print, “I owe everything.” As I write this, twenty-five years have passed. In mid-December 2002, and again on January 2, 2003, I was hospitalized with congestive heart failure, known in the medical profession by the acronym CHF. By good luck, my attending physician on January 2 was Dr. James Beattie, who, after testing, told me that without a coronary artery bypass graft, called CABG (amusingly pronounced “cabbage” and which I had postponed ever since April 1999²), I had just a 50-50 chance of surviving. He knew an excellent thoracic surgeon, Dr. Guerrati, the Chief Thoracic Surgeon at the Graduate Hospital in Philadelphia, and on January 6, with my wife Molly beside me, I was sent there in an ambulance. On January 7, 2004 I had an emergency (quadruple) *and* an emergency replacement of six inches of my aorta (the “biggy,” i.e., the “mother of all arteries”), which had split when the bypass veins were being grafted, resulting in the loss of half my blood, and necessitating the switch from “off pump” to the heart-lung machine.

² Several cardiologists, and my primary care physician, Dr. Kathryn Emily Morris, who took over Dr. Blumenthal’s practice, had been urging me to have this. I had scheduled the CABG on April 26 1999, but my mother-in-law had a traumatic traffic accident, and we rushed to San Angelo, Texas, where she lived. Then, satisfied she was doing well, and in good hands, we returned but then Molly became afflicted with severe arthritis, and temporarily needed me to help her. By then, I found that nitrates eased my angina pains, and I resorted what Dr. Morris called a *medical*, rather than a *surgical*, procedure. But that, and chelation, which I took for over a year, was no cure, and led to my CHF.

I have to thank Dr. Albert Guerrati, and his team, for saving my life in the quick switch from “off pump” to the heart-lung machine. Dr. Guerrati told me in the recovery room that I owed my life to a “higher power” than his team, and asked me if I was “religious.” I said, “I am although not in the regular-churchgoer sense.” (I believe that not a second of any day passes that we do not owe our existence to some higher power than our will to live, which of itself is a kind of miraculous power that not everybody is endowed with.) Then, I added, “But even if I weren’t a believer before, I would be now!” The Swiss-born Dr. Guerrati has a beautiful smile, and he beamed at me.

A week later while I was still recovering at Graduate Hospital, after testing, I was told that my heart was in danger of fibrillation, so a defibrillator was implanted. I said to myself, “Here I am, the bionic man, with a Dacron aorta, pacemaker and defibrillator. I was back to square one.”

The winter of 2003 was snowy, cold, and icy, and I was unable to go out to do the exercise requisite for recovery. Then, Luciano Rossi, a friend who had undergone CABG at age thirty-eight during a cold winter, came to my rescue. He was recovering from rotor cuff surgery, and offered to drive me one-armed for a walk in nearby mall. This greatly speeded my recovery, and strengthened our friendship. Also see Acknowledgments.

The Recall of 80,000 Medtronic Pacemakers in 2005

As Paul Harvey used to say, “Now for the rest of the Story.” In March 2005, Dr. Beattie’s office called me for an unscheduled “checkup.” From that, I guessed that something was amiss. When I got there, he told me that Medtronic was recalling certain models of its pacemakers, some 80,000 of them! Obviously, the flaw was serious—the battery could be drained in several hours, leaving pacemaker-dependent patients dead. Luckily, Dr. Beattie got me into St Mary’s Hospital in Langhorne, PA, ten days later. You can imagine how I felt, not to mention Molly, during the waiting period. The entire unit was replaced except for the wires leading from the pacer to my heart. That made it an “outpatient” procedure, and I was back home by early afternoon. Unfortunately a hematoma developed that made the “patch” much bigger than the one I had before, but I was told that it should subside over time. (It hasn’t!)

Proust’s “Search for Lost Time”

Naturally, I have taken the opportunity to add to my original memoir, which I had published in 1980 in Xerox and bound in paper wrappers, a rather thick book (now a collector’s item!). Consequently, this a much-ruminated memoir, a kind of *A la Recherche du Temps Perdu*, literally, “In Search of Lost Time,” most often rendered, e.g., in Bartlett’s, “Remembrance of Things Past”. (Apologies to Marcel Proust.)

James Joyce's Ulysses

Another writer in this vein, James Joyce, wrote "Ulysses, which recreated his beloved city of Dublin, while in self-imposed exile in Paris, Zurich, and Trieste. It can be read as a kind of Baedeker, and, indeed, many tourists follow the footsteps of Leopold Bloom, on Bloom's birthday, June 16, 1904, through the streets, alleys, and pubs of Dublin. Bloom's Day was chosen because it was the day that Joyce first walked with Nora Barnacle, the day she "made a man of him." In gratitude, Joyce wrote "Ulysses," as an anniversary present. How many people would be willing to devote 18 years to a commemoration of first love?³ But the bigger question is this: how many would be able to write a masterpiece about it?

Dramatis Personae

This book is about my family, my place in it as the third child,⁴ and what became of us up to the when I left the Navy in August 1946. If my mother, whom I call Mama, is sun of my life, then Dad is the moon, and my siblings are planets: my older brother Eldridge as Jupiter; my sister Louise, Venus; and my younger brother Fred, Mars. In this analogy, my childhood and high school friend Joy is a brilliant star in the heavens (or maybe a meteor?) and my other best Holmes High School friends, Benny Craig, Frank Duff, Lou Elva Oldham, and Walter Waymeyer, and my Navy buddies, Glenn Fitkin, Jack Seibert, are other stars in the constellation, which include other childhood friends, my elementary school, and high school teachers and friends, and, of course, my relatives: grandparents, great-grandparents uncles, aunts, nephews, nieces, cousins, in-laws, neighbors, and neighborhood friends on Herman Street in my hometown Covington, Kentucky (see, e.g., Acknowledgments, Dedications, Prologue, and the Faith and Foster Families Trees.)

Wonder at Life's Accidents

How often is it given to anybody to feel at one with a time and a place and a person or persons? Life is a parade of ambiguities offering half-choices that are met with half-decisions. But there are times with friends on a team, or in high school, in the armed

³ "Ulysses," after having been rejected by other publishers as pornographic, was published in 1922 in Paris by his friend, Sylvia Beach, 1887-1862, owner of Shakespeare and Company Bookstore that still stands in Paris in its original enviable location, a beacon in the search for literature. However, in protest to the German occupation Beach closed the bookstore in 1941, and she never reopened it.

⁴ See the Third Child Syndrome in the ensuing. E.g., see the Index.

services, or college, dating your sweetheart, or marrying, having a baby, seeing your children graduate, marry or have a baby, your grandchild, when this miraculous trinity occurs: the right person or persons at the right place at the right time. This is the way I feel about my friends and loved ones, and, indeed, my life.

Carl Faith
Princeton, NJ
January 30, 2006

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS AND PERMISSIONS

*The heart has its reasons that reason knows nothing of,
(Le coeur a ses raisons que la raison ne connaît point.)*—Blaise Pascal, 1623-1662:

*The most important things cannot be seen or even touched.
They must be felt in the heart*—Helen Keller; 1880-1968

Et Uxor

I am deeply indebted to my wife Molly Kathleen Sullivan (and who isn't indebted to theirs?), to whom (among many others) this book is dedicated, for her unflagging love while I was in Philadelphia's Graduate Hospital recovering from CABG (Coronary Artery Bypass Graft), and for many months afterwards, cooking nourishing hot meals, and shopped groceries, while carrying her full load of teaching Latin in Steinert High School in Hamilton. I survived CABG, but I wonder if *she* did, or even *could*.

Et Familia

I also thank my sons, Zeno, Japheth, Malachi, who visited me in the hospital, for their caring love, and for rallying around Molly with emotional support. Molly had lost her late husband, Henry Wood (the birth father of her four boys), in Princeton Hospital in what had appeared to be a minor patch-up after a car crash put him there, so naturally she was fearful of a *déjà vu*! My daughters Heidi and Cindy cheered me up during my convalescence with flowers and a cactus plant—I still have the cactus, a memento of their caring. I also wish to acknowledge the many, many phone calls that I received in the hospital from family and friends in the states, and, surprisingly, others from England, Italy, Spain, Lebanon, Saudi Arabia, etc., whom Molly, remembering what had happened to Henry, e-mailed about my condition,

Luciano Rossi, “The Beautiful Man”

My recovery was hastened with the help of Luciano Rossi, who was recovering from rotor-cuff surgery. The ice and snow of winter of 2003 made it difficult for us to take daily walks, so we became mall rats. Having undergone CABG twelve years earlier in a bleak wintry December 1991—only age 38—Luciano encountered the same problems back then, and offered to drive me to the malls. I learned much about healing others from his generosity, and cannot thank Luciano enough.

Once, Luciano was working for us in hot weather when he apologized when he took off his shirt to cool off & wipe off the sweat. To reassure him, I said, “Luciano, you’re beautiful.” When I told this to Malachi, thereafter we referred to him as “The Beautiful Man.” Mama used to say, “Beauty is as beauty does.” a saying that certainly applies to Luciano.

Charles Neider

I am grateful to my late friend, Charles Neider, a writer on the Antarctica, a Twain scholar, in fact, a polymath of note, who read the original manuscript and advised me to put it onto a computer for easy editing, in order “to see what you have”. (What I saw I didn’t like, and I have no doubt that he didn’t either, the old fox!)

Barbara Miller

I have followed his advice. I also thank Barbara L. Miller, *Secrétaire Par Excellence* at Rutgers University, where I taught for 35 years, for putting it on the computer, and for her encouragement. Finding resonances in these pages with her childhood and life, she told me *Carl, this is about everyone who lived in those times.*

Childhood Is What Everyone Has To Overcome

Well, I hope not everybody had to endure what we did, but then, there are myriad kinds of deprivation, and many had it far worse. In this regard, see Chapter 69, especially, e.g., Justin Kaplan and Anne Bernays, who overcame not poverty but wealth! In this regard, see Geoffrey Thurley’s remark concerning *the advantages of not having had an advantageous childhood*, taken from his “Confessions of a Hooligan,” on **T2**, the title page to Part II. *Childhood is what everyone has to overcome, regardless of social status.* But Mark Twain said it better:

Your parents made you what you are, but it is your fault if you stay that way.

How's that for grabbing credit for what everyone already knows? Ha-ha. By the way, if you look up "Ha-ha" in the dictionary you might find something that will surprise you. Besides being an ejaculation, it's a noun denoting a device that preserves scenic landscape, an invisible barrier, most often a moat, a walled ditch, or hedge that keeps the cattle from escaping. The point is that it springs up on you as you approach it. Ha-ha!¹

Patricia Barr's Empathy

Patricia ("Patty") Barr, another friend on the Rutgers University Staff who read the manuscript, told me that she too cried bitter tears over her own sorrows and hardships in growing up in a suburb of Pittsburgh that this memoir recalled to her. At coffee times in Barbara Miller's she regaled us with hilarious stories from her life. I think she told them to keep from crying, an example of true grit. I deeply admire her.

Barbara Miller and "The Road to Wellville"

Barbara Miller's was reared by her grandparents in Michigan, and never knew her birth parents, while Patty grew up in poverty in Pittsburgh. However, Barbara had the inestimable advantage of growing up in Battle Creek Michigan, next to the farm of the inventor of dry cereal, Kellogg, whom she knew, whose passion for health was the model for the 1993 novel by "The Road to Wellville", by T. Coraghessan Boyle, and the 1994 film based on it.

I also am indebted to Barbara for putting this book on the Computer, using AMSTEX, a language she pioneered the use of at Rutgers University. In addition, she did the same for my book of poems, "The Seduction of Hummingbirds," which came out in late 2004.

Like Patty Barr, Barbara's encountered much sadness in her life, besides not knowing her parents, her husband, and a daughter died within years of each other. Once when I

¹ Not to be confused with Haw-Haw. William Joyce, known as "Lord Haw-Haw" was charged in London with high treason, June 18, 1945 for his English-language wartime broadcasts on German radio. He was hanged in January 1946. Thus, Haw-Haw was no joke! I wonder why the severity of his punishment contrasted with that of the American called "Tokyo Rose"? (See the Index at Tokyo Rose) A well-meaning friend urged me to cut out the "Ha-Has" that I put here and there in the text, until I pointed out that a no less a writer than Kurt Vonnegut sprinkled "Slaughter House Five: with his "Hi-Hos."

told her how “spunky” she was in overcoming this, she said, “Why that’s what they called me while I was growing up!”

Barbara Mastrian: Another Barbara at Rutgers

Another Barbara at Rutgers, who added to the festivities at Thanksgiving, Birthdays, Christmas, and Halloween, is Barbara Mastrian. Like Barbara Miller, and Patty Barr, she did much to make life enjoyable on these and other occasions, including frequently bringing an Italian coffee cake.

Dick Macke, Classmate and Frat Brother

In May 2003, along with four others, I was inducted into the Hall of Distinguished Alumni at Holmes High School, my Alma Mater, and I owe it to my long-time friend, Dick Macke. Dick is also an alumnus of Holmes, graduating in 1947, two years after me, and a frat brother at the University of Kentucky, where we both graduated in 1951. Dick went to a great deal of trouble to nominate me, and to provide the selection committee with my *Curriculum Vita* and endorsement letters from my colleagues at the University of Kentucky, where I matriculated, and other supporting documents. What a friend! When my brother Fred saw Dick at a reunion of the class of 1947, Dick told me that Fred was trying to proselyte him for me, and that he told Fred that he was “preaching to the converted.” So I have two brothers to thank for this signal honor.

Frank Duff, Classmate and Frat Brother

In addition to Dick Macke and Fred, I also thank Frank Duff, the Vice President of our class at Holmes, his wife Phyllis, Dick’s wife Joyce, and my wife, Molly Sullivan, for joining me at the celebration at the Hall of Distinction prior to the presentation of the Award preceding the graduation of Holmes High Schools 149th Class. While there Frank told me the anecdote about “Doc” Coker, which I have recorded in Chapter 44. As a curiosity, Frank also joined the Lambda Chi Alpha Fraternity at the University of Cincinnati, which we both attended in 1947-1948. After a semester or two off, I returned to my Alma Mater, University of Kentucky, while Frank graduated from UC.

Mary Ann, June, Walt, Gus, George, Cline and Dick

I was touched by my Holmes’ classmates Mary Ann Pingel Unkraut, June McCoy Parsell, Walter Waymeyer, Gus Berger, George Ries, and Cline Duff, Frank’s brother in the class of 1947, the same class as Dick, for their e-mail congratulations, and for refreshing my

memory about long-forgotten events. These include: George's reminiscences about working at the United Cigar store in Cincinnati with Frank, me, and others; an eye-opening video that Mary Ann took of a Reunion Luncheon on October 20, 2002; some photographs Fred e-mailed me; Walt Waymeyer's five-page letter of January 25, 2005 on his Germanic origins, his family's (printers and lithographers) trade in Cincinnati; details Walt sent me about "The Island Queen," Coney Island, and much more than I incorporated into the text often without specifying the source, e.g., that he and Jack Fightmaster played in the Kentucky Active Militia Band on the Ferris Wheel, and that he played on Clyde Trask's band at Moonlight Gardens, both at Coney Island.

I am grateful to Dick Macke, also, for sending me his own memoir of that era, "You Were There", proof reading parts of the manuscript, and lending me his expertise as Managing Editor of the Cincinnati Enquirer for forty some-odd years, and of *The Holmespun*, the Holmes High School's student newspaper.

Joy Deborah Kinsburg and her Daughter Ariela Marks

A good deal of this memoir is about another friend, the late Joy Deborah Marks, née Kinsburg. We have been friends since first grade in Fifth District School, were in a play together in the third grade—and wouldn't you know?—we became the best of friends in High School. I squired her to the Senior Prom, and we spent a memorable overnight together with many others of our Holmes High School class of 1945 on a moonlit lake in Ryland, a suburb of Covington. After I was drafted, her many letters sustained me while I was in the US Navy in 1945-1946. *She was my most faithful pen pal!* (No pun intended!) I was deeply grieved when her daughter, Ariela Marks, sent me the sad news of her passing on August 16, 2003. I thank her also for sending me information on Joy's marriage to her father Joseph, and of his passing, and for her kindly permitting me to include two of the many letters that Joy sent to me while I was in the US Navy, 1945-1946. (See Chapter 70.) Finally, I thank Ariela for her encouragement, "Carl, Do not despair!" when I despaired about ever recapturing "lost time," à la Proust. Whereupon, in an act of inestimable friendship, she pitched in and proofread the entire manuscript for me. I cannot thank her enough.

Help From Family . . .

I owe many debts to: Molly, Zeno, Japheth, Malachi, and Ezra for patiently explaining the use of the computer in compiling this document; to Japheth and Dr. Jhilam Iqbal, my daughter-in-law (Malachi's wife), for converting from Amstex, which Barbara Miller used, to Word, i.e., a language suitable for this edition, and for other improvements, e.g., Jhilam for the graphics for the Faith Family Tree, and help in formatting the document;

to Ezra for compiling a PDF disc over Thanksgiving 2004 for use in a preliminary edition for private circulation. I also thank my brother Fred to thank for sending me a long forgotten photograph of the family on the occasion of my leave from the Navy at Christmas 1945, and for regaling me with many forgotten stories of growing up together. Thanks also to my second cousin Lewis Elliott, Marie and Cletus Elliot's son, for e-mailing me upon request the Foster Family Tree, which may be found following the Faith Family Tree. (See the Table of Contents.) I also am indebted to my nephew Mark Faith for his kindness in sending me Lewis' e-address. (Marie was the daughter of Aunt Irene (Foster) and Simon Perdew.)

. . . And Others

A large number of classmates and friends have helped me proof read this book, most notably Ariela Marks, Walt Waymeyer, Fred Faith, and Molly Sullivan, who proofed the entire book. I thank Dick Macke, and also Mary Ann Unkraut (N.B.), who undertook a seemingly endless task. I also thank Alice Calaprice, editor of "The New Quotable Einstein, for her helpful suggestions, and several additions, to the Albert Einstein, and Anne Frank entries in the Index and Glossary, and Trisha Brundage of Holmes High School, and Betty Lee Nordheim, Covington and Holmes Historian, for their help. (See the Index and Glossary.)

Was Mama a "Jewish Mother?"

There is a joke about a Jewish mother bragging about "my son, the doctor," but of course, this is a universal trait, e.g., my mother was also a "Jewish," mother in this sense.² She exulted in my Ph.D., and did everything to encourage me, "Ad astra per aspera", i.e., "to

² There are countless jokes about mothers, etc. One I like best is about Jewish mothers is a one-liner: Telegram to her son: "Start worrying, details to follow." In every sense I can think of, Mama fit the bill. See, for example, **Dan Greenburg's** hilarious book, "How to be a Jewish Mother," or even the excerpt in "The Best of Modern Humor." Greenburg gives step-by-step instructions.

Here's one from a **Mike Nichols** and **Elaine May** skit: Son: "Mom, how are you?" Mom, "Starving!" S: "Why don't you eat?" M: "I've been waiting three days for you to call?" S: "Three days without food—Mom, this makes me feel terrible, really bad!" M: "Son, if you knew how happy that makes me feel. I only hope it's true!"—told to me by **Bill Gregory** on 12/02/97, and presented here shortened. . Also see Philip Roth's take on Jewish mothers, and quotes by Gary Shteyngart in "To the Reader: An Introduction," **R.** Another Jewish joke: A goy asks a rabbi, "Why do Jews always answer a question with a question?" Rabbi: "And where is it written that one cannot answer a question with a question?" Also see at Jewish Mother, at Guilt, and at Jewish Jokes, in the Index and Glossary.

the stars through effort”. She saved every newspaper article about me, my graduation from Holmes High School, from the University of Kentucky, when I obtained the Ph. D. in Mathematics from Purdue, and later, a Fulbright Postdoctoral Scholarship to Heidelberg. And before me, my brother Eldridge was the “guiding light” of the family, who worked his way through college, and became an outstanding chemist specializing in sulfa drugs, which were the drug of choice before the discovery of penicillin. However, both Molly and I owe our lives to penicillin, as we relate later on.

Are We “Jewish” Parents?

As a matter of fact, I am a bit of a “Jewish father,” and my wife, Molly, is a “Jewish mother,” since two of our sons, Japheth and Ezra have Ph.D.s from the U. of California, Berkeley (in mathematics and atmospheric chemistry, respectively, while one daughter-in-law, Jhilam Iqbal, Malachi’s wife, has a Ph. D. from Fordham in “Economies of Third World Countries” (“My daughter-in-law, the Doctor”), and another daughter-in-law, Simi Hoque, has two master’s degrees (in civil engineering and architecture), and is a year away from finishing her Ph.D. in architecture at the U. of California, Berkeley.

To make the analogy more complete, Molly was a thesis away from her Ph.D. in classics at the U. of Texas, when she had to leave because the Classics Department fired five female TAs, and she never went back to graduate school. Furthermore, the aforementioned late Dr. Henry Wood, the birth father of our sons, Zeno, Japheth, Malachi, and Ezra, was the only child of Jewish immigrants, Paula and Solomon Wood, from Eastern Europe. Henry attended *three* (!) Ivy League Colleges, Harvard, Yale, *and* Columbia University, where he received the Ph. D. in Classics. Henry’s father was named Schoenholz (Schönholz) before entering Ellis Island, and, as our eldest son, Zeno, found out, he is listed there as entering the country as that. At Ellis Island, Schönholz, German for “Beautiful Wood,” was changed to plain Wood, the patronymic of our four sons. (Zeno’s two middle names, “Denny Solomon,” are after his maternal and paternal grandfathers. When I suggested that he and his brothers adopt Sullivan for their surname because all of their surviving relatives are Sullivans, Malachi said, “I like Wood, it is short and blunt.” (I refrain from the obvious wisecrack!)

My Daughter, Heidi, Age 15, Saved Two Princeton University Students . . .

In the winter of 1970, Heidi saved two ice-skating Princeton University undergraduates from drowning when they fell through the ice on Lake Carnegie across from our backyard where the Millstone flows into Stony Creek. Heidi, on ice-skates and just 15 years old, pushed our upside-down metal rowboat across the ice, and leveraged the boat so the two

floundering students could grab the towline, and pull themselves up. Heidi's friend, Ann Whitehall, ran to the house to call the police for help, and they bundled the boys into a shower, where they warmed up. They were understandably crying over the ordeal, according to the Princeton Packet. When her mother, Mickey, and I came home afterwards, we were terribly frightened by the flashing red lights of the police cars, but grateful to learn that no one was harmed. Thereafter I had a deeper appreciation of the capabilities of teenagers. *No one I know has ever done as great as what she did that day in saving the lives of two young men.*

. . . And Receives the Red Cross Certificate for Heroism

I never knew anyone who did more for humanity by saving two lives than Heidi. Her bravery was recognized by the American Red Cross, which presented her with a certificate for heroism. Only one of the two students attended the presentation of the Red Cross, because the other was reportedly too upset to relive the experience. The presentation created quite a stir in the community, and ten years afterwards people who met me asked if I was the father of the girl who saved two Princeton students from drowning. This is how I became famous: *I was Heidi's father.*

Ahem: Heidi is Inducted into The Rutgers U. Sports Hall of Fame!

In February 2003, while I was still recovering, Heidi was inducted into the Rutgers University Sports Hall of Fame, in *two* sports, field Hockey, and Lacrosse. The bronze plaque was engraved with the lengthy list of her exploits as a pioneer in women's sports in her years at Rutgers, 1973-1977.

June McCoy Parsell and Ariela

I am grateful to June McCoy Parsell, another Holmes High School Classmate of 1945, for taking the lead in contacting Joy's uncle, Bernie Marks, in Cincinnati, who kindly gave June Joy's address in Jerusalem, where we sent our letters. I am grateful to Ariela not only for her kindness in responding, but also for her friendship in writing to me about Joy's last years, during which Joy and I had lost contact with each other. She also conscientiously, I might add painstakingly, proofed much of the text, leading to a clearer understanding of things. Her caring so much about her mother's legacy reinforced my desire that this book be meaningful and valuable to others, other than family and relatives.

Mary Ann Pingel Unkraut and Dick Macke

I am deeply grateful to Mary Ann Unkraut for under taking the task of “Photographs, Maps, and Documents” editor, and for scanning them and their captions into the text file for Xlibris. In addition, she contributed photographs of her own, e.g., the Holmes High School Class of 1945 Ensemble Photograph, and the photographs of the VJ Day Celebration. Thanks, too, to Dick Macke for the annotated photograph of the VE celebration. Both celebrations were in Fountain Square in Cincinnati. Mary Ann also searched the Internet for lyrics of many, many songs that appear in this book. When I offered recompense for her services, she refused saying, *We are friends, aren’t we?* Well, some things go way beyond the call of friendship, don’t they? Both Mary Ann, and Dick corrected many errors in the text. In criminal terminology, they “aided and abetted me.” (While writing *per se* isn’t a crime, perhaps the way I write is!)

What I said about Ariela’s caring can also be said about Mary Ann and Dick, who often told me outrageous lies about its “best seller” potential. Personally, I think it could be marketed as a non-narcotic sleep-inducer. (But how to persuade people to take their “medicine” would be a problem.)

Navy Pals: Glenn Fitkin, Jack Seibert, and Claude Lynch, Jr.

One of the documents that Mary Ann scanned is a letter from Glenn L. Fitkin, a navy buddy of mine at Great Lakes, Dearborn, and Corpus Christi (1945-1946). It’s dated May 20, 1988, and offers a corrective to a description I gave of his family’s wealth, relative to that of my family, as well as recalling several events that I had completely forgotten about. I thank him for the letter, and for permission to publish it here, as well as excerpts from several e-mails. I also thank Glenn for tracking down another navy buddy, Jack R. Seibert, who supported my estimate of the Fitkin’s relative financial position, which inspired Glenn to write a hilarious response to our families’ poverty! I am grateful to Jack for permission to publish excerpts from his e-mails.

Glenn also helped me track down Claude A. Lynch, Jr., who had the foresight to have the members of Great Lakes Company 1038 sign and write their addresses on the back of the Official Company Photograph in a chart indicating their position in the photograph. In addition Claude had the patience to type a copy, and send it to us. (It was easy for Glenn to find Claude—they were neighbors in Toledo!) This invaluable document and photograph Mary Ann also kindly scanned for me.

Lee Iacocca on Friends

My father use always used to say that when you die, and you've got five real friends, you've had a great life—Lee Iacocca, in “The Quotable Dad”

Blaise Pascal on Friends

If all men knew what others say of them, there would not be four friends in the world—Blaise Pascal.

Well, Pascal certainly *makes* the case for *keeping* your opinions to yourself. I have taken big chances here writing about my friends, who kindly still write to me. (No doubt they are kind to all idiots!)

Why the Lamb Loves Mary So

On the subject of love, which is the basis of all friendship, I think of Mary's teacher's reply to the class' query as to why the lamb followed her to school: *Why does lamb love Mary so? / Because Mary loves the lamb you know, / The teacher did reply.*

“I Would Be But Little Grateful, If I Could Say How Much”—Shakespeare. Finally acknowledgment is due my sweetheart and joy, Molly, for whom, as Heidi wrote in an e-mail spring 2003, my “love . . . is bottomless.” (Children are so perceptive.) But words cannot express the loyalty, passion, compassion, and the twenty-six years of happiness Molly has shared with me. I also owe her much for her proof reading the book on the computer, and for her unflagging encouragement. As Molly, a Latinista, will understand: *Amor vincit omnia, et tibi dabo fidelitatem semper.* (For non-Latinists: Love conquers all, and I give you my eternal fidelity.) *Ave Molly!*

PERMISSIONS

I wish to thank Farrar Strauss and Giroux, publishers of Czeslaw Milosz's “Road—Dog,” for permission to print a short essay “Ancestors,” pp. 206-207 of that book. See the Foreword on Ancestors (F). In addition, I wish to thank Ms. Victoria Fox of FSG for her kind offices in arranging for me to buy the license to publish Milosz's essay.

I already acknowledged Ariela Marks; in addition, I am grateful to her for permission to publish two of her mother's letters to me at the Navy Base on Ward Island, Corpus Christi, Texas, written on May 7 and May 14, 1946 near the end of my service in the Navy. These appear in Chapter 70, together with Afterword excerpted from a letter of July 7-8, 2004, from Ariela, also published here with her permission.

Permissions to excerpt a number of paragraphs from Glenn Fitkin's Autobiography, as well as excerpts from his, Jack Seibert's, Gus Berger's, Elaine Seligman Cole's, and e-mails are gratefully acknowledged. (These are fully indexed.)

Carl Faith
Princeton, NJ
January 2006

DEDICATIONS

1 To You Who Love Me and Whom I Love

*How often is it given to anybody to feel at one with a time, a place,
And a person or persons? Life often is
A parade of ambiguities offering half-choices that are met with half-decisions.
Yet there are times with friends, teammates, classmates, bunkmates
And pals in the Armed Forces
Or dating, and marrying your sweetheart
Fathering your child, and then seeing
Your children graduate, marry or have a baby—your grandchild!
When this miraculous trinity occurs:
You have met the right person or persons at the right place at the right time.
This is the way I feel about my family and friends, and, indeed, my life.*

*There is nothing so absurd as not
have been said by a philosopher—Cicero, 106-43 BC*

2 My Family

*So mayest thou live, 'till like a ripe fruit
Thou drop in thy mother's lap.
From "Paradise Lost" by John Milton*

In memory of Mama to whom I owe everything
And who is the inspiration for everything I ever did in academia
*I was, being human, born alone;
I am, being woman, hard beset;
I live by squeezing from a stone
The little nourishment I get.
From "Let No Charitable Hope", by Elinor Wylie*

To memory of Dad, whom I loved for his many endearing qualities

The child is father to the man—

William Wordsworth in “My Heart Leaps Up”

To Molly

My sweetheart wife and mother of our four sons—

Silence is the perfectest herald of joy: I were but little happy,

if I could say how much—

Shakespeare in Much Ado About Nothing, II, I, 319

To my delightful and witty mother-in-law, Dorothy Wilson George Sullivan,

And in memory of

Denny Owen Lindsay Sullivan, 1907-1997, father-in-law, a much
bemedalled Veteran of World War II, Sharpshooter and Europe
Campaign (two years), 1942-1945, in England, France, and Germany,
ending up in Hitler’s redoubt in the Alps: Bertchesgaden,—for blessing
me with their greatest gift and my treasure: Molly

To Fredrick (aka Tobey, Doodle) who taught me the meaning of brotherly love;

My sister-in-law Mary Corns Faith, a beautiful, loving soul;

And to the memory of: My giving, loving sister Louise,

who was my second mother;

And my learned brother Eldridge, who was my “guiding light”

In loving memory of Aunts Alice, Ethel, and Nona, Irene, Minnie, and Susie,

Who knew how to make children happy;

And Cousins Carrie Mae, Pauline, Bo, and Marie, Audry, Eva, Gertrude;

Bobby and “Sonny”

And to my Second Cousins Louis, Urban, and Eleanor,

For the love of my nieces and nephews, Kathryn Jean, Karen Louise,

Barbara, and Billy, Mark, Wayne, and Dick

For the love of my children, Heidi & Cindy,

My grandson, Cindy’s son, Michael

And Molly’s and my four sons Zeno, Malachi, Dr. Japheth, and Dr. Ezra Wood

Grown-ups never understand anything . . . children be . . . always and forever

explaining things to them—Antoine de Saint-Exupéry

For the love of my daughters-in law
 Jill Dowling, Dr. Jhila Iqbal, and Dr. Simi Hoque,
 For their enrichment of our lives with the gifts of themselves-and their love
 for our sons, Zeno, Malachi, and Ezra, and their love for each of our families
 And to Jill and Zeno, who on January 10, 2004 gave us the gift of life—Clio Lily
Amor vincit omnia—Virgil

3 Friends

For *mon ami* Dr. Frank Duff, my best friend in high school,
 pianist *par excellence*, Vice President Holmes High School Class of 1945,
 fraternity brother at University of Cincinnati (UC), Doctor of Philosophy,
 Columbia University, and Dean Emeritus at Illinois University at Urbana
 And to my other high school friends, Dr. Walter Waymeyer, Holmes
 High School Scholar, who wrote the music for our class song, played the
 trombone, and acted in our Class plays, and Doctor of Philosophy in
 Mechanical Engineering at UCLA
 Mary Ann Unkraut, née Pingel, *de facto* class historian, who lovingly kept
 track of classmates in the Holmes High School 60th Reunion Booklet and
 was Photograph Editor, Reader, and a Technical Adviser for this book,
 June Parsell, née McCoy, another of our class historians,
 And Dick Macke, Holmes High School Class of 1947, University of
 Kentucky (UK) Classmate of 1950 and UK fraternity brother to whom I owe
 the nomination and induction into
 The Holmes High School Hall of Distinction.

In memory of my childhood friend and Holmes High School sweetheart and
 Class of 1945 Valedictorian, Dr. Joy Deborah Marks, née Kinsburg,
 Whose intelligence and love shines throughout these pages—
Even after more than a half-century;
 And to her loving daughter Ariela Marks, whom Joy loved “beyond dimension,”
 Who reciprocated Joy’s love, & helped me so much with her family history.

And in memory of Cecil “Benny” Craig, our Class President,
 scholar, friend, and alter-ego,
 Barry “Rosie” O’ Grady, a longtime pal and outstanding athlete,
 World War and Korean War veteran, and Vietnam War bomber
 pilot with 300 missions

And to Lou Elva Oldham—a class spark plug
And unfailingly devoted and loving friend to many classmates.

Requiescant in Pace

And to all my friends and Classmates of Holmes High School Class of 1945
Whose friendships have meant so much to me, as shown in these
lovingly inscribed pages

And a salute to my Navy buddies Glenn L. (“GL”), Fitkin Jack R. (“JR”)
Seifert and Claude A. Lynch, Jr.,
And other mates in Company 1038, Great Lakes, August 14, 1945,
Radio Materiel Schools At Michigan City, Indiana, and Dearborn,
Michigan on River Rouge
Also in 1945

And Secondary School at Ward Island Navy Base, Corpus Christi, Texas
Until demobilization at Camp Wallace, Texas, August 1946

And to two longtime, helpful, friends at Rutgers University in New Brunswick:
Barbara L. Miller, who typed several books and many manuscripts for
me, and shared coffee and cookies while Patricia A. Barr
regaled us with hilarious jokes
Acted out between runs on the Xerox machine,
and both encouraged me
With their helpful readings of this book

And to the memory of Charles Neider, friend, neighbor,
and renown Mark Twain
Scholar who explored and wrote about the Antarctica, and many,
many other things

And to Luciano Rossi, voted Outstanding Athlete
Of Princeton High School’s Class of 1971,
a master builder and master craftsman,
Who helped me recover from a 2003 bypass operation,
And who taught me much about love of family
And his wife, Laura, and children, Luciano (“Lou”), Jr., and Nina
An all-star swimmer at Princeton High School
And his ninety year-old mother, his sisters and brothers
I nicknamed “Beautiful Man”

*Photographs and memories
Christmas cards you sent to me
All that I have are these—
To remember you . . .*

“Photographs and Memories,” Jim Croce (1943-1973), 1975

*If I could save time in a bottle, / The first thing I'd like to do,
Is to save every day 'till eternity passes away, / Just to spend them with you.
If I could make days last forever, / If words could make wishes come true,
I would save every day like a treasure, / And, then, again,
I would spend them with you.*

. . . .

*But there never seems to be enough time to do / Things you want to do—
Want to get by them—/ I looked around enough to know
You're the one I want to go through time with.
If I had a box just for wishes
And dreams that had never come true,
The box would be empty except for the memory
Of how they there were answered by you.*

*But there never seems to be enough time to do / Things you want to do—
Want to get by them—/ I looked around enough to know
You're the one I want to go through time with.*

“Time in a Bottle” by Jim Croce, 1975

*There's nothing left for me, / Of the days that used to be;
I live alone in memory / Among my souvenirs . . .*

“Among My Souvenirs”

Written in 1927 (the year of my birth)

By Laurence Wright and Edgar Leslie

*You keep coming back like a song,
A song that keeps saying remember;
That sweet used-to-be, that was once you and me,
Keeps coming back, like an old melody
The perfume of roses in May returns to my room in December.
From out of the past where forgotten things belong.
You keep coming back like a song*

“You Keep Coming Back Like a Song”—Irving Berlin, circa 1935-1938

FOREWORD ON ANCESTORS

By Czeslaw Milosz, Chief Seattle, Lewis Mumford and Primo Levi

Seek my face. Your face, Lord will I seek—Psalm 27

At 50, every man has the face he deserves—George Orwell, see Quotationary

Every man finds room in his face for all his ancestors—Ralph Waldo Emerson, Journal, 1850

Czeslaw Milosz on “Ancestors,”

“**T**o tell the truth, we should not exist. We, not any collective plural, just you and me. Let us use our imaginations to visualize for a moment the circumstances and conditions of the life of our parents, then our grandparents, then great grandparents, then further and further back. Even if among them all there happened to be wealthy individuals or men of privilege, the stench and filth in which they lived, as that was the rule, would have astonished us who use showers and toilets. What was even more certain was the presence among them of starvelings, for whom a piece of dry bread in pre-harvest time meant happiness. Our ancestors died like flies from epidemics, from starvation, from wars, and though children swarmed, for every twelve of them only one or two survived. And what strange tribes, what ugly snouts behind you and what, me bloody rites in honor of gods carved in the trunk of a linden tree! Back to those who are stalking through the undergrowth of a murky primeval forest with chipped stones for their only weapons, in order to split the skulls of their enemies. It would seem as if we had only parents and that’s all, but those other pre-pre-predecessors exist, and with them their afflictions, manias, mental illnesses, syphilis, tuberculosis, and whatnot, and do you know they do not continue on in you? And what was the probability that among the children of your great-great grand parents the one survived who would beget your ancestor? And what the probability that this would repeat itself in the next generation?

Altogether, a very slim chance that we would be born in these skins, as these, not other, individuals, in whom the genes met those of the devil knows what whores and oafs. The very fact that our species survived and even multiplied beyond measure is astonishing, for it had much against it, and the primeval forest full of animals stronger than humans may serve till now as a metaphor for man’s precarious situation—let us add viruses, bacteria, earthquakes, volcanic eruptions, floods, but also his own works, atomic

weapons and the pollution of nature. Our species should have disappeared a long time ago, and it is still alive, incredibly resistant. That you and I happen to be part of it should be enough to give us pause for meditation.”

—From “Road-side Dog,” by Czeslaw Milosz
“Ancestors,”¹

Chief Seattle about His People . . .

“We are two distinct races, and must rust ever remain so, with separate origins and separate destinies. There is little in common between us.

“To us the ashes of our ancestors are sacred and their final resting place is hallowed ground, while you wander far from the graves of your ancestors, and seemingly, without regret . . .

“Our dead never forget this beautiful world that gave them being. They still love its winding rivers, its great mountains, and its sequestered vales . . .

“Every part of this country is sacred to my people, every hillside, every valley, every plain and grove has been hallowed by some fond memory or some sad experience of my tribe. Even the rocks, which seem to lie dumb as they swelter in the sun along the silent seashore in solemn grandeur, thrill with memories of past events connected with the lives of my people.

“The very dust under your feet responds more lovingly to our footsteps than to yours, because it is the ashes of our ancestors, and our bare feet are conscious of the sympathetic touch, for the soil is rich with the life of our kindred”—From Renée Dubos’ “So Human an Animal,” p. 138; originally in John M. Rich’s “Chief Seattle’s Unanswered Challenge.” Dubos added the italics.

. . . And the Beasts

“What is man without the beasts? Of all the beasts were gone, man would die from a great loneliness of the spirit. For whatever happens to the beast soon happens to man. All things are connected,”—Chief Seattle in 1854; quoted in *Defenders of Wildlife Magazine*, summer issue of 2005.

¹ Compare René Dubois’ take on “The Biological Remembrance of Things Past,” Chapter 3 in his book, “So Human an Animal,” and the first section of Chapter 3, “The Genetic Record of Past Experiences.” Dubois is an advocate of evolution.

Lewis Mumford on Modern Man

“If man had originally inhabited a world as blankly uniform as a ‘high rise’ housing development, as featureless as a parking lot, as destitute as an automotive factory, it is doubtful that he would have a sufficiently varied experience to retain images, mold languages, or acquire ideals.”—From “The Myth of the Machine” by Lewis Mumford quoted in “So Human an Animal, p.174.

Primo Levi on the Meaning of Life

The conviction that life has a purpose is rooted in every fiber of man; it is a property of the human substance . . . men give many names to this purpose . . . —From “If This is a Man” by Primo Levi, chap. 7, p.77.

PROLOGUE

What's past is prologue.

William Shakespeare
in "The Tempest", II, i, 261

*Those who cannot remember the past
are condemned to repeat it.*

George Santayana,

Narration of Joseph Thomas Faith

The following is a narrative written by a great uncle of mine, Joseph Thomas Faith (1842—) to a newspaper, probably in, or near, Louisville, Kentucky.

Dear Editors:

Sometime last year you published in your paper reminiscences and historical facts, in this [*sic*!] McLean and Davis counties, which we though [*sic*] interesting. There were many things that took place in the early settings of our country that should not be lost. So by your permission, I will give some historical facts as I have had them related by the old people who have gone on to their reward.

William Faith, senior, was born in Virginia in the year 1775. His father moved to Kentucky when he was a child. He being a surveyer [*sic*] took up six hundred forty acres of land lying immediately below Bear Brass Creek on the Ohio River, which is now the city of Louisville. One day while surveying he was shot and killed by the Indians. His widow, becoming dissatisfied on the account of the maurauding [*sic*] bands of Indians, sold her land and returned to Virginia, I know not [where], but in the year of 1790, my grandfather the hero of this sketch, was in old Vienna Fort. (Allow me to digress a little time to say that it was very dangerous to hunt for game near the fort, so the hunters would go from fifteen to thirty miles from the forts to kill their game, for the Indians were always laying around the forts for the purpose of stealing, harass[ing] picking up any women or children that might unfortunately fall into their hands.)

About the year of 1790, Mr. Mucklemerry, Martin Vernada and my grandfather, Wm. Faith, went down near the mouth of the Green River to hunt and kill game for the Fort

Vienna. They arrived at their hunting ground on Sunday evening and went into camp for Sunday night. Just at daylight next morning, Mr. Mucklemerry, being an old and successful Indian Fighter, discovered they were surrounded by Indians. They succeeded [*sic*] in getting under the river bank near the water, and were trying to get a shot at the Indians above them, of whom they knew not the number. While they were in this position, the Indians fired down from the bank at them shooting Mr. Mucklemerry through the body and my grandfather in the shoulder. Mr. Vernada not knowing they were hurt advised them to swim the river as they were both expert swimmers, and make their way of escape as he could not swim he would have to take his chances with the Indians. They started into the water, and Mr. Mucklemerry exclaimed, "My God, Billie, I am a dead man," turned and fell at the water's edge.

There being a heavy fog on the river, my grandfather swam the river and made his way to the Red Bank, now the City of Henderson. Fever set in his wound and he lay hovering for quite awhile between life and death, but being young and vigorous, he finally recovered. The Indians managed to draw the fire of Mr. Vernada's gun, made a charge on him and captured him. After relieving him of gun and knife and all his fixtures that a hunter carried in these days, they tied him to a tree with his back to it in a sitting posture with rawhide throngs [*sic*]. They carried water to him in his hat and made signs to him that they would be gone about three days.

Mr. Vernada said that the Indians, of whom there were but two, were not out of sight before he was trying to get loose, which he succeeded [*sic*] in doing after quite a while. After he had freed himself from the thongs, he started to make his way back to Old Vienna. The weather became cloudy, and of course there were no roads in those days, and he became lost and bewildered in the interminable forest. After wandering for eleven days he succeeded in reaching the Fort where Hartford now stands. All that he had to eat for the eleven days that he was out was part of a possum's liver uncooked.

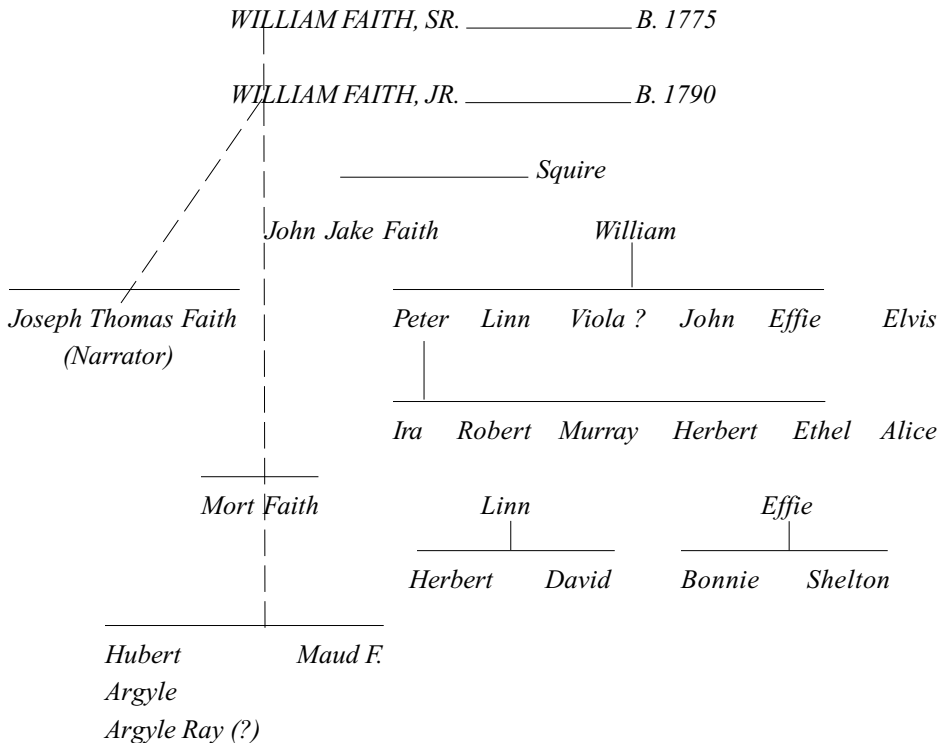
The two Indians after leaving Mr. Vernada, tied to the tree, started up toward Yellow Banks (Owensboro, Ky), came onto the trail of a hunter that had gone out from Yellow Banks to kill meat for his fort. They followed his trail and somewhere below Don Harbor they came upon him while he was dressing a deer that he had shot. After capturing him they tied him to a tree and gathered dry brush and piled about him. While setting fire to it, the two other men who were out hunting had been trailing the Indians, and came in sight. The Indians were so absorbed in their fiendish work that they did not know that an enemy was nigh until the report of deadly rifles, and the two Indians fell pierced by bullets.

The names of the three white men have slipped my mind. If any old settlers who read this remember them, we would be glad if they would furnish us with [the] same.

The End of the Letter

Some time last fall, Argyle Faith, from McLean County near the Davis County line stopped in the office and told me who he was, a grandson of Mort Faith. I promised to visit him, which I did sometime in November last year. While there I learned this little bit about the history of the Faith Family. This document was in the possession of old Aunt Jenni Waltrop, a connection. The older people over there knew Grandfather, Uncle John, and Jake Faith.

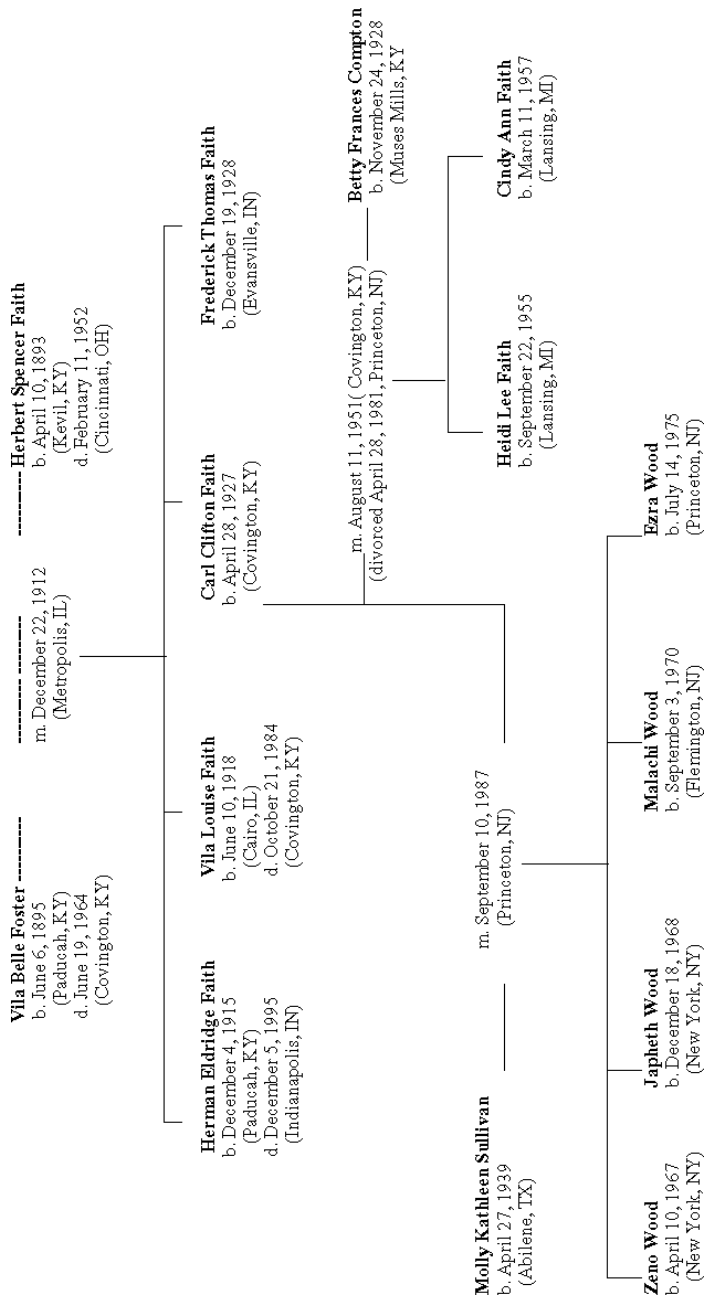
THIS IS THE WAY WE HAVE DOPED IT OUT¹



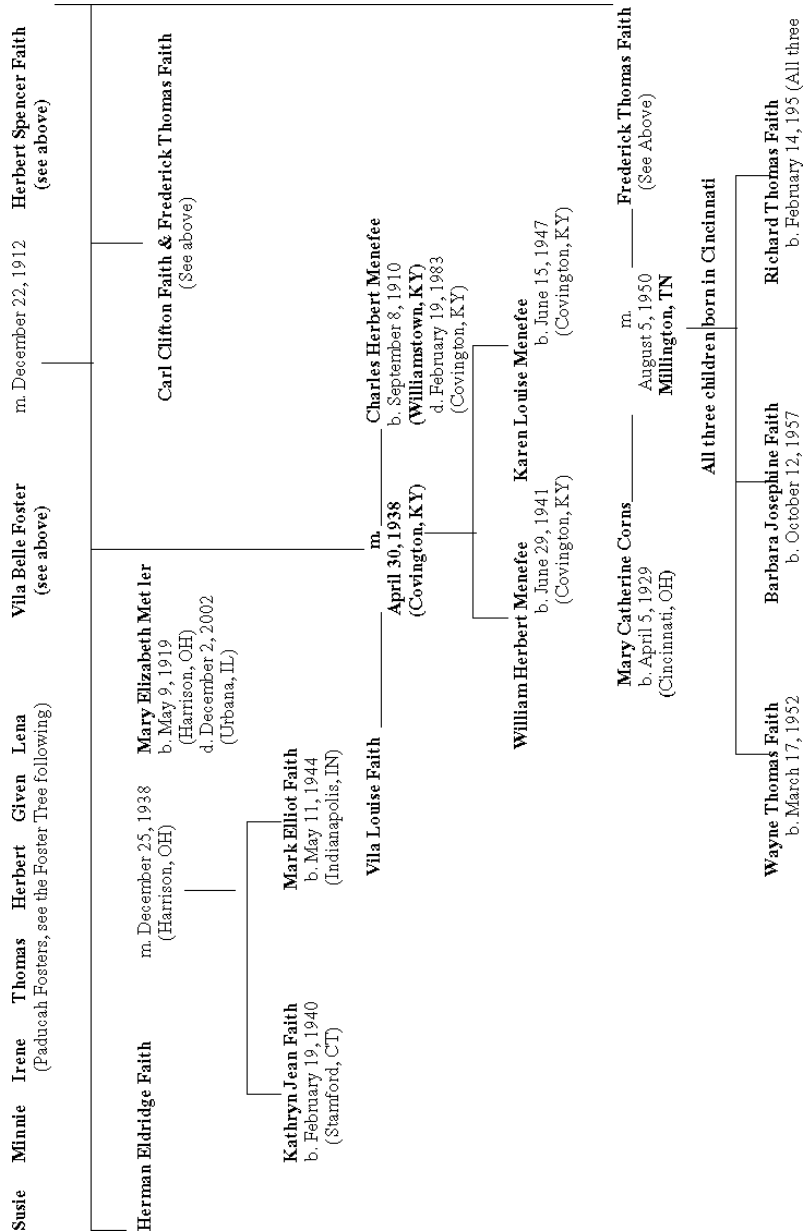
¹ I do not know who constructed this table originally, or who the “we” are, but I received this from my brother Eldridge. I have Dr. Jhila Iqbal, my daughter-in-law, to thank for this computer graphic.

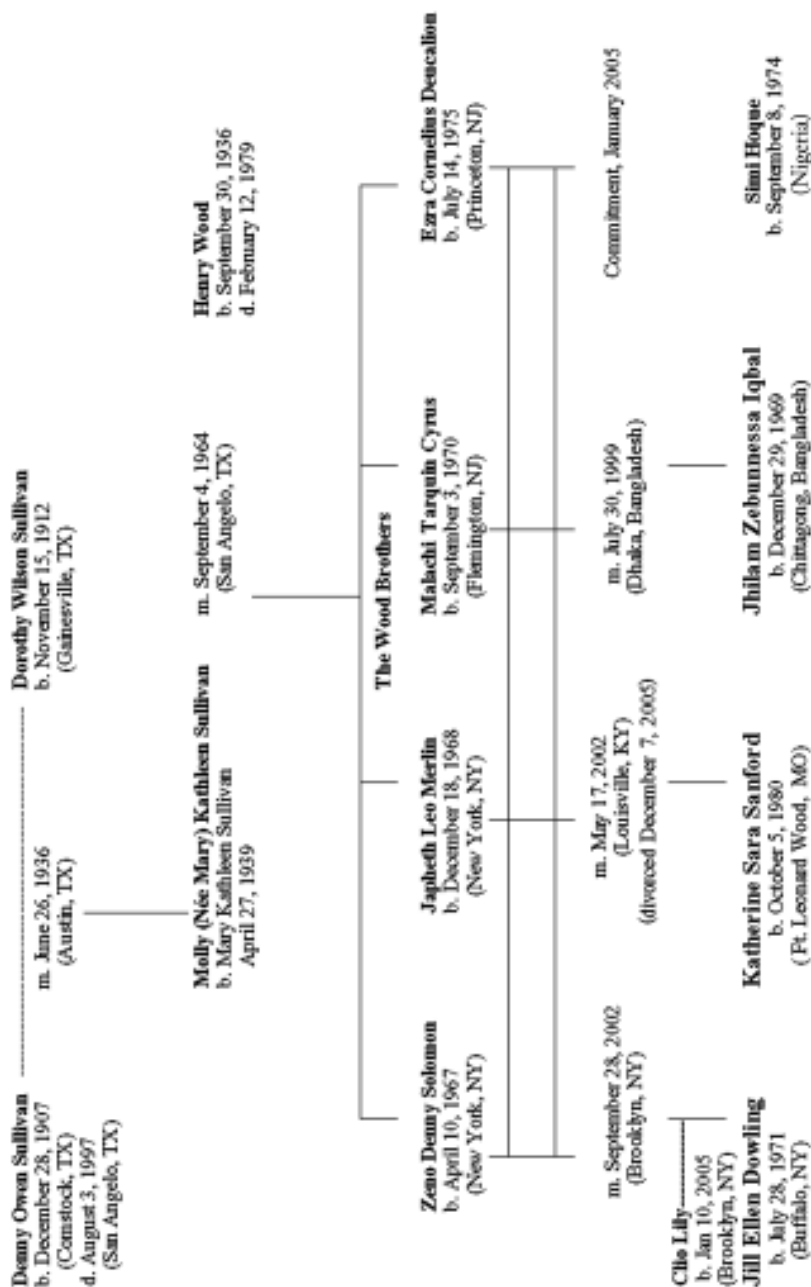
THE FAITH FAMILY TREE (CONTINUED)

The surname Faith is derived from Faithful, or Faithfull, a trustworthy person, according to the Oxford Dictionary of Surnames. The first recorded instance was the marriage of William Feythfull in Chichester, England in 1492. (Honestly!) Also see the Prologue.

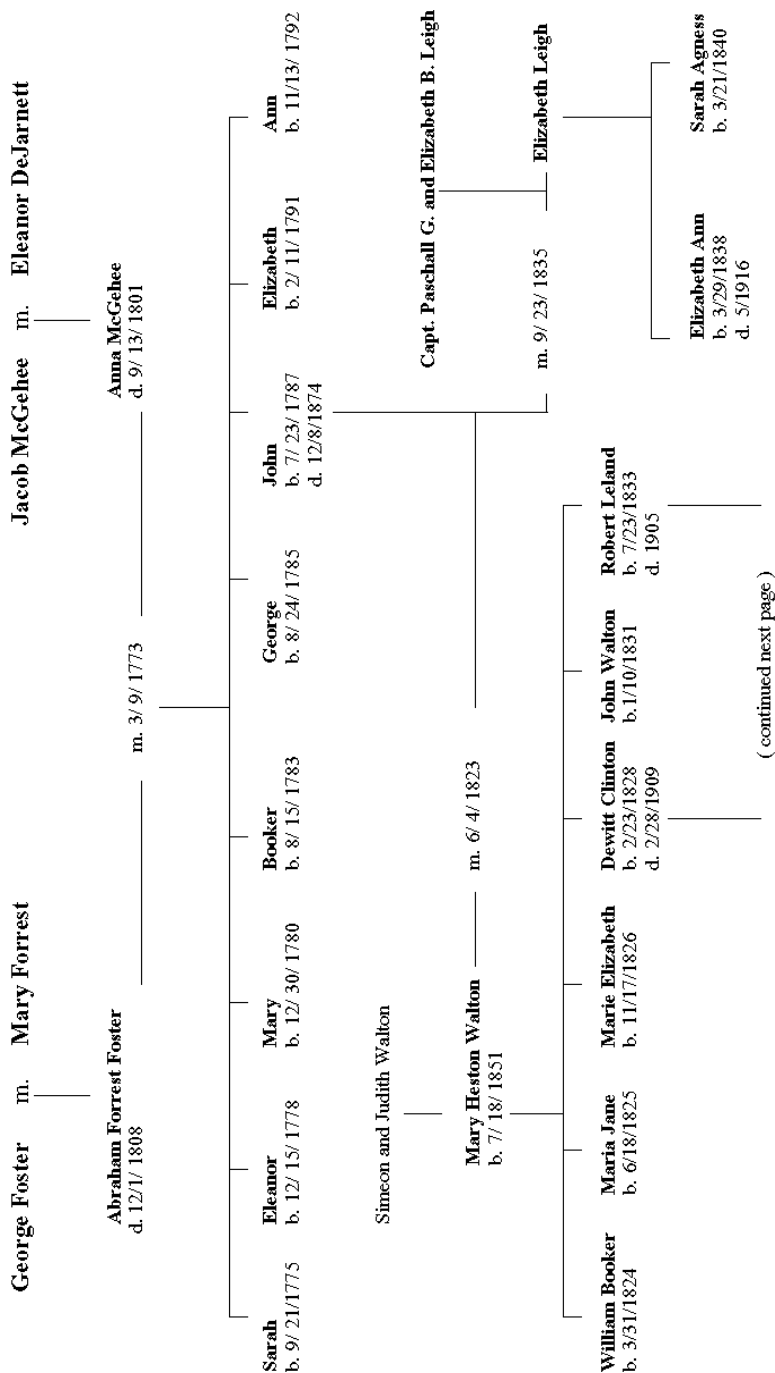


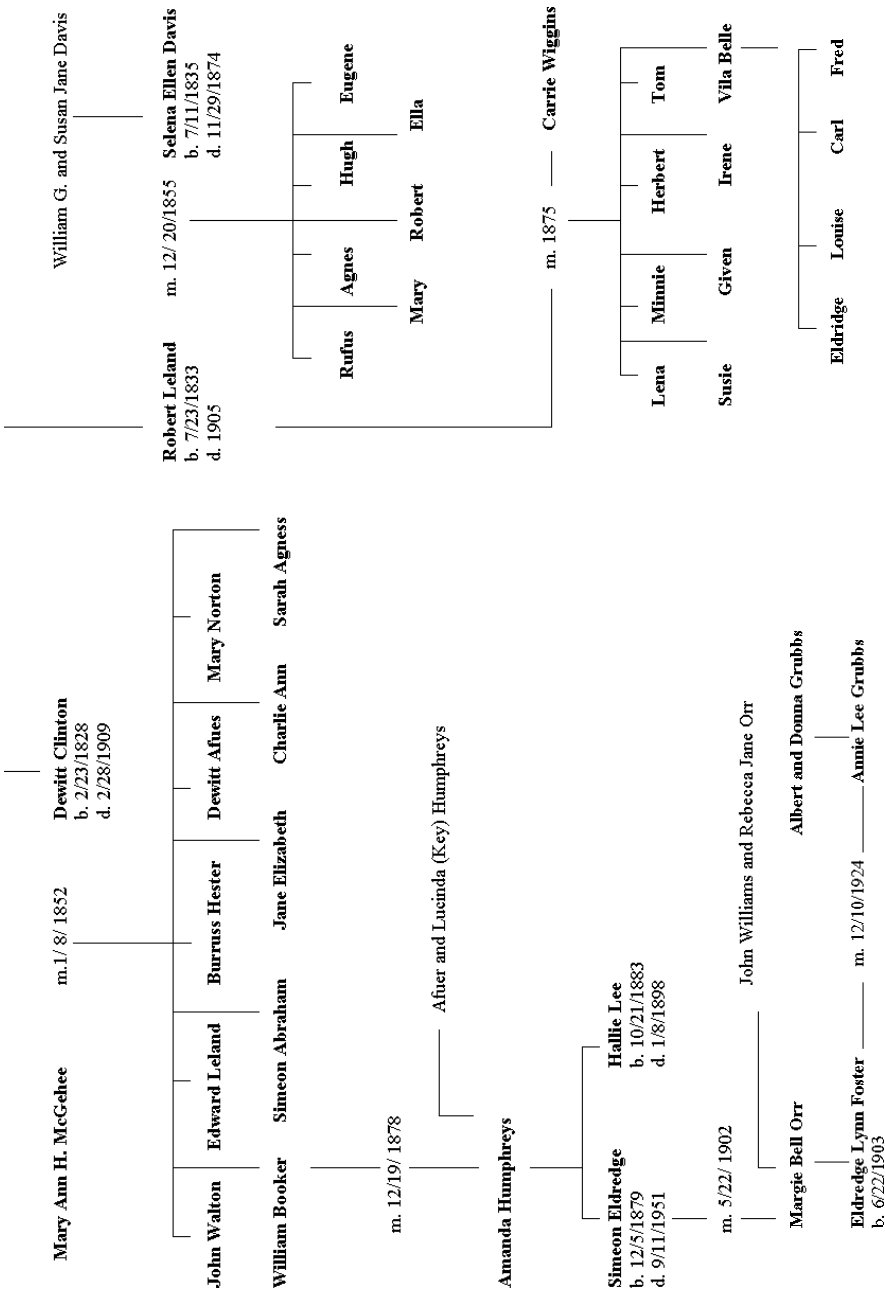
(The Woods brothers were adopted by Carl Faith on May 17, 1995, in Mercer County Court, Judge Karschman presiding. See second page below for their middle names. I think of this as a great occasion in my life—when these fine young men *adopted* me as well!)





FOSTER FAMILY TREE





(Continued in the Faith Family Tree preceding.)

READER'S INTRODUCTION

Man makes no structure that outlives a book,

Anonymous

In my childhood, there were real wolves at the door.

Now I spend my time shooting at phantoms—The author, N.B.

Individuality of expression is the beginning and end of all art,

Johannes Wolfgang Goethe, Faust, II, Proverbs in Prose

The conviction that life has a purpose is rooted in every fiber of man—Primo Levi, “If This Is a Man, ch. 7.

After a Quarter of a Century . . .

Started in September 1979—more than a quarter of century ago, this book will exhibit many changes of style and mood. I very much doubt that a commercial publisher would print it, or make any money on it if it did. In any event, I do not want an editor to blue pencil it—not for nothing is a publisher, e.g., Xlibris, called a “Vanity Press.” (Xlibris, however, prefers the moniker “self-publishers.”) It may come as no surprise that many first works were self-published, and, in fact, self-publishing of the early works of poets was often the rule rather than the exception.

. . . You Can't Tell the Players Without a Scorecard

This book is not for the mythical “average reader.” It is a memoir of my personal odyssey, and that of my family, relatives, and friends; over the years, I have added to it for the reasons I explained in the Preface. As I learned more about the history of Cincinnati and its sister-city, Covington, about the Faith and Foster family trees, about my friends in Covington schools and Navy buddies, naturally I was able to write more. The complexity of these relationships, and the intertwining them, stretches over 70 chapters, some only a page or two, in length, and a few as long as eight pages. This, and the length of time required to get here, necessitated a thorough index. As the hawkler shouts out at baseball games, “You can't tell the players without a score-card,” so it is with this book. Not even I can say in which chapters many topics might occur. I therefore hope that you will not be put off by the seemingly countless entries under “Carl,” even if it seems that I indexed

every thought I ever had! Duh! As one columnist (James Reston) said of the New York Times during a prolonged strike by its printers, “How can I know what I think if I can’t read it?”.

Reston’s remark is far from being merely facetious. It hints at the basis of knowing, and the fact that most people do not know, and *can’t know*, themselves, if they do not read themselves. A phrase that pertains to this that I recall is: “Do you read me?” How many people can honestly answer that question in the affirmative, replacing me with “yourself? That is not to say that every one who picks up a book is going to read it, however little or well indexed it may be. Three quotations pertain to this, two of which appear on the Title page—the first by Emerson, and the second by the ubiquitous Mr. Anonymous: *’Tis the good reader that makes the good book (Emerson) . . . Man makes no structure that outlives a book.*” A student, or colleague, said to T. S. Eliot, “We can forget about the older writers, we know ever so much more than they.” And Eliot replied, “Yes, and it is they we chiefly know!” And again, with Flaubert: “There is a part of everything, which is unexplored.” In this book, I have tried to explore my life, and the lives of those whom I have encountered.

“A Book Without an Index is Like a Compass Without a Needle”

Most commercial publishers bent on cutting costs dispense with both indices *and* footnotes. The claim that these wear down the reader; in any case, they wear down the author. Consequently, many, too many, authors refuse the onerous task. But I find it an invaluable entry into a book, unlike a novel, which one does not expect to read cover-to-cover.

Needless to say, based on my own reading, I quite agree with the analogy given in the paragraph heading, or maybe a book without an index is like looking for a needle in a haystack. The fact that there are 70 chapters written over a quarter of a century meant that in editing I could not remember where a topic or phrase appeared without the index. See the next-to-last section “Twenty-five Years Later” below.

The Index & Glossary of this book runs about 100 pages, which is about 25% of the book, which runs over 600 pages, counting the front material and photographs. As of November 30, 2006, the size of the file for this book on my “HP Pavilion m×75” computer was 16.6 megabytes (MB). Of this, the Photographs’ file accounts 11.6 MB, or about 70% of the computer space needed for the entire book (so the Chinese proverb “One picture is worth more than a thousand words” holds true in cyberspace.) This means the text is 5.0 MB, while the Index and Glossary is 1.24 MB which is about 25% of the text, and 7.5% of the computer space for the book. Because of its size the Index & Glossary appears in a separate volume, entitled “The Sun Shines Bright 2.”

Sacco and Vanzetti

As I mentioned elsewhere, the year of my birth was commemorated by the 60 homeruns hit by the immortal **Babe Ruth**. Sadly, it also marked the executions on August 23 of that year of **Nicola Sacco**, a shoemaker, and **Bartolomeo Vanzetti**, a fish peddler, both Italian immigrants and theoretical anarchists who never threw a bomb. Nevertheless, in 1921, they were arrested and charged with a murder and a holdup (of a shoe factory) in South Braintree, Massachusetts. According to **Zinn's "Voices of a People's History of the United States"** p.331:

"Their trial took place before a jury contemptuous of foreigners and a judge who referred to them privately as 'anarchist bastards,' in an atmosphere filled with wartime patriotism . . . They were found guilty and sentenced to death.

During the next six years their case became famous throughout the world, but all appeals, pointing to tainted evidence and judicial bias, were turned down. A special panel consisting of the president of Harvard, the president of MIT, and a retired judge affirmed their guilt. The prominent journalist Heywood Broun wrote bitterly, "What more can the immigrants from Italy expect? It is not every person who has a president of Harvard University throw the switch for him. If this is a lynching, at least the fish peddler and his friend will die at the hands of men in dinner jackets or academic gowns."

Vanzetti wrote to his son in April 1927, the very month in which I was born. "If it had not been for this thing, I might have lived out my life talking at street corners to scorning men. I might have died unmarked, unknown, a failure. Now we are not a failure. This is our career and our triumph. Never in our full life could we hope to do such work for tolerance, for justice, for man's understanding of man, as now we do by accident."

And in his speech to the court on April 9, 1927, he said: "This is what I say: I would not wish to a dog or to a snake, to the most low and misfortunate creature of the earth—I would not wish to any of them what I have had to suffer for things that I am not guilty of. I am suffering because I am a radical and indeed I am a radical; I have suffered because I am an Italian, and indeed I am an Italian; I have suffered more for my family and for my beloved than for myself; but I am so convinced to be right that you can only kill me once but if you executed me two times, and I could be reborn two other times, I would live to do what I have done already."

Sacco's Letter To His Son, Dante

"Help the weak ones that cry for help, help the prosecuted and the victim . . . they are the comrades that fight and fall . . . for the conquest of the joy of freedom for all the poor workers. In this struggle for life you will find more love and you will be loved."

Another Sacco Named Jack Helped Liberate Dachau, *Where the Birds Never Sing*

Jack Sacco was an Alabama farm boy who, as part of the 92nd Signal Battalion in Patton's Third Army, was among the first 230 American troops to enter the infamous Dachau concentration camp, just 12 miles northwest of Munich. Nothing could have prepared these men for the horrors they encountered, and which Sacco's son, Jack, related along with never before published photographs in *Where The Birds Never Sing, The True Story of the 92nd Signal Battalion and the Liberation of Dachau*, told from the perspective of the father.

Fleming Discovers Penicillin (1928)

Alexander Fleming in Britain accidentally discovered penicillin in 1928, the year after I was born, and the year my brother, **Fred**, was born. However, the first American patient whose life was saved by penicillin was **Anne Sheafe Miller**, who made medical history in March 1942 at New Haven Hospital. She had been hospitalized for a month with a streptococcal infection, slipping in and out of consciousness, with temperatures spiking to 107 degrees! She was treated with everything then in general use, including sulfa drugs, blood transfusions, and surgery, but all failed. In desperation, the doctors obtained and administered a small amount of the then obscure drug with dramatic results; her temperature dropped overnight, and by the next day she was no longer delirious. Soon, she was eating full meals.

Molly And I Both Were Treated by Penicillin in 1945

Coincidentally, Penicillin helped keep alive my wife, **Molly Sullivan**, and me, way back in 1945, when **Molly** had pneumonia, which didn't respond to sulfa drugs, and I came down with scarlet fever with temperatures above 106 degrees at the Navy Radio Technology in Michigan City, Indiana. Penicillin is one of the great boons for humanity in history, and everybody alive then and since probably is indebted to **Sir Alexander Fleming**, who discovered its therapeutic possibilities accidentally when some bread spores landed on a Petri dish in his lab and killed bacteria growing there.

Coincidentally, **Primo Levi** contacted scarlet fever Jan. 11, 1945 in a concentration camp near Auschwitz, and was being treated with sulfa drugs when the Russians liberated the camp. See the last chapters of "If This Is Man," his memoir of his days in the concentration camp.

Dr. Jasper Herbert Kane's Deep-Tank Fermentation Process

Up to 1943 penicillin was made in single doses, and was not widely available to the general public. This all changed in March 1943, when **Dr. Jasper Herbert Kane, 1903-2004**, a biochemist who graduated from Brooklyn Polytechnic University in 1928, working at the Brooklyn plant of **Charles Pfizer & Co.** developed a deep-tank fermentation process that used molasses rather than refined sugar. In 1942, he got the idea that this deep-tank mold fermentation method could also make penicillin, streptomycin and other antibiotics in large quantities. His idea initially received a cool reception because of the risks that **Pfizer** was being asked to take. *At the time, hundreds of Allied soldiers were dying daily from infections [not to mention civilians!], and desperate measures were called for.* **Pfizer** bought an ice-making plant in Brooklyn, and **Dr. Kane's** idea was put to test in 1943 in a round-the-clock race against time. The plant opened in March 1943, and produced more than 45 million units of broad-spectrum antibiotics by the end of the year.

"In Search of Penicillin"

In a book by that title, the author **Davis Wilson** wrote: "It is the biggest single failing of the myth about penicillin that it ignores [**Dr. Kane's**] technological break-through of the deep fermentation that was every bit as vital to the successful development of penicillin as any of the more dramatic laboratory work." (This, and the above paragraph, was paraphrased from the Nov. 20, 2004 New York Times Obituary of **Dr. Kane** written by **Wolfgang Saxon**. My emphasis and the insertion in square brackets.) Consequently, most of us owe a great debt also to **Dr. Kane**, Pfizer, as well as **Fleming**, and countless doctors and others, who facilitated Penicillin's therapeutic use.

Hoovervilles:

During the 1930's depression, camps were built on the edge of towns to house the dispossessed and destitute, much the same way as the homeless today encircle the world's great cities, e.g., New York, Paris, Rome, London, Tokyo, *et al*, or, in the subways, under bridges, and in alleys. According to my dentist friend, Dr. Jack McNeil, even in swamps, e.g., near his hometown, Gloucester City, New Jersey, four miles south of Camden on the Delaware River, or any other uninhabited place they could find to live. "In 1933 and 1934, millions of Americans, unmoored by the Depression were drifting up and down the roads, families sleeping in their cars, living in what were known . . . as 'tourist

camps, essentially middle-class shanty towns on wheels.” (From the June 1, 2004, New York Times Book Review of “Public Enemies,” by Mark Costello)

Roosevelt and The Great Depression

Roosevelt was able to secure the confidence of an economically prostrate nation that Hoover could not. No doubt that Roosevelt was one of America’s greatest presidents, following George Washington, Abraham Lincoln in the hierarchy. On November 8, 1933, FDR created the Civil Workers Administration, the forerunner of the Work Project Administration (WPA), to create jobs for the 4 million unemployed. Between 1933 and 1936, 5.5 million jobs were added, while under Hoover there was a net loss of 6.4 million. In 1937-1940, there was another net gain of 3.3 million jobs, and in the war years 1941-1944, a whopping 7.7 million jobs were created. (From the NY Times Week in Review, August 8, 2004. A large number of these jobs were with the WPA itself. See WPA in the Index.) It is interesting to compare this with 11.6 and 11.4 million jobs under Clinton’s two administrations 1993-96 and 1997-2000, and the net loss of 1.2 million jobs in George W. Bush’s first administration 2001-2004.

What I said above about learning more as I wrote more, also applies to my writing about The Great Depression, which extended from the crash of the Stock Markets in 1929 to the beginning of World War II.

Roosevelt’s Pledges to the American People

I pledge you, I pledge myself, to a new deal for the American people—From the acceptance speech of **Franklin Delano Roosevelt (FDR)** when he ran for the Democratic nomination for the presidency, Chicago, July 2, 1932.

First of all, let me assert my firm belief that the only thing we have to fear is fear itself—From **FDR’s** Inaugural Address, March 4, 1933.

On August 14, 1935, **President Roosevelt** signed the Social Security Act into law. Without it, countless millions today would be living in abject poverty in their old age. For years this law was an anathema to the Republican Party of **Robert A. Taft, Thomas Dewey, Nelson A. Rockefeller (and the other Rockefellers)**, and other business-biased and money-interest representatives who did not want to part with their portion of the contribution to fund it.

Roosevelt and World War II

Britain and France declared War on Nazi Germany two days after Germany invaded Poland on September 1, 1939 (That, the rearmament, and the annexing of Alsace-Lorraine, were all instances of Nazi Germany's abrogating the terms of surrender of WW I.) New Zealand followed suit the same day, *but two days later, on September 5, the USA under President Franklin Delano Roosevelt proclaimed its neutrality*, yet already in 1933 it had begun to strengthen the Navy (N. B.), and on October 5, 1937 he called for a "quarantine of aggressor nations!" Although Canada and South Africa both had sizable non-British minorities who wanted no involvement with in a European war, they declared war on German, and South Africa the next day after Britain on September 6, and Canada, despite the defiance of French Quebec, who like many conservatives in the USA "refused to fight an English War," declared War on September 10. Germany retaliated against Canada by controlling the Gulf of St. Lawrence, a vital seaway connected to the Great Lakes, hence to Chicago, Detroit, and Cleveland by canals. (See, for example, the essay by **Clark Blaise**, "Memories of Unhousement, a Memoir" in *The Pushcart Book of Essays*, esp. pp.65-66)

On September 17, 1939 USSR invaded Poland

The USSR also annexed East Poland and Germany took the rest, in a treaty signed with Germany on September 18. In March 1941, three months before Germany attacked USSR on June 21 the USA passed the "Lend Lease Act," which authorized the sending of supplies and armaments to Britain, China and other allied nations including Australia, New Zealand, *and the USSR*, for repayment "in kind", including support of the US military in England and elsewhere. This made the United States the "Arsenal of democracy" for the Allies. All in all, the British Commonwealth received \$31 billion, and USSR \$11 billion under the Lend Lease agreement. (See, e.g., the *Columbia Encyclopedia* for further details.)

In October 1939, the USSR pressed Finland with territorial and other demands, and on the last day of November embarked on the "Winter War," attacking Finland with more than a million men, more than three times as many as the entire Finnish army. The Finns resisted gallantly, but signed a peace treaty on March 12, 1940, after suffering 25,000 dead. In the end, the Danes had to yield to all the Soviet demands, and more, but were allowed to keep King Christian as their nominal ruler. (See *The Reader's Digest History of World War II*, p. 29)

Three German troopships sailed into Copenhagen's peaceful unprotected harbor on April 9, 1940, and after a brief resistance elsewhere, Denmark called off the resistance. On the same day, ten German destroyers sailed into the Norwegian port at Narvik. Fighting was stiff, but in the end, the Nazis had control of the Norway's rich iron mines.

Blitzkrieg of the Lowlands, Denmark & Norway Presaged the Fall of France.

On May 10, 1940, Hitler began his blitzkrieg of the Lowlands. The Netherlands fell on May 14, Brussels was occupied May 17, and all of Belgium surrendered on May 28. Encircled allied forces were evacuated at Dunkirk from May 2 to June 4 on every kind of ship the Britain could find, thus barely escaping annihilation. Moreover, on June 4 Allied forces in Norway began to withdraw to counter the threat to France and Britain. Finally, Norway surrendered on June 9; Paris fell on June 14, 1940. (See the map, *Op. Cit.*, p.37.)

Germany Attacks USSR

In June 1941, the Germans amassed the greatest military machine ever assembled, more than 3,000,000 men, 600,000 vehicles, 3350 tanks along a 1250 mile border between the Baltic and the Black Seas. (The impending assault on USSR was given the suitable pretentious name "Barbarossa," or "Red Beard," the nickname of the 12th-century Holy Roman Emperor, Frederick I.) On the night of June 21/22, the storm was unleashed. The Red Army was caught by surprise. By midday of June 22, USSR had lost more than 1200 planes, most of them caught on the ground, and the Germans crossed bridges before the Soviets had time to denote demolition charges. In the drive to Moscow, brilliant pincer movements led to German hopes of a quick victory—until Russian resistance, and Hitler's own orders, brought the German armies up short. The pause proved to be a major blunder, and fatal to Hitler's ambitions. (Excerpts and paraphrased, *Op. Cit.*, pp. 104-106; see the map on p. 106.)

Roosevelt Builds Up Navy and Army Might

At his first cabinet meeting in 1933, **Roosevelt** warned that the USA might be forced into war with Japan. Three months later, \$300 million was allocated to building new warships, including four new aircraft carriers—*Yorktown*, *Enterprise*, *Wasp* and *Hornet*—were built, making seven in all. Battleships were doubled to 17, destroyers increased to 171, and cruisers to 37, making America well prepared for action at sea at the outbreak of the Pacific War in December 1941. Only when Nazi Germany overran Europe in 1940 did Congress vote for the first military draft in peacetime in US history. On September 16, 1940 **President Roosevelt** signed into law the Selective Training and Service Act. It

made men between the ages of 18 and 40 liable for military service. Although there was a conscription of men for service in the Selective Service Act of 1917, that was in wartime. On November 15, 1940, 75,000 men were called up in the first peacetime conscription. Even so, in 1941, the army totaled only 500,000 men and women and one armored division. On January 12, 1942, **FDR** created the National War Labor Board to organize labor for the war effort. On October 22, 1942 in one of his famous and popular “Fireside Chats,” **Roosevelt** proposed drafting 18—and 19-year-old men. On November 13, 1942, the minimum draft age was lowered from 21 to 18. That meant that a sophomore in high school surely would be drafted, as I was in April 1945.

Mistreatment of Nisei and Issei Americans in World War II

Immediately after Pearl Harbor, FBI Chief J. Edgar Hoover ordered the rounding up of all Japanese nationals resident in the USA. Then, in February 1942, the US Government, under that eloquent apostle of democracy, namely, President Roosevelt, created a legal controversy when it put 110,000 West Coast residents of Japanese origin, Issei, including 75,000 Nisei, that is, American Citizens born in the USA of Japanese parents, despite the fact that not a shred of evidence has ever been found to impugn the loyalty of these hard working people. Besides that, 33,000 other Nisei served in the US armed forces, including the much-decorated 100th battalion and the 442nd Regimental Combat team, which fought in Europe. To add injury to insult, the property that the Nisei left was looted, and expropriated, while they languished in what can only be called “Concentration Camps,” since they were living in barracks, surrounded by barbed wired, and guarded by watchtowers.

An Octogenarian Nisei Neighbor Speaks Out Against the Abuse

An octogenarian Nisei neighbor of mine, Dee, who preferred to remain anonymous, said that she lived in one of these camps on the Gila River in Arizona, which was “altogether nicer than some of the other camps.” Dee mentioned three or four others (there were ten in all), including one in Jerome, Idaho; one where her husband was sent to “Tula Lake in Idaho, or Utah?” (I was unable to find that in the Times Atlas of the World.) Another that was mentioned in Life Magazine’s “World War II, p. 158, in the “bleakness of the Heart Mountain.” The mountain in the background of the accompanying photograph looked familiar, like a monument. (“Tula” can be found in other places, e.g., Kenya, Mexico, American Samoa, Sardinia, and USSR! And there is a Heart River in N. Dakota, and a Heart Lake in Wyoming—see “Farewell to Manzanar Below. *Added in proof*: There were ten camps in all: Topaz (Central Utah), Poston (Colorado River), Gila River (Arizona), Granada (Colorado), Heart Mountain (Wyoming), Jerome and Rohwer (Arkansas), Manzanar and Tule Lake (California), Minidoka (Hunt, Idaho)—from the Web at 100-th battalion/442-nd Regimental Combat team.)

Dee went on to say that years later many Nisei children became lawyers and sued for return of their parents' property. While there was a "redress by the US Government, the amount of money never approached the value of what was taken from us." Later Dee amended that by saying that in some cases the settlement (\$20,000?) was equitable, but in other cases the increased value of the property far outstripped that amount. (Another Nisei neighbor was named Yamamoto, the very same name as the Japanese admiral who was adjudged a war criminal and hanged from the yardarm of a battleship commanded by Admiral Nimitz.)

Manzanar Internment Camp at the Foot of the Sierra Nevada, 1942-45

"Manzanar War Relocation Center at Independence, California. was one of ten camps at which Japanese American citizens and resident Japanese aliens were interned during World War II. Located at the foot of the imposing Sierra Nevada in eastern California's Owens Valley, Manzanar has been identified as the best preserved of these camps"

"The first morning in Manzanar when I woke up and saw what Manzanar looked like, I just cried. And then I saw the high Sierra mountain, just like my native country's mountain, and I just cried, that's all"—Haruko Niwa, interned at Manzanar from 1942 until 1945. (For more about Manzanar, search the web at: www.nps.gov/manz)

"Farewell to Manzanar"

Jeanne Wakatsuki Houston has written a book with the above title on the travails of internment of her family to Manzanar, which is a Spanish word for "apple orchard." Excerpts from her book appear in "American Childhoods," edited by David Willis McCullough (see the Bibliography), and are entitled "Shakata Ga Nai" (In English: It Can't Be Helped), "Almost a Family," and "Manzanar U.S.A." "Manzanar was a hastily built internment camp that was erected in the high desert country of the Owens Valley, just northeast of Los Angeles in the early days of World War II. Her father, a commercial fisherman who on the night after the attack on Pearl Harbor burned the Japanese flag he had brought with him to 'California from Hiroshima thirty-five years before. Although his family did not know it, he had been sent off to al all-male camp in North Dakota."—*From McCullough's Introduction to the excerpts.* (See "An Octogenarian Nisei Neighbor" . . . above.)

This book is a poignantly sad description of the disintegration of the author's close-knit family life that the Wakatsukis enjoyed in their home, eating "at the old round

wooden table in our dining room in Ocean Park . . . large enough to seat twelve or thirteen of us at once . . . Now, in the mess halls, after a few weeks passed, we stopped eating as a family.” *Ibid.* p. 296. “As months turned into years, it became a world into itself with its own logic and familiar world.”

“Rabbit in the Moon,” Documentary Film About the Nisei in WW II.

The Nisei were forced to renounce their American citizenship. It took each Nisei “20 years, and 10,000 affidavits” to reclaim it after the war. They were used as hostages against Japanese maltreatment of American prisoners of Japan. Many were drafted into special all-Nisei battalions, although 99% of the Nisei opposed the draft. The only US newspaper that took up their plight had a Nisei editor, James Omura, who was imprisoned for aiding the resistance to the draft. President Truman pardoned all Nisei draft dodgers, and restored full citizenship in 1947, two years after the war ended. (Viewed on AZNTV, May 2, 2005.)

Fussell’s “Wartime”

The books that I have read on these subjects, many of which I cite as I quote from them, may be found in the Bibliography. Two highly readable books listed there, which were especially helpful, are by Paul Fussell. Although the first book, “The Great War and Modern Memory” is ostensibly about World War I, Fussell has stated that it is a “cleverly disguised autobiography of his experiences as a First Lieutenant in World War II.” About the latter, see his “Wartime.”

Andy Rooney’s War

One of the best books I have read about WW II is Andy Rooney’s classic, “My War,” about his experiences based on more than 800 dispatches he wrote as Technician Fourth Grade for the US Army assigned to “The Stars and Stripes,” the official Service Newspaper for Europe. He was one of the paper’s youngest correspondents. At first based in England, he covered the bombing of Germany in his dispatches. One of these, also accompanied by Homer Bigart and Walter Cronkite, was about a bombing raid over Wilhemshaven, a heavily defended Nazi naval installation form, from which many planes did not return. (See, e.g., “Reporting America on War.”) Then he was “imbedded” in the front lines on D-Day, giving horrifying descriptions of the impenetrable hedgerows of Normandy (*ibid.* p. 172), which not only slowed the advance of the Allies, but also provided cover for the German army. He wrote on the capture of the all-important port city of Cherbourg, then

on to St. Lo, Paris and its environs, e.g., St. Cloud (where he entered Paris), and on the Battle of the Bulge, etc. He received the Army bronze star, “for meritorious service . . . penetrated to the heart of Saint-Lo . . . without regard to his own safety . . . for a complete and accurate story with the most forward elements of our troops, etc” (*ibid.* p. 181.) About Saint-Lo he comments (*loc. cit.*): “*I don’t know why the people of Saint-Lo don’t hate Americans. We destroyed their town. We didn’t damage it, we annihilated it.*” (My emphasis.)

Andy Rooney provides vivid eye-witness accounts of many other momentous events, and colorful sketches of such luminaries as General Dwight D. Eisenhower, who after December 1944, was the Supreme Commander of the D-Day invasion, and later of all the Allies in Europe, and many others, e.g., General Omar Bradley, General George Patton, whom he despised for good reasons, James Stewart, the actor who rose high in the ranks of the Air Force, completing over 50 missions over Germany, and fellow correspondents, e.g., Ernie Pyle, H. V. Kaltenborn, Homer Bigart, Walter Cronkite, and Bill Mauldin, whom he admired. Speaking about book indices, as I was above, let me point out that Andy Rooney’s is a well-constructed pleasure.

Charles Lindbergh and US Fascism

Unfortunately, neither Rooney nor Fussell discuss the tragic case of Lindbergh’s fascism. In 1927, Charles Lindbergh made the world’s first transatlantic solo flight and became an international hero. (In 1919, John William Alcock and Arthur Brown were the first to fly across the Atlantic. They flew in a Vickers Vimy twin-engine Army bomber.) Lindbergh and his writer-wife, Anne Morrow, moved to England in 1935 to escape the publicity surrounding the 1932 kidnapping and murder of their retarded twenty-month old son.¹

¹ There was much speculation that Bruno Richard Hauptmann, a man convicted and executed in 1936 for the crime, was not guilty, and that maybe Lindbergh disliked having an imperfect son enough to do away with him. After his death, a Munich hat-maker, Brigitte Hesshaimer claimed that Lindbergh fathered three of her children. In 2003 DNA tests confirmed that her children were indeed sired by Lindbergh whose liaison with her lasted from 1957 until his death in 1974 at the age of 72. The three children also offered as evidence a bundle of 112 letters Lindbergh wrote to their mother. While this does not provide any evidence for his involvement in the death of his son, it does shed light on the enormous duplicity he was capable of, and that his affair with Hesshaimer was no “quickie,” or brief encounter. His wife Anne Morrow “was lucky enough to die at 93 in 2001 apparently unaware of the affair,” (Parade Magazine, October 24, 2004.) From an article in the Trenton Times on May 28, 2005: In book, “The Double Life of Charles A. Lindbergh,” the author Rudolf Schroeck claims that Lindbergh also had two children with Hesshaimer’s sister, and another two children with his German private secretary identified only as Valeska, making seven illegitimate children in all.

While in Europe, he went to Germany to inspect planes being developed there, and Lindbergh wrote that Hitler “was a great man.” In 1935, the Nuremberg Laws in Nazi Germany deprived Jews of their citizenship. In 1938, Air Marshal Hermann Goering, “by the order of der Fuehrer,” gave Lindbergh a medal blazoned with swastikas. In 1939, Lindbergh returned to the USA, and began giving speeches in support of US isolationism, saying that Europe was Britain’s problem, not ours, and that certain self-interest groups were trying to push us into war. He said that Jews control “our press, radio, and motion pictures,” a familiar Anti-Semitic accusation, and “We cannot allow the natural passions and prejudices of other people to lead our country to destruction.” In other words, *just as in Nazi Germany after the Nuremberg Laws were passed, Jews were “other peoples,” that is, foreigners, even though they were loyal citizens!*

Henry Ford and US Fascism

“In May 1920, the Dearborn Independent, a local weekly bought by Henry Ford, printed the first of ninety-one articles devoted to exposing ‘The International Jew: The World’s Problem’; in ensuing issues, it serializes the text of the fraudulent ‘Protocols of the Learned Elders of Zion’ while claiming the document—and its revelation of a Jewish plan for world domination—to be authentic. Circulation rises to close to 300,00 as subscriptions . . . [the paper is] forced on Ford dealers as a company product, and the strongly anti-Semitic articles are collected in a four-volume edition, *The International Jew*” *The World’s Foremost Problem*.”—From “The Plot Against America,” Postscript, p.378, by Philip Roth. (My brackets.)

Philip Roth’s “The Plot Against America”

I have excerpted, or paraphrased, the above, and some of the below, from Joan Acocella’s review in the September 20, 2004 issue of the New Yorker of Philip Roth’s novel “The Plot Against America,” and the quotes reportedly represent Lindbergh’s exact words. (I have not put quotes on Acocella’s words, however.) In the Postscript, *ibid.*, p.379, Roth prints the September 11, 1941 speech “Who Are The War Antagonists?” given by Lindbergh at the American First Committee’s rally in Des Moines. He also cites Henry Ford’s fascism, including an excerpt of Hitler’s 1923 speech saying “We count on Henry Ford as the leader of a growing fascist movement in America,” *ibid.* p. 379.) Roth’s novel is a historical fantasy set in the Lindbergh Administration: Lindbergh strides into the 1940 Republican Convention Hall in Philadelphia, and, breaking a deadlocked convention, is nominated to run for President by acclamation. He then goes on to defeat Roosevelt’s unprecedented bid for a third term by a landslide. You can imagine how the suppression of American Jews plays out, after Lindbergh signs non-aggression pacts with Germany and Italy. Acocella writes, “Makes sense, right? Why should the sufferings

of these people come to an end in the space of one generation with the crossing of one ocean?" Sound familiar? In the following are quotes from the review of "The Plot Against America" by Paul Berman in the NY Times Sunday Book Review, October 3, 2004:

"—a fable . . . in which American has gone fascist and ordinary life has been flattened under a steamroller of national politics and mass hatreds. Hitler's allies rule the White House. Anti-Semitic mobs roam the streets. The lower-middleclass Jews of Weequahic, in Newark, NJ, cower in a second-floor apartment, trying to figure out how to use a gun to defend themselves. ('You pulla the trig,' a kindly neighbor explains.) The novel is sinister, dreamlike, preposterous and, at the same time, creepily plausible.

"—at last, Franklin Roosevelt addresses an anti-Lindbergh rally in Madison Square Garden . . . sonorously declaims, in syllables so majestic that only dashes will suffice, 'We—choose—freedom.'

"The German radio denounces a conspiracy by the 'warmonger Roosevelt—in collusion with his Jewish Treasure secretary, Morgenthau, his Jewish Supreme Court justice, Frankfurter, and the Jewish investment banker Baruch.' This conspiracy, the German radio explains, 'is being financed by the international Jewish usurers Warburg and Rothschild and carried out under the command of Roosevelt's mongrel henchmen, the half-Jew gangster La Guardia, mayor of Jewish New York City, along with the powerful Jewish governor of New York State, the financier Lehman . . .'"²

Week after week the radio journalist Walter Winchell criticizes Lindbergh and his administration, but outside of the Jewish community he finds little support. Even the New York Times criticizes him, and he denounces the owners as "Ultracivilized Jewish Quislings." At a rally in Lindbergh heartland, Winchell is assassinated, and Fiorello La Guardia delivers a Mark Anthony—type oration over Winchell's coffin. In reaction, Lindbergh gets into a plane, flies off, and is never heard of again, although there is speculation that he ended up in Germany, or has surfaced in various other places on the globe.

As a consequence of Lindbergh's flight, Roosevelt is elected President in a special election in November 1942, and Japan promptly bombs Pearl Harbor. Thus, exactly one year late, American history resumes its course. (The last two paragraphs have been

² The only Warburg listed in The Cambridge Biographical Encyclopedia, or The American Heritage Dictionary, is Otto Heinrich Warburg, 1883-1970, A German biochemist who won a Nobel prize in 1931 for research on the respiration of cells. Perhaps Roth is alluding to a near homophone with (Daddy) Warbucks, the industrialist in "Annie." This list does not include others cited by Roth, e.g., the first Jewish Supreme Court Justice Louis Brandeis, who served from 1916-1939, and Hank Greenberg, the first Jewish baseball player ever elected to the Hall of Fame. See the Postscript to Roth's novel.

paraphrased from J.M. Coetzee's review of Roth's book in the New York Review of Books, November 18, 2004.)

Lindbergh Defended: a Patriot and No Nazi

On the plus side, in reality, Lindbergh responded to Pearl Harbor by flying many bomber missions against the Japanese. He therefore was a patriot, and no Nazi. An apologist for Lindbergh, Walter L. Hixson in a letter to the New York Times Book Review of October 17, 2004, stated: "Lindbergh's ignorant and stereotypical view of Jews was not uncommon in the 1930's America, particularly in the Midwest, and neither was his exaggeration of Jewish media influence . . . Despite the anti-Semitic reference in his Des Moines speech, . . . Lindbergh did not hate Jews, nor was he a "blindly self-loving Aryan . . . He accepted the notorious Swastika emblazoned aviation medal from Hermann Goering in 1938 in the presence of the applauding American ambassador and at the behest of an appeasing State Department, which itself was rife with anti-Semitism. Neither Roosevelt, nor Secretary of State Cordell Hull, who also disparaged Jews, purged the State Department of Anti-Semitism, nor removed the impediments that precluded broader Jewish emigrations to the United States either before or during the war. American anti-Semitism—or African-American civil rights, for that matter—was not a priority for Roosevelt." Nevertheless, Cordell Hull was given the Nobel Peace Prize in 1944 for being an "architect of bipartisanship." (Quoted both by The Cambridge Biographical Dictionary, and Today in History.)

Kristallnacht: November 9, 1938: Ironically, in the same year that Lindbergh had accepted the accolade by Hitler, the Nazis looted and burned synagogues, and Jewish-owned stores and houses in Germany and Austria in what has become known as Kristallnacht, which is German for "the night of the (broken) glass."

The Holocaust

Despite this, *sadly, most German Jews opted to stay in Germany, as they were often as nationalistic as the next German, and identified themselves as Germans first, and Jews second.* This proved to be a fatal mistake of terrifying magnitude, as the Holocaust subsequently claimed the lives of over 6,000,000 Jews. Raymond P. Scheindlin illustrates with a map on p. 205 in a book he edited, "A Short History of the Jewish People" of the distribution and number of European Jews on the eve of the Holocaust (1937-41): Poland had 3,275,000 Jews, while Germany had in comparison "only" 365,000. Other figures: Ukraine—1,700,000, Central Russia—900,000, Romania—800,000, Hungary—440,000, White Russia—400,000, France—270,000, Austria—180,000, Lithuania—160,000, Greece—75,000, Turkey—75,000, Bulgaria—50,000, Belgium—40,000,

Czechoslovakia—36,000. All of the rest had less than Sweden's 10,000. These numbers total 8,776,000. With a conservative estimate of 6,000,000 killed in the Holocaust, one realizes how few escaped the horrible German efficiency in killing. A map (p.207 *ibid.*) shows the routes of the pathetically few who managed to escape.

“War Without Mercy” and “Surviving The Sword”

“John Dower, the pre-imminent historian of Japan's role in the Second World War, entitled his award-winning book *War Without Mercy*. Brian McArthur's compelling story [*Surviving The Sword*] about British, Australian, Dutch, and American prisoners of the Japanese provides excruciatingly painful detail in support of Dower's characterization. Racism, prevalent among Japanese as well as Westerner, contributed mightily to the torments inflicted on the Allied troops unfortunate enough to become “Fepows” (Far East Prisoners of War.) Many of the guards delighted in humiliating the white men who claimed superiority over Asians. Koreans serving at the camps were no less sadistic than the Japanese. One telling statistic is the difference between the death rates of POWs in German and Japanese camps. Twenty-seven percent of Allied prisoners died in Japanese camps compared to only 4 percent of those held by the Germans.

“*Surviving the Sword* is based primarily on diaries kept secretly—and at great risk—by some of the prisoners, mostly officers, and on interviews with survivors. The forbidden diaries were written on toilet paper whatever scraps of paper could be found, then hidden to escaped punishment or even execution. The Japanese, unlike the Germans, were not bent on genocide, but the recollections of their captives are reminiscent of Primo Levi's depictions of conditions at Auschwitz. [See, e.g., below] They were still murdering the prisoners after the Emperor's call for surrender.

“The major cause of death was inhumane treatment, including massacres, torture, and enslavement. Almost all prisoners lived on the edge of starvation and the emaciated prisoners look much like those found in the Nazi death camps.” (From the review in Sept. 2, 2005 TLS by Warren I Cohen. Also see at Bataan Death March.)

Albert Einstein

Einstein left Germany in the early days of Nazi fascism. While vacationing in Belgium he luckily was told that Nazis had ransacked his home in 1933, and his papers and books were destroyed. **Einstein** wisely never returned to Germany. Germany's insanity was America's good fortune, for in 1933 he accepted a position at the newly founded Institute for **Advanced Study in Princeton** as the second permanent member. **Abraham Flexner**, a distinguished medical doctor, was the founding director, and his first appointment was

Oswald Veblen, a world-renown mathematician, who was instrumental in selecting other distinguished permanent members, including **Johnny von Neumann**, a Hungarian Jew, and, along with **Einstein**, a German Jew, **two of the greatest minds of the century**.

Leo Szilard Einstein's Letter to President Roosevelt, and the A-Bomb

Leo Szilard, another Hungarian refugee, was the first one to conceptualize (in 1934) the concept of a nuclear chain reaction. After he settled in the USA in 1937, in 1939 he confirmed the practicality in building an Atomic bomb. **Szilard** then famously persuaded **Einstein**, who had not thought of the idea of an A-bomb based on his the calculation of his famous equation $E = mc^2$, to write a letter to **President Roosevelt** asking him to give the highest priority to building an Atomic bomb before the Nazis did. (Szilard *wrote* the letter—Einstein *signed* it.) **Roosevelt** acceded to the request, and thus was born “**The Manhattan Project**,” the hush-hush program in Chicago that led to the first sustained nuclear chain reaction. Speaking of chain reactions! (For some other accounts see, e.g., “The Illustrious Immigrants: The Intellectual Migration,” by **Laura Fermi**, and “Who Got Einstein's Office,” by **Ed Regis**.)

Anne Frank's Diary: The Definitive Edition

I first read **Anne Frank's** heart-breaking account of her going into hiding in a “secret annex” in the expurgated first edition (Doubleday, 1952.) with an moving introduction by Eleanor Roosevelt (N.B). This time I read the 1995 “Definitive Edition” (Doubleday & Co.), which restored the cuts made by her father in the first edition, excising **Anne's** passages expressing her dislike for her mother, and her frank interest in her growing sexuality. Anne began the diary in June 20, 1942, eight days after her thirteenth birthday, addressing all her entries to “Dear Kitty.” Thus, we are assured she wrote candidly.

Anne Frank was born June 12, 1929 in Frankfort Germany, and her family fled Nazi Germany in 1934 to Amsterdam, when she was just five years old, so her diary is written in the Dutch language. (Actually, in Netherlandish—Dutch is an American corruption of “Deutch, which means German!) **Einstein had** arrived in the USA as a refugee from Nazi Germany a year earlier. The last diary entry is dated August 1, 1944, just three days before the **Franks** and their group in hiding were arrested.

Anne Frank Is Open About Her Hates and Loves.

She dearly loved and admired her father, **Otto**, “the most adorable father I have ever seen,” for his wisdom, forbearance, and kindness. She also loved **Peter**, a boy several

years older, with whom she engaged in “petting,” after 21 months of hiding in the Annex. Despite the genius that her diary reveals, Anne nevertheless had normal girlish dreams as becoming a Hollywood Movie Star! She wrote on a photograph, reproduced in the Cambridge Biographical Encyclopedia, p. 348 (but unfortunately not in the Diary): *“This a photo of me as I would wish myself to look all the time. Then maybe I would have the chance to come to Hollywood.”*³

Anne Frank’s father chided her for being conceited, but in my opinion, as attractive as Anne undoubtedly was, her main talent lay in her precocious understanding of people, as evidenced by her diary entries. Possibly she may have become a great actress, perhaps another **Greta Garbo**, but tragically, she never had the chance to grow up. The Nazis saw to that. This is the horrible consequence of anti-Semitism, which is a crime against humanity, hence a crime against all of us. No one is safe when the weakest members of society are not safe.

British Radio: “They (The Jews) Are Being Gassed”

Anne Frank was aware from British radio broadcasts about the progress of the war. She did not appear shocked when she wrote: *“British radio says they’re being gassed. Perhaps that’s the quickest way to die.”* (Diary entry of Friday October 9, 1942.) If that matter-of-fact acceptance of the fate of her people does not break your heart, then I wonder where your heart is, and what it’s made of. *Already at age thirteen Anne Frank has found out that there are worse things than dying!*

“I Still Believe That People Are Good At Heart”—Anne Frank

Terrified of being captured by the Gestapo, Anne understandably despairs at the slow advance of the Allies after D-Day. And rightfully so! She and the seven others hiding in the Annex are captured on August 4, 1944, when somebody tips off the police. They had lived in their cramped quarters for over two years, sharing the deprivations of the general population plus that of the isolation from a normal healthy life. Often Anne, despairing of escape, thought of giving up her daily educational studies using the meager textbooks and library that they brought to the Annex with them. Can you imagine a child realizing that she *might not have a future*? It breaks my heart. Three weeks before her capture on August 4, 1944, she wrote on July 15, 1944, the third-to-last diary date: *It’s difficult in times like these: ideals, dreams and cherished hopes rise with us, only to be crushed by grim reality. It’s a wonder I haven’t abandoned all my ideals; they seem so absurd and*

³ Anne was right—it was more attractive than other photographs of her that appear in the “Definitive Edition.” I wonder why it was not included.

impractical. Yet I cling to them because I still believe, in spite of everything, that people are really good at heart.

“I Want to Go on Living Even after Death”—Anne Frank

She wrote this in a diary entry of April 4, 1944, eight days before her 15th birthday. As heartbreaking as it is, it is an almost universal desire, which ranks very high among the Christians I have known best: Mama and Sister. I think that there is no doubt that **Anne Frank** would get into Christian heaven despite her religious affiliation. I know this sounds stupid, but as I wrote elsewhere that Einstein’s secretary, friend, and biographer (see, e.g., “Einstein, The Human Side”), was “a living saint, loving and kind, without any malice of any kind,” I have no doubt Anne Frank is now an archangel.

The Diary of Anne Frank with an Introduction by Eleanor Roosevelt”

“This is a remarkable book. Written by a young girl and the young are not afraid of telling the truth—it is one of the wisest and most moving commentaries on war and its impact on human beings that I have ever read . . . **Anne’s** diary makes poignantly clear the ultimate shining nobility of . . . spirit. Despite the horror and the humiliation of their daily lives, these people never gave up . . . Reading it is a rich and rewarding experience”—Eleanor Roosevelt. (*This about the original, expurgated edition! See the Bibliography.*)

The Franks and Others Are Captured August 4, 1944

Otto Frank is the only one of the eight to survive the concentrations camps. **Anne** and her older sister **Margot** died in “February-March 1944” from a virulent typhus infection that derived from the squalid sanitation and nonexistent medical and humanitarian aid of the Bergen-Belsen Camp she was sent to. **Otto** was liberated from Auschwitz by the Red Army, and lived to publish **Anne’s** priceless diary, which two secretaries in the building that contained the Annex picked off the floor when the Gestapo discarded it for trash, the way they discarded people.

Who Knew?

“Not a single German could have been unaware of the fact that the prisons were full to overflowing, and that the executions were taking place continually all over the country. Thousands of magistrates and police functionaries, lawyers, priests and social workers

generally knew that the situation was very grave.” **Eugen Kogon**, from his book “Der SS Staat,” literally, “The SS State”, and quoted in “The Voice of Memory,” p. 189.

“In Hitler’s Germany, a particular code was widespread: those who knew did not talk; those who did not know did not ask questions; those who did ask questions received no answers. In this way, the typical German citizen won and defended his ignorance . . .”—Primo Levi, *ibid*.

“ . . the mass of the German population was guilty of making a pact with the devil—in this case, Adolf Hitler. Millions of Germans voted for him, and millions more followed him avidly after he came to power. With the limited exceptions of the Nazis’ most strident political enemies on the left in the beginning years of the Third Reich, a few isolated clergy men, some devoted members of tiny religious sects, and a few others, Hitler ruled without serious opposition, and there was hardly any meaningful popular resistance to his rule throughout the years of Nazi Germany.”⁴ (From Eric A. Johnson’s “Nazi Terror,” p.484.)

Martin Niemöller on Why No One Spoke Up

“In Germany they came first for the Communists, and I didn’t speak up because I wasn’t a Communist. Then they came for the Jews, and I didn’t speak up because I wasn’t a Jew. Then, they came for the trade unionists, and I didn’t speak up because I wasn’t a trade unionist. Then they came for the Catholics, and I didn’t speak up because I was a Protestant. Then they came for me, and by that time no one was left to speak up.” (Martin Niemöller, German Lutheran pastor and outspoken critic of Hitler. Attributed and quoted in Bartlett, with a reference to Lincoln.)

The Warsaw Ghetto Uprising of April 19, 1943

It has been asked, “Why didn’t Jews fight back? At the beginning they had nothing to fight with, no military skills or training enough, and the SS was a thoroughly trained and equipped, ruthless organization. It was the realization of the truth of the Nazi’s aim of genocide, which had been kept a dark secret even inside Germany, and never written down anywhere, that led to the Warsaw Ghetto uprising. In July 1942, deportations began at the rate of 6000 or more a day, but *most trains went no farther than Treblinka*, the Polish concentration camp. In mid-September, a young Jew named Krzepicki managed to escape and return to Warsaw, where he warned the *Judenrat* (*Jewish Council*.) On April

⁴ On July 20, 1944, a group of German officials attempted to assassinate Hitler by planting a bomb under heavy (oaken?) table at Rastenburg Headquarters; a partition under the table shielded Hitler from the main blast, although he was badly wounded. The participants in the plot paid with their lives.

19, 1943, when the Wehrmacht (the German armed forces) and SS troops marched in for the final destruction of the Ghetto, the Jews, who had accumulated a stockpile of weapons, including a few submachine guns, and a few grenades, opened fire, and then wept with joy to see German blood on the streets. Picking up weapons of the dead Germans, they continued the battle with those. The rebellion lasted until May 16, when predictably the Germans bombed, shelled and burned the ghetto to rubble. Only about 70 Jewish fighters escaped through the sewers, out of a total of 1200 at the start of the rebellion. Some 7000 non-combatants died among the ruins, and over 56,000 were sent to Treblinka or to labor camps. (Excerpted with several paraphrases from “The Readers Digest Illustrated History of World War II, pp. 190-191.)

Auschwitz and Primo Levi (1919-1987)

“... the twentieth century will be known as the century of Auschwitz and Hiroshima”—see Primo Levi, *The Voice of Memory: Interviews, 1961-1987*. He knew what he was talking about, having survived in one of the satellite concentration camps, or Lagers, at Buna-Monowitz, near “the main camp of Auschwitz,” where only 100 out of 800 prisoners survived to see the camp liberated by the Russian army, and half these died soon afterwards. His memoir, “If This Is a Man and The Truce” (a dual volume: also published separately as “Survival at Auschwitz,” and “The Reawakening”) is a horrifying account of the of the ruthless German system of reducing man to skeletons, and, what in Levi’s opinion was much worse, of robbing them of their humanity, the prisoners ability to empathize with each other. “Whoever waits for his neighbor to die in order to take his piece of bread is, albeit guiltless, further from the model of the thinking man than the most primitive pigmy or the most vicious sadist.” (*Op. Cit.* pp. 177-178.)

“The Conviction That Life Has a Purpose Is Rooted in Every Fiber of Man”

Levi wrote that. The implication being that the Germans had robbed them of that, is clear from this: “But for us the question is simpler. Today in this place, our only purpose is to reach the spring. At the moment we care about nothing else.” (Chapter 7, p.77, *Op. Cit.*)

And this: “Whoever waits for his neighbor to die in order to take his piece of bread is, albeit guiltless, further from the model of the thinking man than the most primitive pigmy or the most vicious sadist,” Primo Levi, *loc. cit.*

Levi joined the Italian Partisan Resistance in Sept. 1943. These partisans were betrayed by an informer in December, and in February 1944 they were handed over to the Nazi’s for deportation to Auschwitz—“If Not Now, When?” (see p. 6 of the introduction by Irving Howe.)

“The railroad convoy that took us to the Lager [i.e., concentration camp, or Stalag] contained 650 persons; of these 525 were immediately put to death; 29 women were interned in Birkenau; 96 men, myself among them, were sent to Monowitz-Auschwitz . . . Of these about 20 men and women returned to their homes.” *Loc. Cit.* (My brackets.) Only five of the women survived Birkenau. (See the last page of Chapter 2 of “The Truce” entitled “The Reawakening,” in America.)

As I mentioned above, Levi contacted scarlet fever Jan. 11, 1945 in a concentration camp near Auschwitz, and was being treated with sulfa drugs when the Russians liberated them. Being in the camp hospital, he escaped death when the “sound” prisoners were taken with the retreating Germans for labor, and almost all died, or were killed soon afterwards for being unable to keep up. The second part of the dual volume, entitled “The Truce,” is a description of Levi’s eight months’ odyssey from Auschwitz to his home in Turin. It took so long because many train tracks, and the Allies had bombed most bridges. Thus, many detours were necessary.

Levi’s Long Journey Home from Auschwitz

Levi is a bit vague about the date he left Buna for the “transit camp” at Katowice, Poland, a bit due north of Auschwitz. (There is a rough map preceding “The Truce.”) At the beginning of Chapter 3 of “The Truce,” he writes, “At the end of February, after a month in bed, I was not yet cured . . . No later than the following morning I got caught up in a Russian transport towards a mysterious transit camp.” The next chapter, Chapter 4, is entitled Katowice, which is the transit camp. Yet, Levi is specific about when he reached his home: on p. 379 of “The Truce, he writes “I reached Turin on October 19 after thirty-five days of travel.”

Levi’s Itinerary

He celebrated “Victory Day,” the title of Chapter 6, that is, VE day, May 8, in a village named Boguice, which is listed neither on Levi’s map nor in the Times Atlas of the World, but in context is in Poland. Although he wasn’t traveling all that time, it took him from sometime in February to October, a span of eight months to reach home. From Auschwitz he traveled first north to Katowice, next east to Cracow (Krakow), next further east to south of Kiev, next north to almost Minsk, and circling back (retracing part of the path north) to north of Bucarest (Bucharest), then west through Romania, Budapest, Hungary, and Vienna, Austria, to Munich, Germany, south to Garmisch (a ski resort in the alps is named Garmisch-Partenkirchen), through Innsbruck, Switzerland, and the Brenner Pass to Bolzano, Trent, Verona, Milan and finally his home in Turin, Italy, on October 19.

“The Truce”

A movie “The Truce,” starring John Turturro, came out in 1999, about his long (eight months) journey from Buna, near Auschwitz, to his home in Turin in 1945. Levi suffered from depression in the last year of his life, and reportedly committed suicide in 1987, in his 68th year, although no suicide note was found. Some thought he might have slipped over the low banister of his 2nd floor apartment. Others speculated that he had suffered long enough from the horrors he lived through.

“The Drowned and the Saved” and Jean Améry

In this last book of Levi’s, about which a New York Book Review wrote “a dark meditation on the meaning of the Nazi extermination after the passing of forty years.” In the Preface, p. 25, Levi quotes the Austrian philosopher, Jean Améry: “Anyone who has been tortured remains tortured . . . Anyone who has suffered torture never again will be able to be at ease in the world, the abomination of the annihilation is never extinguished. Faith in humanity, already cracked by the first slap in the face, then demolished by torture, is never acquired again.” Then, Levi goes on to say, “Torture for him an interminable death.” Améry killed himself in 1978. This was just nine years before Levi died. Concerning the Holocaust, “Améry contended in one of his books, “At the Mind’s Limits, “that Auschwitz and what was manufactured there were beyond the scope of rational thought.” (Paraphrased from Robert Leiter’s review of “Buried by the Times.” See at The Holocaust.)

Primo Levi’s *If This Is Man*, *The Truce*, and *The Drowned and the Saved*, his last book, ought to be read by everyone as an act of piety and in empathy and grief for those who suffered, or died, in World War II at the brutal hands of the Nazi Germany and its fascist allies.

Rick DeMarinis’ “The Year of the Zinc Penny”

The Year is 1943. Copper has gone to war, and American pennies are made of zinc. Remember?—they weren’t pretty like copper pennies. In this autobiographical novel, ten-year old Trygve Napoli is shipped from Montana to Los Angeles, in the course of which he becomes an “air spotter” looking for Japanese warplanes. He sent in box top and dollar and two weeks later received his kit: a pair of tin binoculars and a chart showing the side view of both Japanese and German warplanes. American names were given them—Tonys, Helens, Irvings, and Nicks, manufactured by Mitsubishi, Kawasaki, Hakajima and Yokosuka—for quick-and-easy-ID. At times, he thought he spotted Zeroes,

but they turned out to be merely American AT-6s, a training plane used by both the army and navy. Zeroes and AT-6s had similar silhouettes, and it was believed that the Japanese had copied the AT-6s. (Paraphrased *Op. Cit.*, pp. 89-90.) “The skies over Los Angeles were crowded with airplanes that summer. The drone and whine were constant . . . P-38s dove and twisted through the stratosphere. Douglas Dauntless SBDs moaned at low level skipping imaginary bombs through the hot streets. Huge formations of B-25 Mitchells shook the buildings. Sleek P-51 Mustangs had dogfights with one another at altitudes so rarified they could only be seen through the binoculars. The high-flying B-24s left vapor trails as they crossed from west to east on their way to England.” (*Loc. Cit.*)

DeMarinis on “Tokyo Rose”

“MY LITTLE two-tube radio had limited selectivity . . . One morning, very early, I picked up Japan itself. Tokyo Rose was playing records for the GI’s in the south Pacific, and in between selections, she speaks to them. “Hi, GI Joe, what do you know? Or rather, what do you not know? I’ll bet you *don’t* know that you’re fighting this useless war for the sole benefit of the Wall Street millionaires. Would you think Mister Roosevelt is one of you? Wise up Joe. And so on. Her voice was smooth and her accent was perfect, except for a slip now and then. I wished she was (*sic!*) dead.” (*Op.cit.*, p.145.) **Woodie Allen’s** Radio Days covers some of the same ground, although not in as great depth. Woodie, as a redheaded youth, searches with binoculars for, and thinks he sees, submarines in the Atlantic. In reality, submarines did drop off spies in two locations near New York City, one on Long Island, but they were quickly spotted by alert citizens, and captured.

Nuremberg

Nuremberg, a city of SE Germany NW of Munich that was largely destroyed in WW II, it was the venue for the Allied trials of war criminals, 1945-1956. On Nov. 20, 1945, just 7 months after VE-Day, 24 Nazi leaders went on trial before an international war crimes tribunal. See “The Trial,” A History, From Socrates to O. J. Simpson,” in the Bibliography.

“Judgment at Nuremberg”

“Judgment at Nuremberg,” is a 1961 film starring **Spencer Tracy**, as the Chief Justice. “Excellent performances throughout, . . . especially by **Marlene Dietrich** and **Judy Garland** . . . Consuming account of the Holocaust and WW II, deeply moving and powerful,” from the “Video Hound.” This film is frequently shown on the History Channel, a Cable TV network.

US Armed Services in World War II

Total number of US men and women in the armed services in World War II was 16,400,000 (Chs. 47 & 50); On VE Day, May 8, 1945 the Army numbered 8,266,868, its maximum strength over the four year period; the Navy had 3,380,817; the Air Force had 2,282,292, down slightly from its maximum strength in 1944; and the Marines had 474,680 (Ch. 50.)

Causalities of World War II: 292,000 dead, and 675, 000 wounded. Veterans of WW II die at the rate of 1100 each day; in 2005 there were fewer than 3.6 million survivors out of 16.5 million total, and their median age is 82 (from an article in the Princeton Packet, November 25, 2005—note that it adds another 100,000 to the armed services' total!)

The Atom Bowl in Nagasaki on New Years Day 1946

A New York Times article by John D. Lucas (a writer living in western Pennsylvania) on Christmas 2005 about a football game, called the Atom Bowl, in Nagasaki on New Years day 1946 between two teams of football players chosen from the Second Marine Division of the occupation forces states that there is just one surviving player—Gerald Sanders, age 81. Considering the fact that the average age of surviving veterans of WW II is 84 years, this shows that the football players in the Atom Bowl suffered from a higher mortality, perhaps due to the unwitting radiation that they were exposed to in Nagasaki.

Puritanism and Sexual Freedom

I have taken the opportunity to exorcise some demons that haunted me in my childhood, boyhood, and beyond. As I wrote in a poem: “In my childhood, there were real wolves at the door, but now I spend my time shooting at phantoms.” A lot of this book is about the widespread Puritanism during my childhood and young adulthood. While I did a lot of moaning and groaning about it, I became quite a Puritan myself in fear of the consequences of disregarding the principles I was reared by. Everybody I knew was a Puritan back in the 30's and 40's, but during WW II, and after it, the mores changed. Rules change in time of war, and then things are never the same again. *But, even during the war, I never touched a girl except to hold hands, or maybe a kiss or two.*

For one thing, women in large numbers came into the work force in WW II, and, after having enjoyed their economic and social freedom, for example, wearing liberating slacks instead of dresses and skirts, and having freer access to other people, stayed there

afterwards. For another thing, people moved about during the war, often far from home, and over seas, which had a broadening, even liberating, effect. You might say that both men and women cut their apron strings. The availability of condoms to US servicemen, ostensibly for the prevention of venereal disease, led to greater sexual freedom of both sexes by greatly reducing the fear and stigma of unwanted pregnancy. Then, too, the advent of penicillin in America in 1942 gave doctors a powerful, and painless tool to fight venereal disease, and this reduced sexual inhibitions. However, the advent in the early 1980s of Acquired Immunity Deficiency Syndrome, or AIDS, which inevitably leads to an early death, and for which there is no cure, has inevitably restored the virtue of Puritanism, which in essences was a philosophy based on cleanliness, health, fair weights at the market, wholesome foods properly prepared, e.g., Kosher food, and other measures Puritans espoused.

“Lady Chatterley” and the Liberation of Literature

The expurgated edition of D. H. Lawrence’s “Lady Chatterley’s Lover,” was published in England in 1932, and the unexpurgated edition with its descriptions of the glories of the male phallus in erection, was not published there until 1960. The first American Edition came out in 1957 or 1958 while I was teaching mathematics at Pennsylvania State University in State College, Pa, exactly in the center of the state. (It was located there by State Senators drawing the diagonals of the rectangular state, and choosing the site where they crossed! See how practical math is?)

“Here it is!”

I remember standing in a small store that stocked paperbacks, when a group of girls came in, and shortly someone squealed, “Here it is!” I turned to look at what “it” was, and saw that one held out the precious, but obscure, object of desire: “Lady Chatterley’s Lover.” It had taken all those years to reach our shores, and not without a long battle that went to the Supreme Court.

James Joyce’s Ulysses Suffered the Same Fate

James Joyce’s “Ulysses,” now considered a literary masterpiece, went through the same struggle to be published. “Ulysses” was first published in serial form in “The Little Review,” starting in 1918. Several years later, in 1921, the serialized form of the book

was first seized and challenged in a New York court with the result that the court ruled against “The Little Review” and its “Ulysses” excerpt. Copies of the book were distributed in bootleg-fashion until 1932, when Customs once again seized a copy of “Ulysses,” which was being sent to Random House. Since the publishing house was intending to publish and distribute copies of the book, the press came to the book’s defense. (Besides the language, an offending passage occurs when one of the characters looked up a girl’s dress from his vantage point below a bridge. Naughty-naughty!) In a court decision, Judge John M. Woolsey ruled in favor of Random House, stating that the book was “not pornographic,” and that “Joyce has attempted—it seems to me, with astonishing success—to show how the stream of consciousness with its ever-shifting kaleidoscopic impressions carries . . .” Judge Woolsey further said that Joyce “shows how each of these impressions affects the life and behavior of the character which he is describing.” Judge Woolsey’s decision was upheld August 7, 1934 by the US Circuit Court of Appeals, with Judge Austus (Augustus?) Hand explaining the decision: “We think ‘Ulysses’ is a book of originality and sincerity of treatment, and that it has not the effect of promoting lust.” This decision was not appealed to the Supreme Court. Two years later, in 1936, the novel was finally legalized in the United Kingdom. (Partly excerpted from the Internet.) Published in Paris in 1922 by Sylvia Beach, the definitive text of *Ulysses* was not published until 1986. In the interim, James Joyce endured great poverty, and died in 1941 long before he could reap the enormous income his book earned.

“Portnoy’s Complaint”

From the *Thesaurus of Book Digests* 1950-1980: Philip Roth already had a reputation for comic invention and mastery of vernacular voices before this novel . . . but the outrageous extent to which he carried his talents in *Portnoy’s Complaint* was unexpected. The novel is colloquially funny, touching, fantastic, and hammeringly obscene . . . But, as [Portnoy] tells his psychiatrist, Dr. Spielvogel⁵ [his “Complaint” is that] his success in his career and indeed in sexual conquest matters little to him, he is so miserably guilt-ridden that he can’t go on . . . The book recounts Portnoy’s intimate confessions to Spielvogel, and the poetry is in the complaining. It is a torrent of talk, in Portnoy’s

⁵ A Germanic name that literally means “play bird,” or “game bird,” is probably Yiddish, since *spiel* derives from the Yiddish, *sphil*, although *Spiel* is also a German noun, meaning game, or *spielen* a verb meaning to play. In English, *spiel* is a lengthy, often extravagant, speech, e.g., a salesman’s pitch. Here it appears a comic Yiddish description of the shrink, Dr. Spielvogel.

sneaky little boy's, educated man's, grinning satyr's selfish and spoiled guises. His mother is one of the marvels of the book, the Jewish mother as a primal goddess . . . Portnoy's other major area of complaint is his sexual pleasure. *He enjoys as much lust as he wants, and he still can't quench his desires, the freedom and abandon is killing him with guilt . . . and he hates himself* . . . (My emphasis.) The purpose of Portnoy's flow of talk is "to turn the complaint into an exorcism" and howl with laughter to soften the suffering . . . Roth has said that "The book is about talking about yourself . . . The method is the subject."

So many people have had the wrong idea about the book, and its comic nature, so much so that Roth has been reviled, and in no place more than in the New York Jewish community, for allegedly tarnishing the reputation of Jews through the Portnoy, Spielvogel, and other fantastic characters. In response, and rebuttal, Roth wrote a long essay in his book "Reading Myself and Others."

Shteyngart on Portnoy and Jewish Mothers

Regarding the New York Jewish community's dislike of Portnoy, here's a bit of Gary Shteyngart's review in the Sunday Dec. 4, 2005 NY Times Book Review of the Library of America's editions of *Philip Roth, Stories and Novels*: 'what's most familiar upon rereading "Portnoy's Complaint" is Roth's treatment of the Jewish mother, sometimes sympathetic ("oh, she can be so sweet and good to me, so motherly!"), but at other times close to matricidal. Through Sophie Portnoy, Roth has essentially killed off the Jewish mother in fiction—with his gift of mimicry, with a deep understanding of the underlying pain and anxiety of a Jewish woman in the 1940's and with a thoroughness that has left few psychological depths unplumbed and *meshuga* details revealed. After this particular Complaint there really wasn't much left to write on the subject. "Alex, I don't want you to flush the toilet," Portnoy's mama says. "I want to see what you've done in there . . ." Do you or do you not stuff yourself with French fries and ketchup on Hawthorne Avenue after school?" I want to see what you've done in there. The humiliation, the infantilization and most of all the inborn diasporic Jewish fear that runs through that request . . .'

Although this is just a small part of Shteyngart's review, I think it illustrates to certain part of my feelings for Mama—not they ever were near matricidal! I loved and needed her in equal and large proportions—as I state elsewhere in this book, Mama was "my guarantee in life," "the inspiration for all I ever did," and "I owe

everything to her.” Even so Mama *was* somewhat of a “Jewish mother, although, as I have said, I am a bit of a “Jewish” father, and my wife, Molly Sullivan, while of Irish descent on both her mother’s and her father’s side, is a “Jewish Mother.” (As stated, her sons’ birth father *was* Jewish, although he was not an observant Jew. See Acknowledgments.)

George Jackson

“At age sixteen was George Jackson was sentenced one year to life for stealing \$71 from a gas station! After being radicalized by his harsh sentence and harsh prison life, he became a leader of a political struggle both in and outside prison. His letters from prison, published in “Soledad Brother,” reached millions of readers. He was murdered in prison.”—from “Voices of a People’s History of the United States,” pp.491-492. (See the Bibliography.) The following lyric by Bob Dylan appears there on p. 493:

*Sometimes I think this whole world
Is one big prison yard.
Some of us are prisoners.
The rest of us are guards.
Lord, Lord, They cut George Jackson down.
Lord, Lord, They laid him in the ground.*

“Racism . . . made me less than I might have been,”—George Jackson, quoted by Eve Pell in “George Jackson Remembered.” See at Racism in Quotationary, p. 607.

“Are You Somebody?”

Everything that I have written in this book is meaningful to me, but I realize its highly personal nature cannot be meaningful to everyone. Yet, as Nuala O’Faolain said about her memoir “Are You Somebody?” about her childhood, her alcoholic mother, and philandering father, the enthusiastic response that her book received by critics and the reading public surprised her. She added that she had no idea that what was meaningful for her also would be so meaningful for others. (See the Title Page to Part II.) I am writing this in the same hope, not that it will be a best seller as her memoir was. Frankly, beyond the family circle, I can’t think of ten friends who would do more than glance at this

memoir, but I trust that whoever reads it not only will share a part of my life, but also find something meaningful in it for themselves about the many people who lived through, or died in, the Great Depression and World War II.

Waiting For an Echo.

Don Marquis, the author of “Archie and Mehitabel,” noted for both his comic and serious poetry, wrote: *Writing a poem is like throwing a feather down a canyon and waiting for an echo.* Nuala O’Faolain was surprised at the echo. I hardly expect an echo, but nevertheless, I throw the feather! Regarding throwing, read Winston Churchill on writing, below

Epigrams, a Moveable Feast

The quotations, epigrams, adages, or sayings most often placed at the head of chapters as epigraphs, is a late-blooming development of the writing of this book. As I continued writing, I continued reading, and soon, I began to note that other authors, some living hundreds, or even thousands, of years ago, either had experiences similar to mine, or what they wrote miraculously (*miracle! pronounced in the Italian style, mir-ah’-klay!*) illuminated mine, e.g., Socrates’ *Life, if unexamined, is not worth living.* To borrow a Hemingway title, their writings have been “a moveable feast.”

*If you are lucky enough to have lived in Paris as a young man,
then wherever you go for the rest of your life, it stays with you,
for Paris is a moveable feast.*

—Epigraph to Ernest Hemingway’s “A Moveable Feast,” 1964.

Robert Lissauer: On Songs

“No matter in which part of the country we have been raised, songs have been a part of our lives. We have sung them, hummed them, whistled and played them. We have heard them in the mountains, on the levees, on the rivers, and one the streets; we have heard them on the radio and on records, in music stores, on the stage, and on the screen. Songs have seen us of to war, helped us laugh and made us cry, pervaded our sleep, and perhaps most importantly, have given us memories”—from the Introduction to Lissauer’s *Encyclopedia of Popular Music*; also quoted in Lissauer’s Obituary in the New York Times, October 15, 2004, written by Margalit Fox

I couldn't more agree with Lissauer more even if I had written it myself; the fact that I have written the lyrics, and snatches of lyrics—most often recalled from memory—to many, many songs, is testimony to this. Harold Arlen pointed out another thing about music that everyone finds appealing:⁶ “Music doesn't argue, discuss, or quarrel. It just breathes the air of freedom.”⁷ Someone (who?) said, “Life without music is (would be?) unthinkable”?⁸ “All I want is loving you and music! music! music!,” a lyric from “Nickelodeon” by Stephen Weiss and Bernie Baum affirms Arlen's statement. Molly Sullivan, among others, have claimed that music facilitates learning, but I have seen roofers, and other workers, able to bear the hot summer sun as long as their stereos sing to them. “All art aspires to the status of music,” as Walter Pater stated, but music has an even greater function—to give us joy wherever we are, whatever we are doing, and whenever we want.

Twenty-Five Years Later . . .

As stated in the opening sentence of this introduction, I started writing this book over twenty-five years ago, starting in September of 1979. On this subject, the New York Times Book Review for Sunday, September 26, 2004, carried Jonathan Mahler's often funny, often sad, article, “20 Years and 5 Editors Later . . .” about several authors who took a long time to complete a work. One is Diane McWhorter whose “Carry Me Back to Birmingham, Alabama: The Climatic Battle of the Civil Rights Revolution,” which was published in 2001. “When she started in 1982, she couldn't imagine it would take more than a year,” according to Mahler. He goes on, “Is this true of most great books? Shelby Foote certainly believes so.” Chiding his friend Percy Walker in early 1952, Foote wrote, ‘What you don't understand (but will when you work harder and come to it yourself) is the artist's terrific affinity for the difficult, the thing he cannot do.’ Of course, Foote had not then published the first of his three-volume history of the Civil War, a project that eventually spanned 20 years.” Based on my own I experience, I can't recommend this way of writing a book. Not to be compared with James Joyce, but I note that it took him 10 years to write “Ulysses,” and 17 years to write “Finnegan's Wake,” according to John

⁶ Arlen wrote the music of “The Wizard of Oz,” e.g., “Over the Rainbow.” See *Reading Lyrics*, and *The Da Capo Companion to 20th-Century Popular Music*, pp. 23-24.

⁷ See “Come Rain or Shine, the Bittersweet Life of Harold Arlen” by John Lahr in *The New Yorker*, p.89, Sept. 19, 2005. Also see *All the Years of American Popular Music*, and *Yesterdays*.

⁸ I made a note that Nietzsche wrote, “Life without music would be a mistake,” but I can't find where I got that quote.

Banville in his review of John Updike's new novel, "Villages," in the December 17, 2004, New York Review of Books.

Moss Hart entitled his Autobiography "Act One," and I can understand why he never wrote "Act Two," or any other acts. I started this book as a personal memoir, but then I realized that it was so much more than that, and I wanted to do justice to the people and events far outside my immediate family. Many, many people have written their stories about the Great Depression and World War II, and now I have written mine.

Churchill on Writing

Writing is an adventure. To begin with, it is a toy and an amusement. Then it becomes an amusement. Then it becomes a mistress, then it becomes a master, then it becomes a tyrant. The last phase is that just as you are about to be reconciled to your servitude, you kill the monster and fling him to the public—Winston Churchill quoted in "The Writer's Quotation Book."

*Cast thy bread upon the waters:
for thou shalt find it after many days—
Ecclesiastes 11:1.*

*All thoughts of a turtle are turtle—Emerson
That favorite subject. Myself—James Boswell*

PART I

Childhood

The sun shines bright on my old Kentucky home,

*'Tis summer the Darkies¹ are gay;
Bye and bye hard times comes a-knocking at the door,
Of my old Kentucky home far away.
Weep no more my lady, Oh! Weep no more today
We will sing one song for the old Kentucky home
For the old Kentucky home far away.*
“My Old Kentucky Home,” 1853, Stephen Foster, 1826-1864.

When we talk of the past, we lie with every breath we take.
William Maxwell (changed from Keepers),
1908-2000 (attributed by Frank McCourt).

The most significant period of an individual's life is spent in his mother's womb.
—Chinese Proverb Quoted in “So Human an Animal,” by René Dubos

*Many types of stress leave their mark on the unborn child by stimulating the
secretion of hormones that migrate across the placental barrier—*
—Renée Dubos, *loc. cit.*

You are what your parents made you, but it is your fault if you stay that way
—Mark Twain

¹ This, along with “Nigger,” was a pejorative term applied to Black people in that time, and a long time after. At first I replaced the offending word with “pickers,” but then, since I dislike bowdlerized versions of things, I printed it as it was, and *should be*, even though I personally eschew the epithet.

Love is a chain whereby to bind a child to his parents
—Abraham Lincoln, 1866. (See Bartlett.)

You must be the change you wish to see in the world—Gandhi

The child is father to the man—William Wordsworth, 1770-1850

The trouble with writing about yourself is that you can't fool around. If you write about someone else, you can stretch the truth from here to Finland. If you write about yourself the slightest deviation makes you realize instantly that there may be honor among thieves, but you are just a dirty liar.

Groucho (Leonard) Marx, 1891-1961, quoted in "Groucho and Me", 1959

For some time now—I think since I was a child—I have been possessed of the desire to put down the stuff of my life . . . And, I am quite certain there is one internal quarrel: how much of the truth to tell? How much, how much, how much!

"To be Young and Gifted and Black: Lorraine Hansberry in Her Own Words"

Robert Nemiroff, Ed., Prentice Hall, 1969 & 1970; Lorraine Hansberry, 1930-1965.

The human heart has dinned treasures
In secret kept, in silence, sealed.
From "Evening Solace", 1846, st. 1
By Charlotte Bronte, 1816-1855

The best part of life came at the beginning and the worst part at the end.

—Attributed to Mark Twain, 1835-1915

Life is not supposed to be easy, my child; but take courage: it can be delightful.

—G. B. Shaw, 1856-1950, quoted in the Little Dictionary of Oxford Quotations.

Like other writers of working-class stock—one thinks of D.H. Lawrence and Maxim Gorky, Esenin was a child in his childhood, unlike Proust, for Instance, or Yeats or Rilke, bourgeois poets who seem to have been born middle-aged.

. . . Esenin [Yesenin] had enjoyed the incomparable privileges of an under-privileged childhood, of a childhood, that is to say, without any of the cultural interference that made a horrible little adult of Proust's Marcel.

Geoffrey Thurley, p. 9 of the Introduction to his translation of Esenin's "Confessions of a Hooligan."

*The value of marriage is not that adults produce children,
but that children produce adults.*

Peter De Vries, in "The tunnel of Love," 1954

Marriage, if one will face the truth, is an evil, but a necessary evil
—Menander, c.341-292 B.C.

Marriage is an evil most men welcome—Monostikoi (see Bartlett.)

*I am convinced there is a certain amount of anarchy under which
children grow best, although I admit the boundaries are not marked,
and children contrive to provide what anarchy is needed anyway.*

—The author

*Dogs observe no boundaries, pay no taxes, neither marry nor divorce,
do not go to school, or, maybe, only under duress go to reform (obedience) school,
do not apply for passports, and in most ways live outside the law, much the way
children do—*

It is precisely this anarchy that children love.

*A dog pees when and where it pleases,
while a child has to squeeze his wee-wee to hold back.
Or dance up and down.*

—The author

PHOTOGRAPHS FOR PART 1



Grandma Foster

standing in front of her beloved swing on Kentucky Avenue, Paducah.



**Eldridge and Louise, in 1923,
ages 7 and 5 respectively.
Mama wrote on the back
“Eldridge starting school,
Louise starting Kindergarten.”**



Mama Eldridge Louise
Eldridge Louise Fred Mama Carl

Family Portraits
(Dad wasn't there)



Mama, in her “basic black” dress holding Kathy, whose arrival made Mama a Grandmother, and Daddy (seated, holding his knees) a Grandfather, not to mention making Eldridge a father and Fred and me uncles! Ironically, it’s about the only picture of 2439 that we have.



**7TH DISTRICT SCHOOL
GRADE 1A—FALL 1933
MRS. DANIELS—TEACHER**

**Row 2 (Second from left) Jimmy Townes
Row 2 (Sixth from left) Carl Faith
Students in Rows 1 and 3 are unidentified.**



Line at top of page—indicating Meta Eichelberger
Under that and to the right—line indicating Carl Faith

**Pupils Appearing in Art Exhibition Picture
Fifth District School**

18th & Holman Streets, Covington, Ky.

1936

Grade

Kathryn Strotman	Kindergarten	Carl Faith	3A
Virginia Norman	1B	Mildred Requardt	4B
James Garrard	1A	Delores Weghorn	4A
Minnie Johnson	2B	Meta Eichelberger	5B
Allan Harney	2A	Clarence Lamb	5A
Hazel Thompson	3B	Dorothy Hammer	6B
Irene Jordan	3B	Fay Smith	6B
		Wendall Hamm	6A

③

COVINGTON PUBLIC SCHOOLS

RECORD OF Carl Faith GRADE H. H.
 SCHOOL 5th Dist TERM 1st YEAR 1937

	Days Present	Days Absent	Times Tardy	Conduct	EFFORT	Reading	Composition	Grammar	Spelling	Writing	Arithmetic	Geography	History	Hygiene	Music	Man. Train.	Dom. Science
First Report	19			2	3+	3+	2	C+	3+	C+				2			
Second Report	19	1		1	C	2	C	C	3+	C+				2			
Third Report	17			3+	2	C-	2	C	C	2				2			
Fourth Report	19			3-	2	3+	2	C	3+	C				2			
Fifth Report	19	1		4+	C	C-	3+	C	C	C				C			
Examination				Promoted to 5 th B													
Average	93		2	3+	2	2	2	C	3+	C				2			

I (parent or guardian) have carefully inspected this report

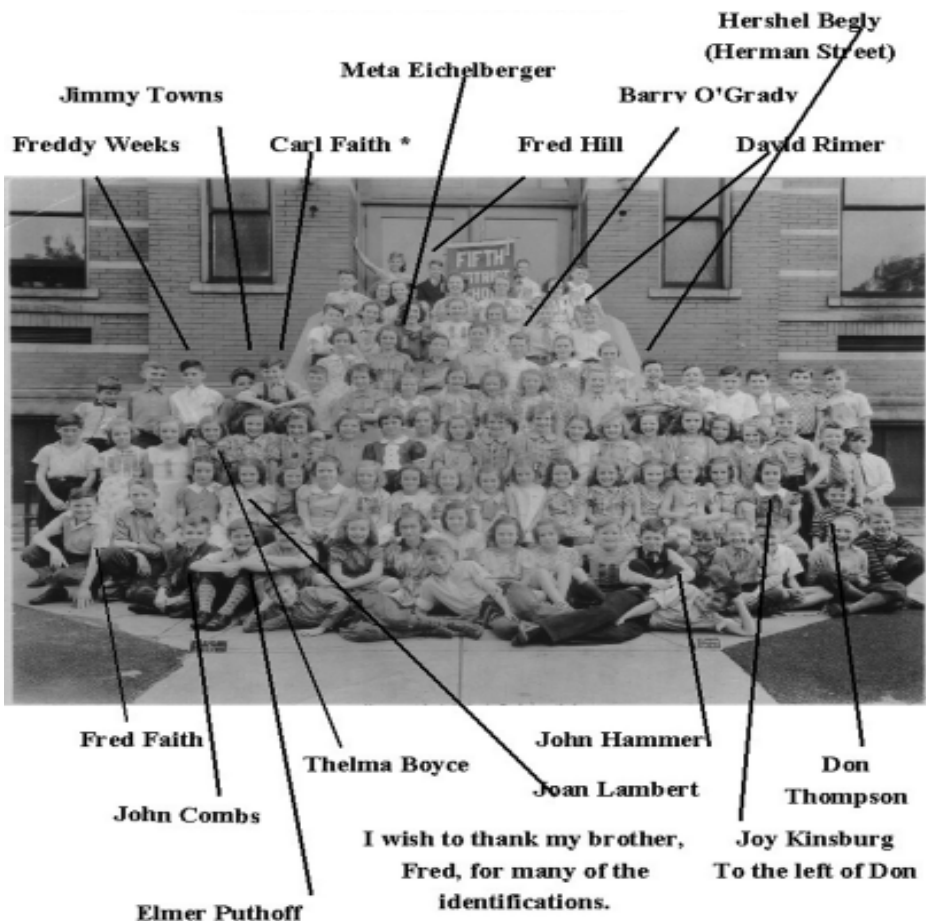
FIRST REPORT Mrs. Faith THIRD REPORT Mrs. Faith
 SECOND REPORT Mrs. Faith FOURTH REPORT Mrs. Faith
 FIFTH REPORT (over)

Carl's Report Card

Fifth District School

Covington, Kentucky

1937



BLUE RIBBON STUDENTS—1938
FIFTH DISTRICT SCHOOL
HOLMAN AVENUE—COVINGTON

PICTURE WITH LINES AND NAMES
(Names listed below but not as they appear
in picture. Listed for spelling.)

Jimmy Townes	Carl Faith
Freddy Weeks	Hershel Begly (Herman Street)
Meta Eichelberger	Barry O'Grady
David Rimer	Fred Hill
Fred Faith	John Combs
Elmer Puthoff	Thelma Boyce
John Hammer	Joan Lambert
Don Thompson	
Joy Kinsburg—to the left of Don	

I wish to thank my brother,
Fred, for many of the
identifications.



“Captain” Carl

of the

5th District School Patrol

Age 11

(1938, Grade 5)



**“Knickers and Tams and High-Tops
and Long Johns**

(This was the favorite spot in the yard for taking pictures—in front of that scrubby fir. This picture is a good indication of our relative physiques: I was taller than Fred, and skinnier.)



**Just look at that face
and that figure.**

**“Gert” and Sis
(Taken August 1936)**



**“Thoroughly
Modern” Gertrude
sometime after
Jesse died.**

CHAPTER 1

MY KENTUCKY HOME

*I wish I was in de land ob cotton,
Old times dar am not forgotten.
Look away, Dixie Land.
In Dixie Land we'll take our stand
To lib an' die in Dixie.*

Dixie, 1859, stanzas 1 and 3

By Daniel Decatur Emmett, 1815-1904.

Is it true what they say about Dixie?

Does the sun really shine all the time?—Traditional Song

Skeeters am a-hummin' / On the honeysuckle vine, / Sleep Kentucky Babe!
... *You is mighty lucky, / Babe of old Kentucky, / Close your eyes in sleep . . . and fly away,
Fly away Kentucky Babe, fly away to rest, fly away . . .*

Music by Adam Geibel, lyrics by Richard Henry Buck

Kentucky Babe, 1896

Oh-he-yo Means Beautiful River in Shawnee

I was born April 28, 1927 in Covington, Kentucky practically within a stone's throw of the broad Ohio—at 417 W. 5th Street according to my birth certificate. It might have been named Water Street—so often was it inundated by the marauding river. According to my birth certificate I was “legitimate.” (Some people might *think* otherwise!) A demographic map of the world—National Geographic put it out I believe—shows that three-fourths of the world's population live within a day's journey of the ocean or sea, and most of the rest live near rivers. (Cf. Footnote 1 on flooding.) Furthermore, over half of the people of the USA live within 50 miles of the coast. These facts are not surprising in view of man's dependence on water for survival. 1927 was the miracle year that Babe Ruth hit his skein of 60 home runs, a record

¹ See the Op-ed article “After the Deluge” by John M. Barry in the Oct. 13, 2005 New York Times.

that still stands for the 154 game season, and only broken in 1960 by Roger Maris in 162 games. The 1927 US population was 100 million, of which 1 million were flooded. “Silent Cal” Coolidge, who was President on Harding’s death in 1923, fixed the problem.¹

LaSalle: La Belle Rivière

The Ohio is one of the nations great rivers.² The French explorer, LaSalle called it *La Belle Rivière* or Beautiful River, so the French agreed with the Indians! Even the term Dixie derives from the French word “dix” for *ten* used in New Orleans for Confederate ten-dollar notes, according to Bartlett. Draining the west flank of the Allegheny Mountains, the Allegheny River from the northeast and the Monongahela River from the south unite with the Ohio at Pittsburgh (“Three Rivers”), which then flows between Kentucky and three States, Ohio, Indiana, and Illinois, emptying into the mighty Missouri-Mississippi River system (draining water runoff from one third of the USA) at Cairo, Illinois, less than 25 miles from the Kentucky birthplaces of my parents. Mama was born in Paducah, June 6, 1895, so she was 32 when I was born, and Dad was born in Kevil on April 10, 1893, so he was 34. (My birth certificate contained a typo on Mama’s year—it was later corrected to 1895 from 1897.)

Estes Kefauver

People who did not live through the televised Senate Committee investigation of crime in the early 50’s (called the Kefauver³ Committee after the late chairman) may not know where Covington is located. It is the northernmost spot of Kentucky—situated directly south across the Ohio from Cincinnati, once the tool and die center of the country. The Kefauver committee issued a preliminary report on February 28, 1951 saying that at least two major crime syndicates were operating in the US. As a result, Cincinnati changed over to a charter government in order to root out corruption

Losantiville: The City Opposite the Licking River (Cincinnati)

I am not certain, outside its enviable location at the confluence of the Licking and Ohio Rivers (see frontispiece maps), surrounded entirely by hills, that Covington has any claim to importance except as a southern suburb of Cincinnati—all the important streets

² Ohio derives from a Shawnee (?) Indian word, *Oh-he-yo*, or Great River. I derived this, and much of the rest of the information on Cincinnati from Luke Feck’s “Yesterday’s Cincinnati” (Seeman, Miami, 1975). Also, see “Vas You Effer in Zinzinnati?”

³ Adlai Stevenson’s running mate in his losing race against Eisenhower in the 1950 Presidential Election.

run north towards Cincinnati. Moreover, Covington was founded in 1812 shortly after the founding of Cincinnati. Cincinnati was originally named Losantiville, which is French for “the city opposite the L”, (where Los is French for “L”). The Licking River forms the border between Covington and Newport to its East, and its source is almost 400 miles away in the southeastern Kentucky mountainous region.

Although I never found out what the river was licking, lick is a name for a place where cattle and other animals lick exposed mineral salt. Some licks were springs that bubbled up a rich brine that could be boiled down to salt. One of these, Blue Licks, was the spot where Daniel Boone was captured by Shawnee Indians who forced him to adopt an Indian (or Mohawk) haircut (shaved head except the top mane), clothes, and customs, before he managed to escape with their war plans.⁴ In the 1960’s Mohawk haircuts were adopted by the Yippies, lead by Abie Hoffman and Jerry Rubin, as anti-government symbols. Evidently the Shawnees have repented: there is a Shawnee State University in Portsmouth, Ohio on the Ohio River border between Ohio and Kentucky due south of Columbus, Ohio. Another lick, Banklick Creek, is a tributary of the Licking, and there also is a Big Bone Lick State Park

Cincinnatus

Cincinnati was named after Lucius Quinctius Cincinnatus, 519?-438?, a legendary Roman farmer who according to legend was called away to become dictator of Rome in 458. After he defeated the Aequi (an Italian people) in a brief campaign, he resumed life as a yeoman farmer. Cincinnati was named in 1709 by General Arthur St. Clair, 1736-1818, for the Society of Cincinnati, which itself was named after Cincinnatus. Like Rome and its seven hills (Palatine, the original site of Rome, Aventine, Capitoline, Esquiline, Quirinal, and Viminal) Cincinnati was built on seven hills: College Hills, Delhi Hills, Indian Hills, Mt. Healthy, Mt. Storm, Norwood, Walnut Hills. (That makes seven, not counting those in Covington, e.g., Devou, Highland Heights, Park Hills, Villa Hills, *et al.*)

The German Influence

German settlers pouring through the region became enamored of Cincinnati because of its resemblance to their beloved Rhine. They also found the southern exposure of the hills that flank Cincinnati congenial to wine growing, and for a time Cincinnati was the biggest producer of wine in a notoriously thirsty nation.⁵ A characteristically German

⁴ See “Kentucky, Land of Contrast” by T. C. Clark (Harper & Row, N.Y., 1968). Boone began exploring present day Kentucky on June 7, 1769.

⁵ According to Feck, (see p.2n), there were 500 bars and restaurants serving alcohol in the downtown area, and 13 on Vine Street between 12th and 13th Streets alone. The Prohibitionist, Carrie Nation, reportedly took one look and said, “I would have dropped from exhaustion!”

product of Cincinnati was the product of large quantities of pork that derived from its location on the Ohio River as a terminal for livestock shipments. Cincinnati “Cracklings”, “Oysters”, “Quail”, were products made of pork scraps, according to the Dictionary of American Slang by Wentworth and Flexner.

Chittlins

Another Southern dish that never appealed to me was chittlins, also chittlings, or chiterlings, a food made from the small intestines of pigs. I drew the line at that, and another delicacy the family enjoyed—brains. Dad scrambled the latter just like he scrambled eggs, and served them up for breakfast food. Yuk! No wonder I stayed skinny, right? But, as the French say *Chacq’un à son gout*, or, there’s no explaining taste. One man’s meat is another man’s poison, agreed?

Cincinnati and National Beers

Going back to the Germanic influence on wine, resemblance often falls short of actuality, and consequently all that is left of the vineyards are the memories. In making beer out of the Ohio, they were much more successful.⁶ By the middle of the 19th century, over a quarter of the citizens of Cincinnati had German ancestors. (About the same percentage holds true in New Jersey today, only the ancestors are Italian.) And the names of the beers bear this out: Bavarian, Burger, Hudepohl, Schoenling, and Weideman, all of which are still in operation (in 2004). However, nationwide, the Milwaukee beers, e.g., Schlitz and Millers, and St. Louis beers, Michelob, Busch, and Budweiser, won out in the national market, not to mention San Francisco’s Anchor Steam beer, Coors, and the mighty flow of imported beers: Amstel and Heineken (Dutch), Lowenbrau (German), Guinness (Irish), Dos Equis (Two X’s, a Mexican beer). Talk about *hauling coal to Newcastle*: beer is even imported from Japan and Thailand.

My Patronymic Derivation

Faith is derived from Faithful or Faithfull, a trustworthy person. According to the Oxford Dictionary of Surnames, William Feythfull was the first recorded Faith in Chichester, England, in 1492. A genealogical study describes the American Faiths settling into Virginia about 1750. My great-great paternal grandfather, William Faith, was attacked and almost

⁶ Germanic ownership of most of the breweries created conflicting loyalties in WWI and II, but thirst won out.

killed in an ambush by Indians near Louisville. (Not for nothing was Kentucky the Indian word for dark and bloody ground!) See the first part of the Faith Family Tree in the Prologue.

mehitabel

On the other hand, I might have the genealogy of mehitabel, the romantic cat chronicled by Archy, the cockroach, who lived in a newspaper office, and *typed everything in lower-case letters*, because he could not reach the shift key!

*mehitabel is a believer / in the pythagorean
theory of transmigration / of the soul and she claims
that formerly her spirit
was incarnated / in the body of Cleopatra
.
.
.
i have had my ups and downs
but wotthell wotthell
yesterday sceptres and crowns
fried oysters and velvet gowns
and today I herd with bums
but wotthell wotthell
.
.
.
but wotthell wotthell
oh I should worry and fret
there s a dance in the old dame yet
toujours gai toujours gai*

Don (ald Robert Perry) Marquis (1878-1937)
“Archy and Mehitabel”, 1927, “the song of mehitabel”

Daniel Boone and Simon Kenton

Two of my childhood heroes were pioneers, Simon Kenton and Daniel Boone, whose exploits against Indians helped to secure the area for settlers. Adjacent counties are named after them. Daniel Boone began the exploration of the area now called Kentucky in 1769, and the Daniel Boone Transylvania Company made the first permanent settlement there in 1775. Covington is situated in Kenton County, while Florence, and Erlanger, and the Greater Cincinnati Airport are located in Boone. (The official title: The Cincinnati-Northern Kentucky International Airport, arrived at after much political wrangling.)

My Baby Book

According to the Baby Book that my mother conscientiously filled out, I weighed in at exactly seven pounds, on a Thursday, 6:15 PM, and as I said earlier, on April 28, 1927. She “had a time trying to draw my hand [and wrote] I had big feet and big hands, so I will be a big man.” She called attention to my little fingers, which the drawing clearly showed were crooked (bowed), an uncommon genetic defect. I am reminded of Henny Youngman’s one-liner: “I was so ugly that the doctor slapped my mother when I was born.”

Another one-liner that I like is by Groucho Marx: “My mother loved children—she would have given anything if I had been one.” (From “The quotable Mom”)

Also in the Baby Book Mama wrote that I had pneumonia when I was 21 months old. Years later my older brother Eldridge told me that I had almost died of double pneumonia, and gave this account: In pre-penicillin days back in 1929 there was little the doctor could do. (The first American patient to be treated with penicillin was in 1942. See p. 189.) When all hope was abandoned, a kindly neighbor advised Mama to fling the windows open to ease my breathing. The next morning, after breathing the oxygen-rich cooler air, I had passed the crisis. And here I am seventy-five years later at this writing. The late Dr. Marvin R. Blumenthal of Princeton, NJ, told me apropos of his thick folder of notes on my ailments over a 20 year period: “Just think of how many you survived” (This was an uncharacteristically encouraging comment of his. See the Preface.)

CHAPTER 2

THE JAZZ AGE, THE GREAT DEPRESSION, AND ME

Asked to explain Jazz, Louis Armstrong (1900-1971) replied:

Man, if you gotta ask, you'll never know.

Asked to explain rhythm, Thomas "Fats" Waller (1904-1943) replied:

Lady, if you got to ask, you ain't got it.

Both in Bartlett's Familiar Quotations

Candy's dandy

But liquor is quicker.

Ogden Nash, 1931

Is You Is (Or Is You Ain't, My Baby?)

Louis Jordan, 1944

Born To Lose (And Now I'm Losing You!)

Song by Ted Daffan, 1943.

Daffan was born in Beauregarde Parish, Louisiana, in 1912

"History is more or less bunk," Henry Ford in an Interview, May 25, 1916

I was born, see? Sure, dat's de charge.

Write it in de blotter. I was born, get me!

Eugene O'Neill, 1888-1953

From "The Hairy Ape", 1922, sc. vii

I Was Born, See?

And near the end of the much written about twenties, I arrived between the Eighteenth Amendment called Prohibition, forbidding the selling of alcoholic beverages, the Nineteenth Amendment, giving women the right to vote (both in 1920), and the Twenty-First in 1933, giving men *and* women back the right to drink, i.e., repeal of

Prohibition. (The Twentieth Amendment is the so-called “Lame Duck” Amendment.) *Write dat in the blotter!* The Twenties, called the “Roaring Twenties, is also called “The Jazz Age” by categorizers who like to put periods in boxes, so as to tidy up life.¹ Yet, how else can one keep track of the generations? “Silent Cal” Coolidge was President.

I was born into the beginning waves of the Great Depression, the specter of which still affects the emotions and otherwise frightens millions of human beings even now, all these years later.² The Depression was accompanied by the most widely shared suffering and misery³ that the country had faced since the Civil War, even more than World War I, which affected a minority of the population. This was a misery that wasted human resources on a grand scale, not only by depriving people of the capability of earning their bread or utilizing their skills to better themselves, but also crushing their hopes and possibilities of better lives, both for themselves and for their children.

I Saw Fear in the Eyes of My Parents

As a growing child, I saw much more fear in the eyes of my parents and other adults in the depression in the 30's than I did in World War II in the 40's. I often expressed it this way: Although I did not *hear* the crash of the stock market on “Black Tuesday”, October 29, 1929, I was to *feel* its devastating effect all my life. This is the closest thing to a joke that I have ever been able to utter about this dismal collective catastrophe. On Black Tuesday, thousands of investors were wiped out on the New York City Stock Exchange. Naturally people panicked, and there was a run on the banks by people who feared for their savings. When the banks could not satisfy the demand, they were forced to close. For that reason most people did not trust banks until federal legislation was passed that guaranteed deposits up to \$10,000. Mama significantly told me many times to get as much education as I could, because they could not *take that away*. Unemployment peaked in the middle of the Great Depression in 1933 at 25 percent.

My Baby Brother, Frederick (“Fred”), was born December 19, 1928, in Evansville, Indiana, making him a Hoosier. His birthday competed with Christmas for gifts. Mama wrote in my Baby Book that she was giving me a little brother, Fred, who

¹ It is true that Jazz became popular in this era, that is, acceptable to the *White* majority, but was *always* popular to Blacks. See the Index/Glossary at Blues and Jazz.

² Richard J. Evans ranked global poverty in the midst of unparalleled prosperity in the western Democracies as one of the world's greatest unsolved problems (see his review in the London Literary Supplement, February 12, 1999, of the Oxford History of the Twentieth Century).

³ Frederick Lewis Allen's, “Only Yesterday,” the classic account of the Depression, documents how much.

weighed in at six and a half pounds.⁴ Mama also traced my hand, showing the signature crooked little fingers, a genetic gift. Fred's middle name, Thomas, in honor of Uncle Tom, was passed on to both his sons, Wayne and Dick.

Calvin Coolidge, Then Herbert Hoover

After Calvin Coolidge came Herbert Hoover, and everyone knows what came after Hoover. No doubt, Hoover was a highly intelligent, dedicated public servant, and maybe, as has been claimed, he was just in the wrong place at the wrong time, an innocent victim of global economic, social and moral forces that overwhelmed nation after nation (Germany, France, Britain . . .) but, indisputably, he lacked his successor's political skills. His slogans "Prosperity is just around the corner," and "a chicken in every pot" came back to haunt him.

Hooverilles: During the 1930's depression, camps were built on the edge of towns to house the dispossessed and destitute, much the same way as the homeless today encircle the world's great cities, e.g., New York, Paris, Rome, London, Tokyo, *et al*, or, in the subways, under bridges, and in alleys. According to my dentist friend, Dr. Jack McNeil, even in swamps, e.g., near his hometown, Gloucester City, New Jersey, four miles south of Camden on the Delaware River, or any other uninhabited place they could find to live. "In 1933 and 1934, millions of Americans, unmoored by the Depression were drifting up and down the roads, families sleeping in their cars, living in what were known . . . as 'tourist camps, essentially middle-class shanty towns on wheels.'" (From the June 1, 2004, New York Times Book Review of "Public Enemies," by Mark Costello) "Once I built a railroad, made it run, . . . Now it's done. Brother can you spare a dime?" Refrain: from "Say don't you remember? They called me Al," by Edgar Yip Harburg, 1932,

Roosevelt's Economic Successes

Roosevelt was able to secure the confidence of an economically prostrate nation that Hoover could not. No doubt that Roosevelt was one of America's greatest presidents, following George Washington, Abraham Lincoln in the hierarchy. On November 8, 1933, FDR created the Civil Workers Administration, the forerunner of the Work Project Administration (WPA), to create jobs for the 4 million unemployed. Between 1933 and 1936, 5.5 million jobs were added, while under Hoover there was a net loss of 6.4 million. In 1937-1940, there was another net

⁴ I weighed in at an even 7 pounds, and Mama made the same claim for Fred as she did for me—"big hands and big feet [and] some day will be a big man"—our feet are *still* big—we wear size 14 shoes! Fred grew to be 6 feet 3-1/2 inches and at one time weighed over 250 lbs, now a svelte 210, while I grew to be 6 ft. 2 in. tall, and now weigh 188 (down from a gross 225), and even lost 2 inches of height due to compression of the cartilage in aging.

gain of 3.3 million jobs, and in the war years 1941-1944, a whopping 7.7 million jobs were created. (From the NY Times Week in Review, August 8, 2004. A large number of these jobs were with the WPA itself. See WPA in the Index.) It is interesting to compare this with 11.6 and 11.4 million jobs under Clinton's two administrations 1993-96 and 1997-2000, and the net loss of 1.2 million jobs in George W. Bush's first administration 2001-2004.

Roosevelt's Pledges

I pledge you, I pledge myself, to a new deal for the American people. From the acceptance speech of—Franklin Delano Roosevelt (FDR) when he ran for the Democratic nomination for the presidency, Chicago, July 2, 1932.⁵

First of all, let me assert my firm belief that the only thing we have to fear is fear itself—from FDR's Inaugural Address, March 4, 1933.

On August 14, 1935, President Roosevelt signed the Social Security Act into law. Without it, countless millions today would be living in abject poverty in their old age. For years this law was an anathema to the Republican Party of Robert A. Taft (isolationist son of William Howard Taft, both born in Cincinnati), Thomas Dewey, Nelson A. Rockefeller (and the other Rockefellers), business-biased representatives who did not want to part with their portion of the SS contribution to fund it.

Presaging the growing clouds of war in Europe, on September 16, 1940 President Roosevelt signed into law the Selective Training and Service Act, setting up the first peacetime military draft in U.S. history. It made men between the ages of 18 and 40 liable for military service. Of course, there was a conscription of men for service in the Selective Service Act of 1917, but that was in wartime.

THE FOUR FREEDOMS

*We look forward to a world founded upon four essential freedoms. The first is freedom of speech and expression—everywhere in the world. The second is freedom of every person to worship God in his own way—everywhere in the world. The third is freedom from want—everywhere in the world. The fourth is freedom from fear—anywhere in the world.*⁶ From Message to Congress, Jan. 6, 1941.

⁵ The name "New Deal" became the name for Roosevelt's program for economic recovery. The success of the New Deal spawned the "Fair Deal," which Pres. Truman labeled his administration on Jan. 5, 1949, and later came the Square Deal. Roosevelt's election to a fourth term of the presidency spawned the joke: Roosevelt showed that he could be elected as often as he wanted! No one had served more than two terms before he was elected to a third term in 1940.

⁶ This is known as "The Four Freedoms," or "Freedom from Fear" speech. The First Amendment accords the first two freedoms to Americans.

*This Land is Your Land, This Land is My Land
 From California, To New York Island.
 From the Redwood forest to the Gulf stream waters
 This land was made for you and me.*

Compare Woodie Guthrie's line above, with Robert Frost's "We were the land's before the land was ours," in the "Gift Outright." Below is a little known stanza of Woodie Guthrie's 1940 poem "This Land is Your Land," quoted in *The New Yorker*, March 29, 2004, p.92. It was written in protest of Irving Berlin's, *God Bless America*:

*One bright and sunny morning in the / shadow of the steeple /
 By the Relief Office I saw my people—As they stood hungry, I stood there
 Wondering if / God Blessed America for me.*

Near the end of the 1942 movie "Saboteur", the heroine, played by Priscilla Lane, catches up with an enemy agent at the top of the **Statue of Liberty**. She tells him it's her first time visiting the "Lady", and then abruptly quotes the lines of the 1883 poem by Emma Lazarus, "The New Colossus," engraved on the statue's pedestal. (This and what follows is either paraphrased, or quoted, from the April 2004 *Smithsonian Magazine* article by David Lehman, entitled *Colossal Ode*, p. 120ff.) Priscilla Lane inexplicably left off the last line. (Cf. Bartlett, or Faber's "Book of America," p. 43):

*Give me your tired, your poor, / Your huddled masses yearning to breathe free,
 The wretched refuse of your teeming shore; / Send these, the homeless, tempest-tossed to me:
 I lift my lamp beside the golden door.*

According to the *Smithsonian*, *loc. cit.*, Lazarus (1849-1887) had written her most famous poem to raise money at an auction to help pay for the pedestal of Frédéric Auguste Bartholdi's gigantic statue, "Liberty Enlightening the World," a magnificent and thoughtful gift of France's. The following was taken from p. 187 of "New York, An Illustrated History", narratives by Ric Burns and James Sanders, with Lisa Ades, Pictures Ed. "The statue was paid [for] by the masses of the public . . . irrespective of class or condition." Following this appeal for funds for the base of the statute by the *New York World*, "donations poured in. In five months more than 120,000 people, mostly working people and school children, in sums as small as a nickel, more than \$100,000 toward the costs." In 1883 it was placed on Bedloe's Island, renamed Liberty Island by Congress in 1936, in the western part of New York Harbor, once a pauper's graveyard, and, at that time an abandoned fort. Emma Lazarus died of cancer, age 38, but for all the praise, e.g., by John Greenleaf Whittier, and Robert Browning, her

sonnet slipped from view, and went unmentioned even in her obituaries. At the dedication ceremony of the statue, October 28, 1886, President Grover Cleveland, who, ironically, as Governor of New York two years earlier had vetoed funds for the project, delivered the keynote address. In it he emphasized the spread of American ideals, and said that the light from the statue's torch would "pierce the darkness of ignorance and man's oppression until liberty shall enlighten the world." And he said nary a word about Lazarus's poem!

Let's face it: *poetry, like passion, is not for everybody!* "Poets are the unacknowledged legislators of the world."—Percy Bysshe Shelley (1792-1822), *In Defense of Poetry*, 1821. And we *know* just how much legislators are loved, not to mention politicians!

"In 1903, following a two-year campaign by a friend, Georgina Schuyler, 'The New Colossus' plaque was placed on an interior wall, where it remained virtually ignored for more than a generation. It was not until the 1930's, when Europeans . . . began seeking asylum from . . . persecution, that the poem was rediscovered and with it the growing recognition that it expressed the statue's true intention. Quoted in speeches, set to music by Irving Berlin, it ultimately melded with the statue itself as a source of patriotism and pride. In 1986, the plaque was moved to an introductory exhibition in the statue's pedestal." (April 2004 Smithsonian Magazine article by David Lehman, entitled *Colossal Ode*, p. 120ff.)

The Tin Lizzie: Another event about this time was the first "Horseless Carriage" of Henry Ford's that was tested on June 4, 1896 in Detroit in a pre-dawn run. In 1908 Henry Ford introduced the Model T, nicknamed the Tin Lizzie, after the common name, Lizzie, for a horse. It was the first generally affordable, mass-produced car, until 1927, the year of my birth, when the Model A replaced it.

The "T", the "A", and later the "V", were designations for the shapes of the engines. In the case of the "T," the pistons were vertical capped by the roof of the T, where the valve-caps were located. The successive models vibrated less, and hence were more efficient, culminating in the "V", which is even today the most popular engine. "Ford V-8" was to cars what "Coca-Cola" was to soft drink. Maybe that's too strong a comparison, since "Coke" is still with us, and the Ford V-8 is seen only in museums and at antique car shows, but of course, the V-8 engine is still King.

CHAPTER 3

VILA BELLE AND HERB

Honor your father and mother.

Moses, Fifth Commandment, Exodus 20:12

They fuck you up, your mum and dad do, / They may not mean to, but they do.

Philip Larkin (1922-1985), *High Windows*, 1974, “This Is the Verse”

Oxford Book of Modern Quotations

You are what your parents made you, but it is your fault if you stay that way—Mark Twain.

“The child is father to the man,”—Wordsworth in “My Heart Leaps Up!” 1807

Genes are a poor man’s will—Saying

My mother was Vila Belle Foster, and mother’s mother was Carrie Wiggins before her second marriage. My father was Herbert Spencer Faith. Mama was born in Paducah, Dad in Kevil, 15 miles due West of Paducah.¹ I do not know how they met each other, but they married young—she was 17, and he 19—but not young by the standards back then. They married on December 22, 1912 in Metropolis, Illinois, across the mighty Ohio, just 3 miles north of West Paducah, which is 3 miles west of Paducah. So nobody had to travel very far.

My mother was a woman of enormous strength, physical, mental, and spiritual; and while my father was a tall, powerful man, he was her opposite: quiet, taciturn, given to reading, a chain-smoker, and in everything, except for providing for his growing family, pleasant and agreeable. Yet strangely, his was not an ingratiating personality. His

¹ According to my Birth Certificate, Dad was 34 years old, and Mama was 32. (Mama’s birth record read “36” but that was a typo that was later amended.) Dad was born in Kevil, KY, on June 10, 1893, and Mama was born in Paducah, on June 6, 1895. Both Kevil and Paducah lie in McCracken County. See the Prologue, and the following Foster Tree. (Which came first, the chicken or the egg? I “dunno” but the Faith Tree is more complete.)

blue-green eyes and abstracted manner captivated you but kept you at a certain distance. His manliness was the ideal I set for myself. Women adored him, and so did I.

Mama's Nickname

Mama was a habitual kidder who learned it the hard way as the youngest of a family of five sisters. Minnie, Susie, Irene, Vila (Mama) and Lena (whom I never met), and three brothers, Thomas Parker, Herbert, and Given. I never heard of the latter two until my second cousin, Louis Elliott, son of cousin Marie and her husband Cletus Elliott, e-mailed me the Foster Family Tree (March 19, 2004, upon my e-mail request a week earlier. How's that for modern communications?) Uncle Tom called Mama "Kick", for what reason I can only guess but I imagine he was justified in doing it.²

Miz Wiggins

Mama's maternal grandmother was named Wiggins, which according to the Oxford Dictionary of Surnames was introduced into England by the followers of William the Conqueror. It's a Breton surname meaning "worthy", or "high", that is, noble, but in our house, "You don't say Miz Wiggins" was a signal for merriment. Carrie, my maternal Grandmother's maiden name, bore my maternal grandfather, Robert Leland Foster, eight children, in addition to the seven his first wife gave him. Fifteen children was not an uncommonly large family in those days of high infant mortality. (See the Foster Family Tree.) As a coincidence, Princeton Cemetery, in the town where I live, is located on the corner of Wiggins and Witherspoon streets, and land donated by Thomas Wiggins.

My Baby Book

According to my Baby Book, "Edge", i.e., "Edgie," was the first word I spoke, followed by "Mam, Sisar, By-By, Dad-day, Boo-boo, Kitty, kit it (for stop it), me-some (for water), me o (for milk), and I well (after Mama kissed a hurt.)" In short, I was brilliant! Also, I sat up at 7 mos., crept at 8 mos., and walked at 9 mos. Mama traced my hand showing the genetic flaw shared by Fred: crooked little fingers, and, as another coincidence, my wife Molly Sullivan also.

Since I was not consulted, I cannot be certain why my mother chose to give birth to me at home. Certainly it was cheaper, hence common then, at least among the poor, and especially the farmers who poured into the cities looking for jobs. According to my birth

² Kick is also slang for a complaint or protest.

certificate, a Dr. Carl Peak delivered me and I was “healthy.” Since Dad was away a lot, I could not be certain if he was present, but as Joe Orton quipped (about his father?), “*All a child can expect is that its father be present at the conception.*” (Quoted in “Wit”, p. 74.) In any case, my birth was registered—I have a birth certificate to prove it—obtained from the City Clerk many years later.

Louise and Eldridge as Surrogate Parents

Probably my mother and father surrogates, my sister and brother, Louise and Eldridge, were present. Louise would have been nine years old the following June 10, while Eldridge³ was eleven the preceding December. Naturally I cannot explain the hiatus between births. Maybe “That was the year we got TV” applied to the then popular radio. My parents’ first daughter, Elizabeth had choked to death after a well-meaning neighbor gave her popcorn. Maybe today that would be considered negligent homicide. I have often wondered what Elizabeth might have been like.

Mama and Dad: The Yin and The Yang

Earlier I wrote that Mama and Daddy were opposite—even their respective families were antithetical. The Fosters were warm, humorous, hearty and generous, whereas the Faiths were more austere, quiet, success-driven, and inevitably, colder. Of course, this stereotype cannot account for every member of my father’s family, Ira, Ethel, Alice, Robert and Murray. But they all possessed a detachment that contrasted with the Fosters who knew how to make children happy and proceeded to give it to them right away. The Faith’s couldn’t be bothered. I suppose that too many “hard times came a-knocking at the door” of their childhood home. In any case, none of us, except perhaps Eldridge, had the warm attachments with the Faiths that we did with the Fosters.

Loony Grandma Faith

Maybe Grandma Faith was to blame for the nether side of Dad’s personality. She was a tall, aloof, gaunt woman who displayed none of the grandmotherly affection that Grandma Foster bestowed on her progeny. Fred disliked her from the time she slapped him hard—the first time he ever met her—for calling her “Grandma,” of all things! She admonished

³ Mama tried to get us to call Eldridge brother, but that didn’t take. “Edgie” was my babyish adaptation of Eldridge, but ironically it described his disposition. He was born on December 4, 1915, and Louise was born on June 10, 1917.

him, “Never call me Grandma ever again!” This incident indicated that she was ready for the funny farm, and may well have ended up there if she had not died soon after. In retrospect, she may have been inflicted with Alzheimer’s disease, or anile dementia, i.e., anility. Thereafter we had to blip out what we called her.

Dad’s Wanderlust and Chauvinism. I am not even sure if my father was home when I was born, but I would be surprised to learn that he was. (He however did satisfy Joe Orton’s requirement for fatherhood quoted on the previous page.) Dad was an absentee father—perhaps one of the first in the modern sense of the word. Not only was he absent, having to commute to work, working long, irregular hours, but also he left home often for lengthy periods. This kind of wandering, like a tramp steamer, was no doubt an expression of his alienation. After all, his folks were land-owning farmers in and about Paducah, whereas he was an unskilled, then semi-skilled laborer. No doubt he was not happy with his job, salary or status in an industrial metropolis. He went to New Orleans once, but not finding anything better there, he came back to us. While he was gone, Fred was born in Evansville, Indiana, where we lived for a time, and where Uncle Ira was a prominent dentist. Perhaps Dad worked Uncle Ira’s farm, the way Eldridge did later.

In retrospect, even by making allowances, Dad had to be considered a male chauvinist and a womanizer. He had a perfect oval-shaped face, soulful eyes, and classic good looks, curly hair, even teeth and a well-developed body. His massive chest and fully developed forearms and biceps were evidence of his trade—farmer, carpenter, and laborer. On my birth certificate Dad listed his occupation as box-maker. Years later he remonstrated when I listed him as a laborer on my college application. At that time he was a baker, in the Kroger Baking Co., and in the Bakers’ Union, a designation he was proud of, although his main job was laying dough flat in the pan going through the mechanized oven, and from which he suffered a yeast allergy. (But at least he was rolling in dough, right?)

Dad Was Not Physically Abusive

He was never openly abusive with Mama—it was, verbally at least, the other way around. But, as I recorded once in a poem (published in “The Seduction of Hummingbirds” in 2004 by Xlibris) his “unspeakable behavior had already spoken far too much.” Dad acted—Mama reacted. He was chauvinist because he used the economic advantage that his sex, male-strength *cum*-laborer and biology provided him to get the freedom that money gives. He exploited fully his biological advantage over Mama, who, saddled with a family of four, had to accept his outrageous behavior or go to the poor-house. Truly Freud was right: *Anatomy is destiny*. Mama became the saint who refused to play his “dirty” game: *She would do no wrong*. (Doesn’t this sound familiar?)

“Ignorance Is Exploited—Always”

Of course, she never really accepted it, but she was too proud to return to Paducah with her brood for her mother or brothers and sisters to feed, and too insecure to go back to school and complete her education. Pride has its drawbacks. She was too proud to admit her educational deficiencies and too proud to rectify them. The powerful prestige of womanly sex can boomerang. As the retired government clerk in the de Sica film, “Umberto D” tells the pregnant servant girl, “Ignorance is exploited—always!” (Her two boyfriends both denied the child was theirs.)

Mama: Virtuous But No Paragon

Mama was virtuous, yet no paragon of virtue. Her biggest fault, next to nagging, and being a killjoy, was jealousy. Not that it was not, at least occasionally, justified, but she was jealous of everybody! No doubt her role as mother and protector gave her much satisfaction, but it created many problems for her children who did not feel the need of so much protection! Suppose some kid did wear his cap catcher-style with the bill backwards? Was this really evidence of a hoodlum tendency? A smoker of course *had* to be deficient in *everything*. A blasphemer was consigned to the deepest circles of hell—and on and on. Nobody ever was good enough for her children. So we lived lonely lives. Or rather we went outside of eyesight and earshot for companionship of people our ages. (This applied only to Fred and me—Eldridge and Louise were *the* angelic pair who never got into any trouble that we ever knew about.) I often wish they had, so we could be closer.

“Consider The Mote in Thine Own Eye”⁴

There was a hypocritical aspect about Mama. She sent us to Sunday School but rarely went herself. She claimed that she did not have the right clothes, but the argument that she made her own clothes, or that she was missing Jesus’ message, failed to sway her. In fact, I never knew anyone to ever talk her in or out of anything. She was a “tough cookie”, and I owe my mental development to this fact. She could find a hole in any argument and escape one’s logic. If this failed, she blasted the whole argument. Everybody knows somebody like that.

Mama as Killjoy

We used to argue with her in vain to go to a movie, or go on a picnic, or come shopping. Even if some amusement had been planned for weeks, she would decide at the last

⁴ Matthew 7:3

moment not to go, so we couldn't go either. Perhaps it was a weapon trained on Dad—she wanted to be begged, but, if so, then it invariably misfired—Dad was not the begging type—and his chief pleasures, smoking and reading, were solitary pleasures to which he returned as happily as a convict receiving his pardon. Unquestionably Mama was arbitrary and even intransigent in matters, when, as a mother and a wife, she should have been flexible and conciliatory, or even ingratiating, in order to get us all together. Didn't she dream of a family united? Often she was not in control of her emotions.⁵ Some over-riding unhappiness stole from her moments that might have yielded happiness, if not for herself, then for us. The discussion of mental illness was tabu in those dark ages of the disease, but undoubtedly modern medicine and mood-bending drugs (Prozac?) would have brightened her outlook. Today, we have the "Prozac Nation" (the title of a best selling book in the 90's.)

Happy Times—We also had, enormously happy times. I vividly remember the times our Paducah relatives *visited*—Aunt Susie, Aunt Nona and Uncle Tom, and their children, Bo, Pauline and Carrie Mae. The table would be groaning with food, and Mama, and Sister would weep (and even worse!) from laughing. This happened when any of the Fosters came to visit. Even Gertrude (Aunt Susie's daughter) had this happy effect on Mama, and could reduce her to helpless gasps for air with a few millimeters of raised-eyebrow or innuendo. Mania, people will say, and mania, or hysteria, maybe it was. The coin was two sided: depression followed by manic laughter. Children never sorted out emotions this way. I was glad to see them happy and I suffered when they cried. I was always close to Mama—emotionally and physically.⁶ I never left her overnight until I was in my middle teens (Boy Scout hiking) and late teens (Boys' State). And when I did, I cried and cried, and she cried and cried. I never once left Mama at any time without sobbing: I simply could not bear to leave this great, good woman that nobody understood but everyone desperately loved.

Mama would even cry when we locked up the house for a vacation. "I may never see it again," she sobbed. She had great love for life, and even material objects came in for their share.

⁵ All *too* well we remember the frightful day they carried Mama out on a stretcher, in convulsions. As her body quivered, Fred and I prayed to God to save her, and promised that we would be good boys for the rest of our lives. Fat chance!

⁶ In almost every group photograph I am at her side, and most frequently with my arms around her neck. In this I am reminded of a New York joke about a mother, who when admonished for her son's excessive devotion, retorted "Oedipus Schmoedipus, what does it matter, as long as a son loves his mother?" And *vice versa*! "Love is a chain whereby to bind a child to his parents" (Abraham Lincoln, 1866. See Bartlett's.)

CHAPTER 4

FAMILY HAPPINESS

Happy families are all alike, every unhappy family is unhappy in its own way—

Leo Tolstoy (1828-1910), “Anna Karenina,” 1875-1877, pt. I, Chap. I

Happiness is the only sanction of life; where happiness fails, existence remains a mad and lamentable experiment.

George Santayana (1863-1952) “The Life of Reason,” I,
Reason in Common Sense, 1905-1906

How simple and frugal a thing is happiness: a glass of wine, a roast chestnut, the sound of the sea . . . All that is required to feel that here and now is happiness a simple frugal heart.

Nikos Kazantakis (1883-1957), “Zorba The Greek,” 1946, ch. 7.

Home is the place where, when you go there, they have to take you in—

Robert Frost in “North of Boston”

Babies are an inestimable blessing and a bother.

Mark Twain, Letter to Annie Webster, Sept. 1, 1876

*What would men be without women? Scarcer, sir . . . mighty scarce—*Mark Twain

My first recollections of life are not of Fifth Street but rather of Banklick Street, and the house we lived in (between 12th and 13th Streets). We lived on the 2nd floor overlooking an alley. The occupants of the house on the other side were Black and Beautiful! (I have a hazy memory of an old man, grizzly-haired smoking a corn cob pipe, and a buxom white-aproned woman with shiny black skin, but I may be confusing my memory with other images: Redd Foxx and “Aunt Jemima” or Ethel Waters.)

One of my earliest recollections of Mama was of her in the nude. I recall my wakening wonder of that dark triangular patch of hair, which covered my, and my siblings’, entrance into the world. (Any one interested in the symbolism of this triangle, or its inverted partner, might enjoy reading “The Da Vinci Code” by Dan Brown.) The mystery of that black triangle remained long after a neighbor kid “tried to explain” to me in graphic language. I pushed him down when he tried to tell me how babies came to be. (The nerve of some people!)

Dad Comes Home From Kroger's Bakery

I remember Dad coming home from work, huffing and puffing up the stairs, to our second-floor apartment. Sometimes he would bring damaged cookies from the Kroger warehouse where he worked—a special treat were “butterfingers” chocolate-covered candy with a crunchy peanut-butter fill. Once he gave me a paper gun that gave off an explosive “pop”. (When suddenly jerked downward, a folded paper flap expanded explosively upwards.) Now toy guns look so much like the real McCoy that criminals use them in lieu of hand guns! (Nobody would bother owning a paper gun anymore.)

Dad Cooked Smother-Burgers

On Friday nights, Dad would cook us well-done hamburgers with slabs of onions and mustard on Kroger buns. These gave off a mouth-watering aroma. So much so that even today, although I no longer eat beef, when I smell hamburger cooking, I go into a Proustian trance (or self-hypnosis?) of remembering. PJ's Pancake Restaurant in Princeton, which I frequented for many years, did this for me with their “Smother-burgers.” Is it possible to enjoy something without partaking of it? You betcha! I often wondered how Gandhi, and other vegetarians resisted Smother-Burgers.

Dad also specialized in mustard-packed sardines on bread or crackers. Before the advent of frozen food, this was virtually the only fish we ate, except during catfish season. To stave off hunger between meals we ate baloney and/or mustard sandwiches, peanut butter on crackers or apples, Graham crackers, milk, and sardines packed in mustard. It kept us going then (and still does.)

These occasions of acquiring and consuming I remember as happy ones: I liked both candy and making noise! What constitutes a happy childhood? At best, childhood is a series of adjustments in physical and mental growth. How does the (unhappy?) six-year-old weakling relate to the (happy?) sixteen year-old athlete or scholar he grows up to be?

Finicky About Veggies: Like most children, Fred and I savored meats and poultry (see at “Faith's Chicken” in the Index and Glossary), but were finicky about most fish (catfish was the exception) and veggies, although we differed about which veggies were most despised. For me, who now relish all vegetables, it was corn, okra, spinach (“I say it's spinach, and I say to hell with it”—Dennis, *The Menace*), broccoli, cabbage, and others with strong smells or flavors. We used boxes from Lifebuoy Soap¹ (so-named

¹ The English company, Lever Brothers, created Lifebuoy soap in 1895 and sold it as an antiseptic soap. They later changed its name to Lifebuoy Health Soap. Lever Brothers first coined the term “B.O.” for bad odor as part of their marketing company for the soap.

because “It floats”) to ditch the food in, to dump in some safe place away from Mama’s eyes. Lifebuoy Soap box sure was a lifesaver to us. No wonder we were so skinny! The famous quote of Brillat Savarin, 1755-1828, applies to us: *Tell me what you eat, and I will tell you what you are.* Well, mostly we ate meat loaf, instead of meat cuts, with cornbread, mashed potatoes and gravy, slaw, and green or pole beans, and often boom-boom (or pinto, or navy beans), which, fortunately, we liked very much.

Prayers And Incantations

Mama had us say grace at meals, and of course, she joined in.

*God is good, God is great, / And we thank Him for this food,
By His hand we must be fed, / Give us Lord, our daily bread.*

And, before bed, we said our prayers:

*Now I lay me down to sleep, / I pray the Lord my soul to keep.
If I should die before I wake, / I pray the Lord my soul to take.
And then she would say: sleep tight! And don’t let the bedbugs bite!*

I don’t think we understood the meaning of the words *then* as we do *now*, but naturally we were fearful of “dying before I wake” and of the bedbugs! (I have been told that all phobias have their etiology in the primal fear of death.) I can’t imagine people eating without thanks for the food they are about to eat. With so many people in the world starving, how can one not feel blessed by having enough to eat? Other incantations were: *Rain, rain / Go away / Come again / Some other day*; and this grammatical monstrosity: *It ain’t going to rain no more / It ain’t going to rain no more; / How in heck, can I wash my neck, / If it ain’t going to rain no more?*

The Myth of the Happy Childhood is just one of many. And after helping to rear six, I might add, so is *The Myth of the Unhappy Childhood!* My personal hang-ups notwithstanding, my Myth of Childhood is, up to the age of puberty at least, that of a happy, normal child (whatever that might be). Unquestionably my love for my mother was the source of much of my happiness—it made me happy to love her (Myth of Mother Love? See the Index/Glossary at Mother Love.). She provided and I dispose of, any number of good things, or “goodies”, but I think that a lot of problems for boys begin at puberty, or what is called facetiously “testosterone poisoning”. *I wondered if Mama understood anything at all about boys!* I developed an understandable attachment to Dad, who did, or at least, *should have* known, what boys live through. I reasoned, at least Dad is a man. (Monkey see? monkey do?)

Mama Was Built On a Large Scale: At 5 foot 5 inches, she weighed usually “only” 165, but often topped 185, and her love of food brought many of the goodies to my mouth the way a puppy shares the dinner table with his masters: I watched her with total concentration until she gave me a piece. She was too generous and too sanitary to employ the trick of our neighborhood kids—spitting on food before anyone asked for a bite. A refinement of this was to chant “ven dibs” which meant “no sharing”. (I don’t know what argot this is.)²

Peaselburg

From Banklick Street we moved to a first floor apartment on 22nd Street, a half-block west of Howell Street, right in the heartland of Peaselburg. Peaselburg is that part of Covington (on the “wrong” side of the tracks) bounded by, say, 16th Street on the North, west of Russell Street (or the railroad track), and the hills on the west, roughly a triangle with the apex at the 27th Street railroad tunnel. Peaselburg, however, is more a state of mind, because no two persons agree on its boundaries, it isn’t on any map that I could find, and I never learned how it got its name. Suffice it to say that it is German: “burg” is a German suffix, meaning town, and “ton” is the English equivalent. Moreover, a goodly percent of the inhabitants of Peaselburg were of German descent. At least, all the saloons in this region had German names, e.g., Heidel Hall, and so did many of the families as well as the beers.

Meet Our Landlord and Lady: Mr. and Mrs. Moore

Our landlord, Mr. Moore, was quite un-Germanic, possibly of Irish or English extraction. This gentle man and his kindly wife invited Fred and me to his house every Sunday so we could read the Sunday comics, and, as it happened, so they could find out about the Faith family. God help us if we learned to lie at the age of five! (Usually, we fibbed only to save our skins!) Mr. Moore always rewarded us with a nickel each, and on Halloween gave us a dime instead of candy. Mama accused us of selling ourselves. (Maybe, too cheap?) Be that as it may, it was Mrs. Moore who taught me that the sound of our peeing in the toilet was not the beautiful music to them that it was to us: “Would you please close the door while doing it?”

For better or for worse, many of my formative years, e.g., ages 6-15 were spent in Peaselburg. From 22nd Street, we moved to Herman Street, where we lived out our

² In Wentworth and Flexner’s “Dictionary of American Slang” a dib is a share or percent of something, usually money, from “divvy” or divide. In Evelyn Waugh’s *Diaries*, a dib was going to church or prayer, or the obligation to. In the American Heritage Dictionary dibs is slang meaning claim or rights, from dib, an obsolete word meaning to tap

destinies for the next 11 years in a clapboard house that was not fit to live in, then later to 20th Street to a better house, having a bath and a basement, and finally to West 16th Street to a brick house that was way too small. Dad believed in cheap rent, the determining factor in all his calculations. We now call it the bottom line.

Dad Chases Mama; Or Vice Versa?

I have one intensely happy remembrance living on 22nd Street: Daddy chasing Mama out of the living room door, across the porch, or veranda as Southerners like to say, around the house to the back yard, while Mama was giggling like the girl she really was (and that you had to see in her to know her), and breathlessly shouting, “No, stop, Herb, don’t!” to no avail. This cadence repeated several times, and afterwards silence. Dad had caught her and they were kissing. Soon they walked to *a place I could not go*. Although I was just five years old then, the vividness of this love embrace has not dimmed in all these years. *This relationship that I just witnessed was different from any I had observed before. I liked it, and more than that, it was desirable, and made them into new and different people, whom I liked! If I had to choose one remembrance of a happy childhood, surely I could never find a happier one than this: paradoxically Dad’s making Mama happy made me happy.*

Mama, the Siren?

This episode convinced me that Daddy’s and Mama’s love was the strongest link in the chain that binds the family together, and surpassed in intensity, quality, and duration the other links. Nothing that has happened to me in the ensuing years has changed that conviction, and everything that has happened has strengthened it. Dad’s chasing after Mama also had that classical aspect which suggested virility, femininity, tenderness, fun, joy and eventually ecstasy. Mama was a full participant in this love-play—*she enticed him, and therefore he was being seduced every bit as much as he was being masterful*. True, he was dressed only in pants and undershirt (before the shirtless Clark Gable vogue), and he was at the height of his strength, lean and muscular, but Mama was simply glorious—her long burnished chestnut hair flowed behind her as she leaped barefoot into the backyard.

I’m sorry that this idyllic episode was never repeated. Love is something like the silver dollar the miner works all day to earn but throws away with a single cut of the cards, saying, “Easy come, easy go!” It is a capital that is squandered when you have it, and then you wonder where it all went. Nothing lasts forever, so why should love? The answer, or the question is what every religion tries to give, or answer. Human beings have a fierce desire for permanence, but as in Juvenal’s poem, “The Vanity of Human Wishes,”

this will never be sated. Heraclitus told us that everything changes, *that the world is in a state of flux*, and that nothing is ever the same twice. For not only is the river not the same after you stick your toe in it, but neither is your toe. And by implication, neither are you. You are changed by experiences, no matter how seemingly innocuous they are at the time.

You must be the change you wish to see in the world—Gandhi³

Happiness

*Happiness is like a butterfly: / The more you chase it,
The more it will elude you, / but if you turn your attention
to other things, it will / come and sit softly / on your shoulder . . .*

Henry David Thoreau, 1817-1862

Hope

*Hope is the thing with feathers/ That perches in the soul
And sings the tune without words, / and never stops at all—Emily Dickinson.*

³ As a teacher later in life I used Gandhi's wisdom this way: I told students, "When were pointing their finger at someone, try turning your finger towards yourself, and see how hard it is."

CHAPTER 5

2439 HERMAN STREET

The long winding road (that leads to your house)

John Lennon and Paul McCartney

If Life Is a Bowl Of Cherries, What Am I Doing In the Pits?

Title of a book by Erma Bombeck.

Instead of giving politicians the keys to the city, it might be better to change the locks.

Doug Larson (from a Crossword Quip in the Trenton Times)

I didn't much like Herman Street.¹ The street was too big, even though it ran just three blocks, from 23rd Street to 26th, and lay between the railroad tracks and Warren Street. Above Warren were the green hills of Kentucky, and below Herman was a jungle growing along the railroad siding.

Railroad's Alphabet Soup

You could learn the alphabet, or make alphabet soup, off the sides of the boxcars: NYC, B&O, C&O, L&N, SP, and UP, short for respectively, New York Central, Baltimore & Ohio (the first US railroad chartered to carry passengers and freight, back on February 28, 1827, according to "Highlights in History"), Chesapeake & Ohio, Louisville & Nashville, Southern Pacific, Union Pacific, not to mention the Atchison, Topeka and Santa Fe!

¹ Like much of Cincinnati, Covington had a large ethnic German population, but Peaselburg had more. There was even a Beer Garden (Heidel Hall). I never knew who Herman Street was named after, but it had a definite Germanic flavor. Eldridge hated it since it was his own despised and disowned first name! I suppose I disliked it because of our miserable house, and the poverty we endured there, in addition to the many pitfalls we skirted, and described below.

(Atchison was a hub city of northeast Kansas for the railroad founded in 1859.) Harry Warren wrote a song about it:

The Atchison, Topeka and Santa Fe

Do yuh hear that whistle down the line?

I figure it's engine number forty-nine,

She's the only one that'll sound that way

On the Atchison, Topeka, and the Santa Fe. Woo-Woo!

Too Tough

Herman Street was too tough for my taste. Over the years bully after bully jumped into my life, and like weeds in sidewalk cracks, they resisted being pulled out. Most withered away as I grew, but unluckily, like many, I grew up late—between the ages of 16 and 18. Herman Street had more than bullies; it had real gangsters: two playmates served time “down the river” in the state pen, and one of these was a repeater “dangerous and armed”.

But bullies and gangsters are just the more theatrical signs of toughness: all life is tough to a growing child. Several young friends died, and I was terrified that I might die, or even worse, that my guarantee-er, Mama, might die. A child soon learns that life is no Garden of Eden—no Earthly Paradise. As the song says, “I never promised you a rose garden.” A title of a book by Erma Bombeck states it well, “If Life Is a Bowl of Cherries, What Am I Doing Here in the Pits?”

Death Affects You Deeply

There were always the threats to your own life posed by potential hunger, homelessness and desertion. There was no Welfare State in the Great Depression! I never knew what a philanthropist was until I got to college and saw all the monuments. Of course, I have never met one. You can cry if people will not give you a buck, but what can you do if they will not give you a chance to earn one? In the thirties, the answer was: Stand in a bread-line! Learn to beg! Kill your pride! Get on your knees!

Uncle Tom

I used to laugh at the epithet Blacks apply to their black brethren who worked for Whites: “Uncle Toms”. For one thing, Uncle Tom was Fred’s and my favorite Uncle. For another, I learned to what extent people are without job tenure (2/3rds of the labor force in 1979-1980, and much more now.) Were they Uncle Toms? It’s hard to talk back on an empty stomach: “An army marches on its belly,” according to Napoleon.

Wrong Side of the Tracks

One tough aspect of Herman Street was its location—far out and on the wrong side. On the other side of the hill at 26th Street and the Extension of Warren Street leading to the main drag (Madison Avenue) was Latonia. On the other side of the hill paralleling Warren Street, nothing but farms. The main drag sported the high school, the banks, the businesses and the approach to the Suspension Bridge² over the Ohio to Cincinnati. (Actually the next street over, Greenup Street, led straight onto the bridge.) The Basilica of the Assumption Cathedral, a replica of Notre Dame in Paris, graced mid-town at 1140 Madison Avenue (and reputedly has the largest stained-glass church window in the world), and Holmes High School, the former owner's (Holmes') idea of an English castle, secured the flank. Madison Avenue Baptist Church, a powerhouse in the Church Basketball League sponsored by the YMCA, is further up on Madison Avenue.

Slummy Houses

What made it tough was that most of the houses were slums—poorly built with high rents. My friends, elsewhere in Covington, lived in houses with bathrooms, attics and basements, hot water and central heating, all of which 2439 lacked, and they paid no more than we paid for rent: The luck of the draw! If you got a slumlord, you paid high, and made people rich who did not give a whit for your happiness or welfare.

Rats!

Does your house crawl with Norwegian (or Brown) rats? 2439 did. Morning after morning we woke up to their teeth gnawing into woodwork, and to the obvious implication: they could gnaw on you! Happiness was hearing them get theirs in the rat-traps Daddy planted in front of their holes in the woodwork.³ But this just got the youngsters—the old ones

² Designed and built by John A. Roebling, an engineering genius whose Brooklyn (Suspension) Bridge is one of the “greatest triumphs of nineteenth century American engineering” (quote from “The Book of Bridges” by Martin Hayden, Galahad Books, New York, 1976 (p.116). Also, see “Bridges” by Judith Dupré, B, L, & D Publishers, New York, 1997.) When he was inspecting the Brooklyn Bridge he injured his foot and died of tetanus, and his son, Washington Augustus took over and completed the job, aided by his wife, who acted as his “eyes” and a courier.

³ 35 years later I watched an exterminator killed a pregnant Brown rat. The rat squealed and squealed and tried to avoid the blows being rained on her. It made me sick to my stomach—the squeals were almost human.

would just go back to gnawing. (Rodents have to gnaw to survive, since otherwise their teeth would grow too long and they could not use them.) The next morning, Mama wiped the blood off the walls, while Dad carried out the carcasses, and sometimes just a leg a rat had gnawed off. Often Dad surprised a rat and killed it before it got back to its hole. How could he do this with his bare feet, or even in slippers? The answer indicates how soft the generations have become—it was *nothing* to him. At least he would not show it if it was. On the farm he killed chickens by chopping off or wringing their necks, rabbits, quail and squirrels by shotgun, pigs by slitting their throats. Life was no bowl of cherries on the farm either.

The Rats Left Calling Cards

Once Mama found rat-droppings in the fold-up bed Fred and I slept in. I tossed and turned all night; terrified that the rat would return when I woke up. In the morning Mama found I had a fever. It was the most horrifying night of my life. Since 2439 had no basement, not even a crawlspace, except for rats, the floors were frigid. On cold winter nights, the temperature of the floor matched the ground temperatures—there was no insulation.

Rats Can Have Sex Twenty Times a Day, But So What? I'm Not Jealous

*... and on Mohs Scale of Hardness, rats' teeth are a 5.5, harder than steel . . . Rats that live in the city grow to be twice as big as rats in the country. Rats have been known to kill themselves over exercising. Rats can kill cats. Rats have been spotted swimming up to three miles from land—*From the New Yorker, March 29, 2004, p.60, Advertisement for Robert Sullivan's book "Rats".

Does Sex Count as Exercise?

That is my question on the above ad. I read a story in the Metro section of the New York Times the first week of June, 2004 about a rat in Central Park that swam out to the middle of the pond and snatched a piece of bread which had been thrown for the ducks to eat. I said to myself: It must have been a Norwegian rat! They are fearless. So often I wished for the Pied Piper of Hamelin to take them all away. (See a quote from Browning's poem in an epigraph to Chapter 42.)

If a man can write a better book, or make a better mousetrap, the world will beat a path to his door—
Ralph Waldo Emerson.

2439 Herman Street—Six People in Three Rooms?

Meanwhile back to my old Kentucky home: since 2439 had no central heating, aside from the fireplace in the front room, or parlor, the pot-belly stove in the bedroom, and the oven in the kitchen, there was no heat to be had. If you strayed from stove in the living room you froze, as did the water standing in the sink, and of course, the water pipes.

Actually, there was just one bedroom, the parlor with a convertible sofa, and a kitchen with a big round table for all six of us, with an expansion “leaf” for when we had guests. It happens all the time in New York and other big cities with even more people crowded together. After Eldridge, left home at age fourteen to live with Uncle Ira in Bloomington, Indiana, Louise had her own bed in the parlor, and for sixteen years (age 2 to 18) Fred and I slept in the same room as Mama and Daddy. Privacy was not a luxury—it was unheard of. Then, after Charley, her husband, was drafted in 1942, Louise moved back in with Billy, her baby, for the rest of the war.

Because of the lack of a hot water heater, Mama had to heat and carry scalding water for the wash and baths. No wonder she suffered “arthritis”! And because there were no washing machines, she had to do the scrubbing of the clothes by hand, and of course she wrung them out by hand, too. In later years, she would complain of “arthritis” of the arm and shoulder. Is there any wonder? Life was no bowl of cherries in the city either!

No Bath Room or Showers

Another lack of 2439—no bathtubs or showers! Imagine having to take your bath in a washtub in the middle of the kitchen while everybody walked by. It was Sis’s job to scrub Fred’s back and mine, and Mama carried the hot water from the stove. This continued until I reached the age of puberty, that is, embarrassment. With three boys in the family, without knowing Mama you might think we led a barrack’s life, but she would have none of that. Fred and I might have streaked⁴, but Sis was so modest that I never even saw her in a swimming suit. She went swimming with her friends, and only photographs attest to her sun worship.

How We Stayed Clean, Despite the Rats

People may wonder how we stayed clean without bathtubs or showers, and rats running about. In the future more people will discover “sponge baths” when they try to conserve

⁴ “Streaking” began in the 70’s: college kids and others running nude through the streets, in theaters, anywhere. In Princeton, New Jersey, where I have lived from 1960 on, the University there just in the year, 1999, banned the “nude Olympics” that celebrated the first snow of the season, because of widespread alcoholic and sexual abuses.

energy, or avoid paying high prices for it, and for gallons of hot water going down the drain. They will also discover how refreshing they are.

The Good Bad Old Days

They did have some nice amenities. Fresh fruits and vegetables, milk and ice were brought to your door, first in horse-drawn wagons, then later in trucks. And weekly, a man sang out “ragscoaliron” to buy or sell, it didn’t matter to him which. (For all I know, he might have been Kirk Douglas’ father. See his biography “The Ragman’s Son.”) When the oil bubble bursts in the oil producing countries, members of OPEC, and prices go sky high (as they did in 2004 when Iraqi oil pipelines were bombed by so-called “insurgents”), some of these amenities may become economically feasible again. Milk runs have already resumed in some cities. Speaking of amenities reminds me of the joke. A man takes his torn trousers to a Greek tailor, who asks, “Euripides?” “Yes, Eumendides?”

The Holman Streetcar: Streetcar # 5

Then, of course, before cars became a household item, public transportation was a cheap convenient way to get from here to there. The Holman Streetcar, # 5, came up Holman to Howell to about three blocks of 2439 Herman Street, and would take you downtown Covington, or across the Suspension Bridge to the Green Line Terminal on 4th Street and Walnut Street in Cincinnati. From there, you could hop a Cincinnati streetcar to anyplace you wanted to go to, or get a transfer and continue your journey. You still can, but only on buses.

Furniture

Before leaving 2439 Herman Street, I ought to say something about our furniture. In the front room, or parlor, there was a carpet, in addition to the pullout sofa, or davenport, and an overstuffed chair or two. There was a “library” table, that is, a table with a drawer in which all photographs were kept (I still have it, minus most of the photographs which Sis took with her), and a fireplace. In the bedroom, where Mama and Dad slept, was a wardrobe, or cabinet for clothes. “Shifferobe” (chifferobe?) was a term Mama used, but I couldn’t find it in the dictionary, although chiffonier is there: a narrow, high chest of drawers, or bureau, often with mirrors. Garderobe was another term in use. In the kitchen was a large round table, covered with an oilcloth decorated with Mama’s inevitable flowers. The chairs weren’t cushioned, to say the least about our bare-boned existence.

CHAPTER 6

MAMA'S LOVE OF BEAUTY

Beauty is in the eye of the beholder.

Many people said this starting with Theocritus, 3BC;

Concise Oxford Dictionary of Proverbs, John Simpson, ed.;

also see *Quotationary*, where is it ascribed to Margaret Hungerford, in 1878.

He thought it happier to be dead, / To die for Beauty, than to live for bread.

Ralph Waldo Emerson, 1803-1882,"Beauty," from "May-Day and Other Pieces," 1867

"Yes, there is beauty in Rome, because there is beauty everywhere

—Maria Rainier Rilke in response to a friends query.

... but I have loved the principle of beauty in all things—John Keats, Endymion, 1818, IV, l.173; see Bartlett.

Mama: The Mother of Beauty?

*D*eath may be, as the quote goes, *the mother of beauty*¹ but mother was the most beauty conscious person I ever knew. She constantly improved on every visual, and some invisible, aspect of our lives. As in the Navy gag—"If it moves, salute it, if it doesn't move, move it, and if you can't move it, paint it," she would paint everything, mostly white and red. All knobs were red. We teased her unmercifully about her rage for red, and she would laugh until tears came. Mama was fun to poke fun at—she caught on early in a tease and could not stop giggling. From then on she was at our mercy. Years later, when I was a Fulbright and a NATO Scholar at Heidelberg, Germany, a woman told me, "Whoever teases, loves." In German, this comes out as "Wer neckt sich, liebt sich."

Wax

Wax was the next necessity for Mama after paint. Everything was waxed and burnished. Floors were proverbially clean enough to eat on, and *they could kill you* when the rugs

¹ From "Sunday Morning" by Wallace Stevens.

flew out from under you. Normally cautious Mama extravagantly applied wax—even to the sink porcelain. Everything you touched skidded away from you—you lived in a greased world. Mama could not tolerate dirt or dust so we had wax and more wax burnished every day. And she applied the same strategy on us—we were scrubbed and burnished to a high shine. *No question about it, we were destined for greatness!* (If that doesn't make you laugh, nothing in this book will.) In any case, Fred and I were "Blue Ribbon Students, the designation for students who passed inspection for oral hygiene, cleanliness, and health.

Did Mama Have the Lady Macbeth Complex?

Of course modern living is so much more casual—few dust every day any more. Certainly Mama did not get many books read in her ceaseless cleaning routine. Worse than that, nobody else had a moment's peace. Everybody was *en garde* every minute. Perhaps this was another "control" tactic, or maybe an obsession against dirt, or a modified Lady Macbeth complex. "Out! Out! Damned spot." (I am only half-joking.) But regardless of the cause of the compulsion to clean, Mama's house was a temple to God, if the old saying "Cleanliness is next to Godliness" has any truth to it.

Time after time, we would come home after school to a practically new house. She reveled in frenzies of work. Her compulsion for paint was only equaled by her compulsions for plants, vines, and flowers. We lived in a terrarium; sweet-potato vines climbing down the wall, morning glories climbing up on the outside, zinnias and geraniums hogging the sunlight in their painted green boxes, while pansies, asters, sunflowers, sweet-peas, chrysanthemums, roses, tulips, jonquils, daffodils proliferated in the yard.

The Purifying Aspect of Work

Some would say that Mama's slavish devotion to her home, plants and family was a wasted effort, and maybe even ostentatious. However, in Kawabata's lyrical novel, "Snow Country", Shimamura ponders the meaning of Kamoko's wasted efforts in filling ten notebooks full of literature she has read, and of learning to play the samisen just for herself. He also comments that mountain climbing is a model of wasted effort, but goes on to say, "He knew well enough that for her it was in fact no wasted effort, but somehow the final determination that it had the effect of distilling and purifying the woman's existence." Moreover, mountain climbing had "the attraction of the unreal."

I think Mama's efforts, while definitely sublimations, were not quite as pure as Kamoko's: dirt is real (as characters in novels are not) and disease is real. We had all the common childhood diseases, whereas Sis suffered major illnesses when she was fourteen (or fifteen?) Louise had developed a very large tumor on her rump—a result of a fall on

skates—that had to be surgically removed. This caused her to miss a year of school, and then she eschewed going back when she recovered because she felt that she was too “old,” and “too big,” for the ninth (or tenth) grade.

Louise also suffered from a terrifying congenital ailment: asthma. Whoever hears an asthmatic struggle to breathe, will not likely forget it. We all suffered when she did, and were afraid that she might die of it, but luckily she didn’t. Wheezing is the word used to describe her breathing “hard with a husky, whistling sound” (Funk and Wagnalls.) In my childish takeoff on a popular song with the opening line, “Every little breeze/ Seems to whisper ‘Louise,’”² I shamelessly would replace breeze with Louise wheeze (but *not* when anyone was around to hear me.) The song goes on: “Birds in the trees, / Seem to whisper ‘Louise.’ / Each little rose / Tells me it knows / I love you.” Etc. Ironically perhaps, wheeze also means “whisper,” for according to my venerable Funk and Wagnalls New College Dictionary, which I purchased new in 1954, the year after its publication, it is “a whisper so exaggerated that it gave rise to the sound popularly called ‘stage whisper.’”

Mama’s View of the World: The Value of Hard Work

While Mama had many bodily complaints (aches and pains), she never complained that life had cheated her, or that she was sick and tired of life! As an adult, I learned that one’s disposition is a reflection on life’s disappointments. It was no secret, however, that her thoughts about the world stretched beyond her sidewalk and her immaculate beloved house were silent, sharp criticisms of the ugliness she perceived there.

But mostly I have come to think of her effort as a manifestation of her creative powers. She not only gave birth to her children, nourished them, molded their characters, but as they were growing up, she created the home environment that we would see as the most beautiful home of all our friends. She showed what you could do with your own efforts.³ Thus, besides my undying love for Mama, she gained my enormous respect. I have never been able to match her in this—far from it!

² This lovely song, entitled “Louise,” was written by Leo Robin (music) and Richard Whiting (lyrics; see, e.g., *Reading Lyrics* by Gottlieb and Kendall, p. 191.) Introduced in the 1929 movie, “Innocents in Paris,” “it was “made for Maurice Chevalier’s accented crooning,” according to the Da Capo’s Companion, p. 167.

³ A neighbor of ours in Princeton (the late Marianne Rees, who lived on the northwest corner of Lake and Longview Drives) put Mama to shame in this regard—not only did she remodel and redecorate her last three domiciles, but she was a prize-winning gardener. I often thought of Monet’s garden when I looked at hers.

CHAPTER 7

THE LOWER DEPTHS

When poverty comes in the door, love flies out the window—Anonymous, 17th c.

It is not the man who has little, but the man who craves more, who is poor.

Seneca, The Younger (5thBC, 65AD)

Quoted in Random House Webster's Quotationary

The real tragedy of the poor is that they can afford nothing but self-denial.

Oscar Wilde (1854-1900), *The Picture of Dorian Gray* (1891) (*ibid*).

I've been poor and I've been rich, and believe me, rich is best.

Sophie Tucker (1884-1966), *Time Magazine*, November 16, 1993

*If a girl has a dog and a bike,
she has all she needs to make her happy.*

My daughter, Cindy Ann, in 1971 at the age of 14 had both.

The trouble with being poor is that it takes all your time.

Wilhelm de Kooning, quoted in his

New York Times Obituary, March 23, 1997

Brother, Can You Spare a Dime? (Say, don't you remember?)—Yip Harburg, 1932

While there is a lower class, I am in it. While there is a criminal class,

I am in it, while there is a soul in prison, I am not free.

Eugene V. Debs, 1855-1926, organizer and leader of the American Socialist Party, imprisoned as a
“labor-agitator.”

Books As Vodka¹

From four articles in the new York Times (especially the article on July 14th, 1979), I learned that people in what was then the USSR had shortages of everything, and were forced to queue up for the basic necessities of life, and, as reported in the New York Review of Books,¹ even toilet paper was scarce and that there were not enough books. I am reminded of the USA in the Great Depression. I read that the Russians lived in crowded apartments, lacked public transportation, and drank too much vodka in order to anesthetize the ennui of a state-controlled life. Well, everybody was crowded in the depression because it was cheaper, nobody could afford cars, nor, of course, drunkenness.

Gorbachev and Glasnost

No wonder the USSR dissolved in 1991. Gorbachev, the President of the USSR from 1985, ushered in an unprecedented era of Glasnost (an official USSR policy of emphasizing candor in discussions of Soviet problems and shortcomings) and Perestroika (the organizational restructuring of the Soviet economy and bureaucracy that began in the mid 1980's), leading to independence of several of the Soviet Republics, notably, Byelorussia (or, Belorussia, now Belarus), Georgia, the Ukraine, Estonia, and Lithuania.

The Drabness of Human Misery

There is a sameness, a drabness about human misery that travels all over the world, except possibly in the Orient where millions famish not from drabness but from hunger or diseases which ravage underfed bodies. To those emaciated souls, the USSR, or even the USA in The Great Depression, would appear preferable or even desirable. The world, which has the money and might to pour incredible wealth into their military systems, such as most recently the U.S., spending countless billions to finance the War in Iraq, begun in late March 2003, might, instead, use these funds to eliminate the greatest of human misery—starvation and hunger-induced diseases. Much good already has been done in parts of the world, notably in Mexico and India, through the Green Revolution

¹ From an article, June-July, 1979, of the New York Review of Books, entitled “Books as Vodka”, by Lev Losev-Lev. I recently learned that this idea is not original with Losev-Lev. Kafka said, “Books are a narcotic” to Gustav Janouch who made notes of their conversations, and published them “Conversations with Kafka.” See, p. 36, 1953. (See also the Kafka quote about books on the Title Page.) No doubt many people had said the same thing about other pursuits, e.g., TV, known as the “idiot-box,” or “boob-tube.”

which doubles and triples grain production through hybrid grains and cereals. But as far as direct charitable contributions to Biafra (a region of Eastern Nigeria), Bangladesh, Cambodia, sub-Saharan Africa, and other areas of the “Third World,” the record for nations great and small is shocking and disgraceful. It is as if Jesus, Mohammed, Moses or Buddha had never walked the earth! The great religions send missionaries to convert the masses, but they send precious little money.² The oil shortage in the 70’s caused nations to talk about world rationing, based on past expenditures (of course this would be unfair to “developing” nations) but thus far only visionaries have called for rationing of food, proteins, meats, fish and fowl. Jesus urged that people divest themselves of accumulated wealth so that much more would be available for the poor. On the other hand, even Jesus said, “You will always have the poor among you” (Matthew 26:11). Then, added, “but you will not always have me.”

From all indications, the people of the United States would rather gorge themselves on a too fat diet even at the duly documented cost of heart disease and other obesity-linked diseases, such as diabetes and cancer, rather than restrict their intake to healthier levels that would not only make them feel better, be healthier, but also would help solve the world’s food shortage.

But would it? Without the money of the rich, the chicken farms and granaries would go out of business. Money is the lubricant of commerce. Money is a lodestone, ever pointing True North. Money is a lightning rod which attracts bolts of lightning (power!). As the USSR (now defunct as stated above) has learned from its former communes, individual (i.e., money) incentives are required if a worker is to give his or her best. “*When it comes to money, everyone is of the same religion*” (Chesterton).

Living in Jerry-Built Houses

Well, many people living on Herman Street, and the adjacent Warren Street, and no doubt, most of Peaselburg, came close to the “Lower Depths” of Maxim Gorky’s play: some hoped to escape, and others gave up in despair.³ Like 2439, most houses were not fit to live in. The ones that were, were renovated by the inhabitants at a considerable expenditure of time, energy and money. Maybe it is always that way—substandard, formerly called Jerry-built houses thrown up by the speculator/developer and humanized

² I wish I could remember who said, “The humanness of any government is measured by how they treat the poor.”

³ A two-disc set packages two very different adaptations of Maxim Gorky’s 1902 play appeared in June 2004. One is Jean Renoir’s 1936 movie “transplants Gorky’s collection of flophouse residents to a grimy suburb of Paris,” while Kurosawa’s 1957 film “reimagines (*sic!*) the action in 19th-century Tokyo.”

or dehumanized by successive waves of tenants, depending on their background: education, culture, health, wealth. In this respect, Herman Street was a mixed-bag. Some people, notably the Kellys, a half-block away, improved their property, and others like the Marshalls and the Bauers, let theirs run down.

Levittown USA

When Levittown, an unincorporated community of western Long Island that was founded in 1947 as a low-cost housing development for returning WWII GI's, it was widely scorned as a slum, but twenty years later after all the trees, shrubs and gardens matured, a reconsideration took place. Its population in 1990 was 65,400. A second Levittown, with a 1990 population of 17,400, is situated in southeast Pennsylvania, northeast of Philadelphia, near the Delaware River. (According to a New York Times article, realty prices rival those of their once-scorning neighboring towns.)

The Secret of Ownership

Of course the secret lay in ownership—the Kellys owned their property, and the Marshalls and the Bauers rented. The Faiths rented too, but Mama had the energy and will to keep the place planted and painted, while Daddy had the good sense to do what she wanted done! But most *things*—a basement, insulation, a furnace, and a hot water heater—evidently were all beyond our financial means. And so, like the characters in the “Lower Depths” we suffered the cold, the heat, the damp, the dirt, and prayed for better weather or better luck, or “cursed his (read our) fate and kept on drinking, as did Edwin Arlington Robinson’s “Miniver Cheevy:” *Miniver Cheevy, born too late, / scratched his head and kept on thinking. / Miniver coughed and called it fate, And kept on drinking—Ib. st. 8.*

Thom McCan’s Cheap Shoes

The wolf at the door was no phantom—no food stamps, no welfare worker to visit you, no one to take over for a sick mother. These were the pits. Lack of money was a devil we never could rid ourselves of. I once broke down and cried in the school playground when the toes of my cheap, paper-thin *Thom McCan*⁴ shoes wore through. I knew that a disaster

⁴ As an example of my dyslexia, for the longest time I thought that McCan was spelled with two “ns” (and so did Microsoft Spell Checker!) In a crossword puzzle Nov. 15, 2005, McCan was the answer to the clue “Shoe Company.” Also on the Web, I found out it is sold at Sears and Roebucks.

had happened, and I wondered how I could ever face Mama with the bad news. *Where would the money come from?* Everybody worked so hard, and did without, and then something in the nature of an inferior shoe made it appear to come to nothing. The U.S. was and still is loaded with *Thom McCans* making millions by providing shoddy merchandise to the poor who cannot afford to pay higher prices. (Cf. the epitaph by Wilhelm de Kooning.) The bad drives out the good, the way cheap shoes and cheap denims drove out the more durable article. Everything developed holes too fast—and that was good for the seller readying his next wagonload of profit. As the artist Wilhelm de Kooning said, “The trouble . . . being poor is that it takes all your time.”

Another thing, Thom McCans squeaked when you walked in them, but we children took our revenge, and would say, “Cheap, cheap, cheap” to rhyme with “Cheap, cheap, cheap.”

Life, Liberty, and the Pursuit of Happiness?

These people justify themselves by the free market principle—nobody forces the poor people to trade with them. The slumlords would have you believe that they are the saviors of society, and that nobody else would touch the people he rents to (a claim with some justice). The problem lies in inadequate government control of housing based on the life, liberty and pursuit of happiness guarantees listed in the Constitution. But too many people profit from the present system, and reform is notoriously slow.

Business is Business

It takes years to find out who actually owns a massage-parlor or adult bookstore in town, and when you do, you may find a prominent citizen, maybe a high-ranking politician, or a leading businessman. Business is Business, right? I remember a yellow rectangle that accompanied a scene from the movie “The French Connection” starring Gene Hackman, who won an Oscar for his performance as “Popeye” the FTA agent stopping the importation of narcotics. These rectangles accompany films shown on The Movie Channel, and they relate interesting tidbits about the background of the movie, and its filming. *This one stated that the amount of money spent on illegal drugs in the USA was over three times the amount of money in circulation at any given time.* Suddenly it dawned on me why so many citizens were incarcerated for selling or taking drugs. It’s not a penny-ante game!

Slumlords

Herman Street was just one of those deals—the slumlords profited, and the poor people suffered and agonized over their impotence to improve their lives, their residency in the cellar of the human edifice, their failure in the land of success.

The Worship of (Financial) Success

Nowhere is ‘success’ more worshiped than in the USA, and nowhere is ‘failure’ more ostracized. Worse than that, failure is a disease that people want to avoid—everybody chases after success, and the people in each category come to personify that category. The waste of human talent that individualism encourages was the most disheartening aspect of our Great Depression. Even though many individuals did not have the talent or options necessary to avoid “The Lower Depths”, collectives could have pooled resources and conserved by using talents that were too small to function alone.

My Hatred of the Defeat Mirrored in the Eyes of People

What I hated most about my childhood were not the rats, the cold, the hunger, nor even the worry, the tears, not the fear, but the terrifying certainty of defeat that I read in people's eyes who had failed to make a pretty life for their families. They blamed themselves as much as they blamed the government. They actually felt inferior! No wonder that Hitler could rise to power over a prostrate people—no one was strong enough to stop him! The Great Depression had destroyed the social fabric—the belief in one's ultimate worth. No wonder that Hitler bragged, “Every man has his price, and you would be surprised at how cheap it is.”

Never Enough Food Except at Feast Days

Although there was always peanut-butter and crackers for snacks, sometimes you simply could not get the dry stuff down your throat—in the thirties, homogenized peanut butter was a decade or more away. (Anyway, homogenized is not good for you.) Fred and I were “skin-and-bones”. Mama would complain that we were not starving, when we would fight like dogs over a piece of meat, and over who got the “bigger” piece. There is nothing like hunger to sharpen the senses—and ours were razor sharp in the thirties. (I have a photo of the family when I was 15 years old in which my ribs show through my T-shirt (formerly polo shirts before T for tennis). See, for example, “The Hungry Years: A Narrative History of the Great Depression in America,” by T.H. Watkins, to see how widespread hunger really was, with some convincing photographs entitled “White Angel Bread Lines” and “Migrant Mother” by Dorothea Lange.

We Were *Always* Hungry

Mama, and Sis, would be horrified to hear me “talk” this way, but without blaming anybody, that was the way it was!⁵ We were *always* hungry.⁶ (Like Charlie Chaplin in a scene in *The Tramp* in which he was so hungry that he boiled his shoes, and ate both his shoes *and* his shoelaces, like spaghetti, with great relish.) Sometimes my parents raised a big garden. Oh how I loved those resourceful people! Dad was an expert carpenter (formerly his trade), and Mama was a country child with a green thumb that could make anything grow anywhere. They were the kind of people in the inspirational King Vidor film “Our Daily Bread” on the depression: self-reliant, resourceful and proud. (In the movie, a young couple makes succeed at farming land that they inherited in the Depression.) In other words, they were the “salt of the earth.” Unfortunately, Fred and me we were too finicky to fill up on vegetables. We were carnivores.

We ate chicken only once- or twice-a-year, and when we did, we bought the chicken live, had to kill it (Dad by cutting off its head, and Mama by wringing, its neck), and then watch the chicken run around the yard until it died, a gruesome sight, especially when it was headless.) Next came the scalding in hot water to loosen the feathers so it could be plucked. Doesn’t that sound grisly? But that was all we had before refrigeration or supermarkets that would do all the preparation for you.

⁵ Sister did in fact read the first edition. Trusting Joy gave Sis her copy, written in 1979-1980 and Xeroxed, without realizing that it was figuratively a bomb! Then Sis gave it to Eldridge with the predictable effect. Boom! In their minds, I was still little brother, and not really old enough (at the age of 54!) to know what life was all about. Predictably, Eldridge chided me the first chance he got: “a lot of water had passed over the dam.” Belittling little brother was such a tradition that it had become a reflexive, like a knee jerk. But, as I was weaned on the lack of praise from him, I had become inured, and would never have expected him to approve of any point of view but his own. (Now does everybody see *how* Eldridge was my second father?) Certainly, I never planned to publish it, and had printed off just ten copies for Molly, Joy, and the children. Let me communicate this to Eldridge’s shade: *Yes, a lot of water passed over the dam.*

⁶ Children of the ages 12-16 generally are. From my perch in the corner of the kitchen, I watched my son Ezra practically live in the refrigerator the year he grew 4 inches, and added 30 pounds in his 16th year.

A Frightening Aspect of Capital is its Liquidity

When people lose the ability to provide their own food they become the new serfs, and worse than the old serfs, since they are dependent on the vagaries of moneyed people for jobs, hence food and housing. When I visited Ireland in 1988, I was told that every Irish person has a tie to the land, someplace they could to live and be fed by a relative. A frightening aspect of capital is its liquidity: a capitalist can close up shop, layoff his employees, convert his assets into money and go elsewhere. There is no law that says a moneyed man has to stay in business, has to provide jobs for his employees, or has to provide them with social security after he quits. Nevertheless, there is a law of nature that says the employees must eat.

“Capital” Disciplines “Labor

And there is a law of business that says that capital must “discipline” labor when labor gets too expensive (*read* too much security in the form of adequate wages and job guarantees). This is done in the manner described: capital-on-the-lam. Now-a-days it is not just a question of the US dollars fleeing labor unions in the North to exploit cheaper labor in the South—those days are long past as our Georgian President, Jimmy Carter attests to. In fact, the money runs (not just flows!) to other countries. (The New York Times for July 9, 1979 has an article on the multi-million dollar expansion of American industry in Spain since the death of Franco.) And since the mid-90’s, we have NAFTA, the North American Free Trade Agreement, that gives the green light to cash flow to Mexico and Latin America. And now South America is also included in NAFTA.

The Kellys

I don’t think the Kelly family never recovered from Herb’s death—he was the apple of their eye, named after his father, and the oldest child. Mr. Herbert Kelly was a veteran of WWI, and suffered from the affects of a gas attack, which left his lungs congested and breathless or wheezy, as they say in Kentucky. (Or maybe it was emphysema? He did smoke, as I remember.) His ramrod straight figure in the khaki uniform of our Scout Troop (#13) guided us for years, but he appeared to lose heart after Herb died, and, then, another block-father, Mr. Edmondson, took his place.

Mrs. Kelly was my favorite adult on the block. She was small, trim and shapely, with a sharp Irish tongue in her mouth and a lively twinkle in her eye. She loved to tease me about my love for Becky, her younger daughter, who was a full-bloom off her mother.

Christine, the eldest, was tall, straight and slim like Mr. Kelly, and Charles, the youngest, was my best friend for years.

Our companionship, though not our friendship, ended after the police rounded up 13 members (disciples?) of the gang for stealing candy from Roush's Candy Store, across from Seventh District School. Fortunately for Fred and me, Mama would not permit us to go out the night of the Big Haul—it was “Cabbage Night” (so named because if someone didn't treat a kid, he would rub cabbage on the porch, which would stink up the place), and she said that means mischief and trouble. When the police looked at our clean hands, and let us go, Mama made a *believer* out of me. It was not only that she was trying to stop just high jinks (although *that too*), she was keeping us out of Reform School where several members of the gang ended up, and one graduated into the State Penitentiary. Mama said on many occasions, “No child of mine is going to jail as long as there's breath in my body!” And you know, I believed her! *She was our guarantee.*

CHAPTER 8

THE HERMAN STREET GANG

I only played the hooligan

To burn with an intenser flame.

Esenin, *Confessions of a Hooligan*, p.16,

Translated and Introduced by Geoffrey Thurley

Birds of a feather flock together.

George Wither, *Abuses*, 1613

Birds of a feather will gather together, Robert Burton, 1577-1640,

Anatomy of Melancholy, 1620, Also, *Ecclesiastes XXVII*, 9.

Dime con quien andas dicinte de quien eres.

(Tell me who you hang out with and I will tell you who you are.)

Cervantes, 1547-1616, in *Don Quixote*.

Bullies and Heroes: Buddy Dotson and Duke Haake

Our gang consisted of about half the kids on the block, but, oddly enough, nobody as far as a block away on Warren Street. The gang did not have a head, or rather it had several heads, who kept the peace among us lesser mortals—the weaklings. Not all the heads were as big and strong as Herbert Kelly’s, nor as short and pugnacious as Paul “Duke” Haake’s. Bailey, another leader named Herb, shorter and broader than Kelly, was taller and better proportioned than Duke, who was devastating at fisticuffs. His low center-of-gravity allowed him to wade into an opponent and maintain a windmill of blows until his adversary was laid low. *In many conflicts, passion is the decisive factor.* His usual foe was the bully-of-the-block, Buddy Dotson. Like all physical bullies, Buddy had strength, and he used it, like all bullies, on demonstrably weaker boys. The boys he could have beaten would not fight him, and the others were thrust on him by one of the gang leaders thirsting to avenge a brother, sister, or a friend. I would hate to live my life knowing that I had caused such pain as he did.

Duke's World War II Exploits

I learned Duke's Christian name, Paul, from an undated article, which Mama had clipped from the Kentucky Post, probably from the summer of 1945, about his marriage in August 2 to June Kroiss, also of Covington. The article stated that he had been in the "service" for two years, including one year overseas, and seven months as a German prisoner. This I knew nothing about until I read the article. Furthermore, the article went on to state that "he had been granted a 66 day furlough . . . had been assigned to duty in Florida," and that "his bride recently visited him there."

Blue Goose

Buddy Dotson would have made a brutal jailer, or prison guard. He liked to stop kids having fun, and push them around to show them that he was boss, or "blue goose," i.e., take their marbles¹, or "borrow" some attractive item like a new glove or baseball and play with them himself. He was a two-bit "Godfather" and so base that, alone, of all my childhood acquaintances, I learned to hate him so deeply that even today I haven't forgiven either him or myself for not annihilating him, not that I could with my puny physique, and, yes, my lack of passion, or the taste for, fighting. I was imbued with Christ's advice: turn the other cheek. Also, Mama absolutely forbade fighting, and if we got into a fight, we had one at home with her afterwards. Unfortunately, Buddy lived just two doors from us, so he was an omnipresent malignancy in our lives. Mama called him and his ilk "roughnecks."²

Duke's little brother, Frankie Haake was my first childhood friend, and his death by drowning had filled me with gloom about life's prospects. He was a red-head, freckles and all, slight of build, with a pleasant boyish grin and the bluest eyes.

Riding the Rails

Everybody in the Gang used to hitch rides on boxcars to a spot on Banklick Creek, a tributary of the Licking River, miles away, and it was there Frankie drowned on a Saturday when I had not been allowed to go. At his funeral at St. Augustine Church, I was named an honorary pallbearer and I remember that he was buried on a bright sunny day in the cemetery, the saddest day that I ever remembered from my childhood.

¹ This was allowed provided that "blue goose" was called out in warning, to give others a chance to snatch too, but it made everyone jumpy in anticipation.

² Mama was an advocate of the nursery rhyme: "Sticks and Stones may break my bones, but names will never hurt me;" but I wasn't worried about the names.

Herb Kelly

Some years later, when the family made one of its infrequent visits to my Mama's hometown of Paducah, my idol and protector, Herb Kelly died the same way as Frank but not in the same place. He drowned in Hatchet Lake (so named after its shape) when he slipped off the log he was floating on. He was a brave yet foolish young man because, as I later learned, he could not swim a stroke. Why, for heaven's sake could a Boy Scout not be able to swim? I heard that he had slipped off his log, sank and never came up.

I learned many years later of what is called "swimmer's syndrome" which describes the death of even experienced or strong swimmers who inadvertently fill their lungs with water instead of air, and drown within view of other swimmers who can't reach him or her in time.

Youth Died Young in the Lower Depths. Because of inadequate safeguards, even lifeguards may not be able to save someone from swimmer's syndrome, the sudden accidental filling of the lungs with water. Preventive medicine was unheard of—people could not afford doctors. When I was in the first grade at Seventh District School a classmate standing in line in front of me slumped to the floor, dead, with a heart attack (as we learned later). Today a congenital defect like his might have been detected early, and corrected by surgery. But maybe not, given the large number of highly publicized sudden deaths of athletes, among other people. In any case, illnesses mostly were treated with home remedies since we couldn't afford a doctor.

Al Capone, 1899-1947

In May 2005, I watched on Cable TV the 1987 movie "The Untouchables" about how the Treasury Agent Eliot Ness, starring Kevin Costner as the idealistic Ness, Robert De Niro as the strutting Capone (which in Italian fittingly means Capon, or castrated rooster) and Sean Connery as Ness' mentor. Italian-born Capone, the son of an impoverished barber, had worked his way up from petty criminal in South Brooklyn to head of the organized crime syndicate in Chicago 1925-1931. Responsible for hundred of murders, and millions in bootleg liquor profits, he was caught only on income tax evasion, and served only eight years in prison. After prison, he lived a peaceful life, and his fabled loot was never found. Connery won an Oscar for Best Supporting Actor, and Costner is fine as Ness finds the necessary guts to get the "untouchable" Capone,

CHAPTER 9

DISTRICT SCHOOLS: FROM SEVENTH TO FIFTH

*I raised my hand
In school one day,
The teacher answered “No.”
The joke was really on her,
Because I didn’t have to go.*

Kindergarten

I started kindergarten when we lived on 22nd Street and the school was a block away katy-korner from Mr. Moore’s house on Howell Street.¹ Kindergarten was a heavenly experience, where I learned that cleanliness is not the only thing next to godliness, but that dirt in the form of modeling clay can be molded into divine forms: dogs, cats, turtles, birds, trees, boys, or whatever.

School introduced a new kind of tension in my life because dirt-on-clothes represented swilling pigs or animal behavior to Mama. On this subject she was a fanatic: “I do not spend my days washing and ironing for you to go dirty,” she proudly exclaimed. It was true, there was not a lazy bone in her body. But she never accepted the “boys will be boys” myth. Sis and Eldridge never got dirty, did they?

Blacktop Playgrounds

In order to help children stay clean, Seventh District blacktopped the grounds. After that, dirt was no problem but blood was. You might have thought that Charles Addams

¹ In my Babybook, Mama wrote that my first teacher was Mrs. Daniel, but she taught Grade 1A at Seventh District. I think that a Mrs. Miller was the kindergarten teacher. Also in Grade 1A with me, in a photograph, fall 1933, was Jimmy Townes. Unfortunately I do not recognize any of the others in the photograph.

had designed the playground, but, no, it was a hygienist! As W.C. Fields has said, *No one who hates dogs and children can be all bad.*

Reading, ‘Riting and ‘Rithmetic: The Three Rs

Another stress I remember was trying to learn to write with those long pens with the steel points that needed to frequently drink from the ink-well, but not too much, or else the ink would run, or blot; and not too little, or else the pen ran dry.

The classic education back then were the three Rs: Reading, ‘Riting, and ‘Rithmetic! Well, ‘Riting was some production called the “Palmer Method”, in which you practiced drawing ovals using your whole arm, starting from the shoulder, and then “push-pulls”. Writing with the long, or quill pen, was a vigorous combination of both. At first, you were encouraged to write big, then gradually with control, within the guidelines of the tablet. Fountain pens were too expensive for students, but even these had problems with the leaky bladder that contained the ink, and, of course, refilling it was another problem.

Ball-Point, Felt-Tip, and Soft-Tip Pens

This was way before the advent of the ball-point pen of the forties. This pen contained a longer-lasting supply of ink, and was less likely to leak. Moreover, some of them, e.g., Parker and Schaeffer pens had refillable cartridges, so in effect, never ran out of ink. I read somewhere that ball-point pen made the inventor a multi-millionaire. (The same man—was it Alpenalp?—loaned Richard Nixon his beach house on Miami Beach to use as a Winter Whitehouse. I wonder if Nixon paid any taxes on this gift.) Not much compared to Bill Gates, and the billions his computers, and “Windows” software made him, or the \$5 billion two young inventors made off Google, the computer search engine.

Although soft-tip pens from rushes were used by the Egyptians, and by the Chinese using hair-tip pens, felt-tip pens did not come into general use until the 1950s, followed by fiber-tip markers made of nylon and plastic, and capable of marking any surface, including plastic and glass—from the Columbia Encyclopedia.

Flunking Reading

When we moved to Herman Street, I had further to walk—now two blocks to get to Seventh District, but the saddest part is that in Grade 1B I flunked the first R: reading! Since Seventh District didn’t have half-grades, I had to walk all the way to 5th District School which was at 17th and Holman Streets, or about six additional blocks away.

School Lunch programs were unheard of in those Dark Ages, so I made the two round trips daily.

Now, how did a bright kid like me flunk 1B? It was easy! Have your father and mother take you out of school three weeks early to take a vacation to Paducah, and thereby incurring the wrath of the principal, Mrs. Wise (sic!), and you have the scenario.

Except that just was not the truth! The truth was that I could not read!!² I remember just as if it were yesterday, stumbling through the text in the reader with my dear teacher, Mrs. Miller, helping me in every way she could, and seeing Mrs. Wise shaking her head in disbelief: I was the first flunkee ever in Grade 1. Was I ever humiliated! But I pushed the guilt-button and blamed Mama and Dad, although they did not punish me about it. Of course, I wore out my shoes faster because of the additional hike to 5th District, yet not only did I not really suffer from the humiliation but I benefited from the move in so many ways that in retrospect my flunking First Grade was serendipity.

Fifth District School

At Fifth District there was no Mrs. Wise, with her terrifying effect on the prisoners of 7th District—a huge woman, and always scowling.³ Thank Goodness not all of my teachers were like her. But it was here that I first met Joy Kinsburg, my first Jewish friend, by the happenstance of my flunking Grade 1B. Other new classmates were Mary Carpenter, Joan Sothard, and Jack Herold. Elaine Seligman, a Herman St. neighbor, had a Jewish grandfather, but her family was allowed to choose whatever religion they wanted. See Seligman in Index.

Terrence Rattigan has one of his characters in *The Browning Version* (1948) tell another: *The Headmaster said you ruled them with a rod of iron. He called you the Himmler of The Lower Fifth.* Change the fifth to the 7th and there you have us! But for all that, you didn't have metal detectors to detect guns or knives, and you didn't have limits on the bathroom privileges, or have to have passes to go there, as schools today have. Actually, there were no guns back then, and no knives except pocketknives.

² In modern lingo, I had, and still have to a noticeable fault, dyslexia. See the Index about this.

³ Was there ever a worse misnomer? Many years later (circa 1976) I recognized her in Lina Wertmüller's 1976 dark Italian comedy "Seven Beauties", as the *Beast of Belsen*, a female commandant of a Nazi concentration camp, whom the lead (convincingly played by Giancarlo Giannini) seduces to save his swarmy skin. Another foreign film, Vigo's "Zero for Conduct" ("Zero de Conduite" in the French original made in 1933) was a delightful farce on schoolboy rebellion. It was so devastatingly critical of bullying by authorities at a prep school that it was banned in Europe at its release.

Mrs. Oelrich, Mrs. Murphy, and Mrs. Settle: My new teacher, Mrs. Oelrich was simply divine—tall, slim, blond and lovable. (Or was she my second grade teacher?) Ditto for my 3rd grade teacher, Mrs. Alma Murphy, only she was a brunette. Fred remembers her as his all-time favorite teacher, who had to quit teaching because of the silly “blue law” back then that forbade pregnant teachers from teaching. Horrors, imagine that! Leaving us to think that the stork carried children in. So much of school is so anti-intellectual, and anti-scientific, as to make you cry, if you keep from laughing. Imagine, “creationism” trying to explain how bacteria and viruses mutate, and how bacteria are able to render antibiotics into a harmless food it feeds on. Or like the 1970 Brooklyn, Berkowitz, serial killer “Son of Sam claimed “God Made Me Do it,” only he said that a dog named Sam made him do it!

Ditto what I said about Mrs. Oelrich for my 4th grade teacher, Miss Virginia Settle, only she was a red-head and shorter. N.B.

Russell E. Helmick and J. Park Strother

The new principal, Mr. J. Park Strother, was affable, humane, and very approachable. He succeeded Mr. Russell E. Helmick, whom I was to meet again as the Executive Principal of Holmes High School, where Mr. Helmick became a nemesis for Fred. Evidently, Mr. Strother was very popular, as he stayed on a principal from 1936, when I was in Grade 4, until 1965!

Captain Carl of the School Patrol

I became the Captain of the School-boy Patrol by winning the competitive test with a score of 38 out of 40 (See the photograph with me wearing my badge affixed to a what belt-sash combination. I look so smug!) This remains one of the biggest thrills of my life—I had a “gold” badge and other patrol boys and girls wore “tinny” badges. Isn’t pride one of the seven deadly sins? Several years later when Fred was on patrol duty, he got a man arrested for going through his stop sign.

Blue Ribbon Students

Each year the District Schools photographed Blue Ribbon Students, that is, those passing the hygiene inspection, the chief being an oral examination for cavities, and of course, clean finger nails and clean clothes. The photographs printed here (see) are a bit faded, but nevertheless, Fred and I were able to identify a goodly number of students, (whose names are misspelled on the photograph), Jimmy Townes, Don Thompson, Freddy Weeks, and, of course, ourselves and others—see Part I Photographs.

The Irish Temper

My praise for my grammar school teachers cannot be topped by anyone. The talent and dedication of all my teachers remains indelibly in my mind and psyche.⁴ Perhaps I would not have recognized an unprepared lesson. My own scholarship was a glass house so I was not about to throw stones. Beyond their professional expertise, they were delightful people, relaxed, happy, and fun to be with. Maybe Mrs. Murphy's temper was not the best. Maybe it was her husband's last name she carried, she didn't look ostensibly Irish, but her temper betrayed her! Certainly I could try the patience of a saint, and I'm not claiming Mrs. Murphy was that.

Whenever I think of Mrs. Murphy, *silly me*, I sing the lines:

*Who threw the overalls in Mrs. Murphy's chowder?
Nobody answered, so I shouted all the louder!*

My 8th grade history teacher, Miss Mary Ellen Moore, who was Irish to the core, once slapped me silly because I absent-mindedly drummed my fingers along the side of her desk while she was lecturing. I was never so shocked in all my days—before or after—she lashed out with the fury of a woman spurned, for that is what I had done to her words—spurned, at least not heeded, them. The plywood side of the desk may have vibrated, even resonated, with a big modern sound, which Miss Moore returned to my face and much more. You would not have believed that such a tiny person, thin and bony, could have such a clout. *It just served to warn me that in all contests, passion can be the decisive attribute.* (Note: In an e-mail, in early February, 2005, Mary Ann Pingel Unkraut wrote that Miss Moore was so partial to boys that she was surprised that Miss Moore had chastised me, but I responded that she did it in a fit of temper, not that she ever apologized!)

Virginia Settle

My favorite grammar school teacher was Miss Virginia Settle, the one who tamed me and made me want to be a gentleman. She bestowed pet names on all her students, and we became her menagerie. It would be wrong to suppose she had a purely saccharine flavor, for Miss Settle taught me more and better than anybody heretofore. Because she engaged my ego, and made me feel important and that made me think that what she said was important. *Capiche?* Love, as in all things, is a pre-conditioner, the *sine qua non* of teaching: *Omnia vincit amor; et nos cedamus amori.*

⁴ "Memory is more indelible than ink"—Edward Dahlberg. And just as leaky?

Nor must it be supposed that Miss Settle was a frustrated spinster acting out her fantasies in Lewis Carroll fashion with the Alices of the world.⁵ True, she did permit us to hold hands with her, and occasionally accompany her home, a detour of no more than two blocks, but beyond those positively innocent excursions, I can find nothing Freudian about Miss Settle's excellence. She was a small, nicely proportioned young woman, with abundant red hair, and, yes, the bluest eyes. I especially like to remember her smiling face, her full red lips, not that a nine-year-old boy ever entertained any notion of kissing them. *But did I?* Kissing bouts were three years away, and they were with girls my age who lived on Herman Street, and whose houses I passed at least four times every school day.

Racism in Covington Kentucky, Princeton New Jersey, and Elsewhere

The sad fact of racism permeated my boyhood, so much so that I was unaware of the segregated schools—*whites had theirs, and black's had theirs*—and never the twain would meet: not on the playgrounds and parks, the swimming pool the churches, in the movie houses, in neighborhoods, in the armed services, nor anywhere. Not until I read Richard Wright's 1945 autobiography *Black Boy*, while I was in the Navy, and Ralph Ellison's 1952 novel "The Invisible Man," did I become fully aware of the terrible injustice of segregation, not only to our Black brethren, but to ourselves, deprived as blacks and whites were of the richness of each other's cultures.

In re-reading the above I am reminded of a quip by the noted wartime correspondent and CBS anchor Edward R. Murrow (1908-1965): *The obscure we always see sooner or later; the obvious always seems to take a little longer.*

Thank goodness for the Civil Rights Movement in the 60s which lead to the outlawing of segregation in schools, in the work place, and in theaters and elsewhere. In Princeton, New Jersey, I successfully worked in the Princeton Association for Human Rights (PAHR) in 1965-1966 for open neighborhoods and housing for Blacks. And I met and made lasting friends in the Black community who worked with others and me for equal opportunity for all.

⁵ True Confession? Did I want to be a girl like Sister whom both Fred and I adored? Stay Tuned!

CHAPTER 10

OVERHAULS, KNICKERS, CLODHOPPERS, BLOOMERS & CORSETS

*Who put the overalls in Mrs. Murphy's chowder?
Nobody answered, so I shouted all the louder.*
—Anonymous Irish Ditty

*Knickers are dopey long pants.
Mine was the last generation . . . that had to earn
the right to wear long pants, or at least wait until
a certain age to wear them—Joseph Epstein*

*Folks down South where I come from, / Never had much learning,
Still, they're happy as can be, / Doing what comes naturally!
My uncle down in Texas, / Couldn't even write his name,
He signed his checks with X's, / But they cashed them just the same!
O folks down South where I come from, etc.*
—From “Annie Get Your Gun,” 1946, by Irving Berlin.

*Clodhopper: 1. A coarse, clumsy person; a bumpkin 2. A big heavy shoe
Brogans, a heavy ankle high work shoe; Brogue, a heavy shoe of untanned leather,
formerly worn in Ireland & Scotland—American Heritage Dictionary*

Knickers, Long Johns, and Knee Stockings

If ever I possessed more than one pair of anything, I never knew about it, because I was quarantined every day so that Mama could wash my clothes and have them ready for the next day. I had overalls (I was almost 18 before I ever knew that what Mama called “over-hauls” was spelled this way!), but just one pair. In those days boys were not

allowed to wear long trousers until they reached puberty, so knickers¹ were what we wore to school. In winter, knickers meant knee-stockings. And knee-stockings meant holes that were always being sewed up only to come open again at recess-play. But this was not the worst humiliation, not by a long shot. We had to wear long-johns practically eight months of the year! Visualize where the long-john's legs ended—right below or at the calf (after shrinkage)—so I always had a lump there, bulging under my stocking! I tried every trick to achieve the smooth calves of luckier children, but, alas, nothing worked. If I stretched them to my ankles, they would split somewhere, or else roll back up when I sat down. And if I pulled them up and stashed the leggings in my knickers, I would look like I had water-on-the-knees! Oh, the ignominy of knickers!

Mama's Bloomers and Corsets

The knickers themselves gave us problems—the knee-bands would loosen, and drape to mid-calf, or even lower. In the latter case, I could pretend that I had long-pants. Once the knee-band loosened, there was no place to stash the legs of my long-johns. No doubt Mama's lack of sympathy for us derived from her belief that boys ought not wear long pants until they were 12 or 13, but it might have something to do with the fact that she wore bloomers, those loose fitting under garments that were descended from Amelia Jenks Bloomer, 1818-1894, who invented a new style of dress for women, i.e., an athletic costume that permitted freedom of motion. (See *The American Heritage Dictionary* for a photograph of the costume, whose long underpants under the skirt reach to the ankles like the Punjabi costume.) Mama later switched from bloomers to "snuggies," and corsets for her increasing girth. The corsets had long stays that could be replaced—they inevitably got bent out of shape!

Clodhoppers and High Tops:

In addition to the knickers, long johns and knee stockings, shoes were another insuperable problem. In Paducah and in the country, people wore above-ankle shoes, called "high tops", and "clod-hoppers". High-tops are the dress-up variety, often called "old men's shoes," because orthopedics prescribed them for support of weak ankles. Clodhoppers were heavier shoes, either brogans, or brogues, that now-a-days are worn mainly by carpenters, mechanics, steel, construction, and other workers who handled heavy

¹ Knickers is short for Knickerbockers, or full breeches gathered and banded just below the knee, and are named after the illustrious, but fictional author of Washington Irving's "History of New York by 'Dietrich Knickerbocker.'" Knee breeches are trousers that extend just below the knee (but neither as full nor banded.)—From the *American Heritage Dictionary of the English Language*.

materials, to better protect the feet. Some had metal toecaps. Consequently, a “clodhopper” is a “a clumsy, coarse person.” I don’t see the logic of that: think of Abraham Lincoln. That Uncle Ely (pronounced “eely” I couldn’t find him in the Faith or Foster Family Trees, but maybe he was a Wiggins, my maternal grandmother’s maiden name. (Also am not sure of the spelling (Ely or Eli?)) Other gray-beards wore them was proof enough for me that I should not. But logic was not one of Mama’s strong points. (She had an abiding faith in the value of tradition—indeed tradition governed **all** aspects of her life. If anyone ever did believe in observing traditions, then Mama did.)

*If it was good enough for Mother,
If it was good enough for Father,
If it was good enough for Grandma,
Then it is good enough for me.*

And so did Uncle Simon, Uncle Henry² and Uncle Rob. I kept insisting that Uncle Ira, the *sacred cow of the Faiths*, “wouldn’t be caught dead in ’em” but this, if anything, only strengthened her resolve to resist “low-cuts” or “slippers”. The Covington Faiths were the poor relations to the Paducah Faiths and the Paducah Fosters, and Mama would go to agonizing lengths to conceal this knowledge from herself. And Fred and I were part of those lengths. We had to be presentable and presentable in Mama’s eye meant dressing the way she thought proper. We were her babies—her last two children. She had reared Sis and Bro right, and she was confident she would raise Fred and me right. And she was right. We were brought up as right as every ounce of energy, strand of her muscle, and might of her brain could make us.

I wish everybody had mothers like her, but to borrow a delightful title of a short story I once read, “Such Waltzing Was Not Easy,” by Delmore Schwartz, 1913-1966, and it also appears in an 1948 poem by Theodore Roethke, 1908-1963:

My Papa’s Waltz
The whiskey on your breath
Could make a small boy dizzy;
But I hung on like death:
Such waltzing was not easy.

Except, to my knowledge, however, Mama never tasted alcohol, not ever!

² Alas, I could not find any Uncle Henry’s in the Family Trees either. I think he was Aunt Alice’s husband. Alice was one of Dad’s sisters. I associate Beyer with his name.

CHAPTER 11

MY AÏDA

*Guiseppe Verdi's opera, Aïda, premiered
in Cairo to celebrate the opening of
the Suez Canal on Dec. 24, 1871*

*If nothing else ever happened to me, I would have been
amply rewarded by a life that contained such poetry as this.*

The author's comment on being kissed by Joy in a play in Grade 3.

Fertilization of the soul is the reason for the necessity for all art
—Alfred North Whitehead

Early in grammar school I became one of the school artists for making posters and designs. In Grade 7 or 8, at Holmes Junior High School, I won a poster contest sponsored by our art teacher, Mr. Oertel, and a scholarship to the Baker-Hunt Foundation. More than this, the 5th District teachers arranged to produce plays that one way or another involved everybody in school. For one play in Grade 3 that I vividly recall, even now after these years, I not only painted the Egyptian sets but had the royal distinction of playing Menes (?)—the messenger who brought the good news to the Egyptian Queen, whom I called “My Aïda.” Joy Kinsburg looked every inch an Egyptian queen, and I was rewarded, as I remember, with a royal kiss in gratitude. This proved prophetic because I suppose that I fell in love with her, and nine years later we repeated our third-grade kiss on the eve of my departure for the Navy. (The kiss itself was actually of the first grade, that is, awkward.)

Regarding my epigram about being rewarded by poetry in life, I am reminded of Rilke's answer to a friend who asked him if Rome was as beautiful as it was said to be: “Yes, Rome is beautiful because there is beauty everywhere.”

Although we never appeared in stage kisses thereafter, we were in at least one other play together, “Arsenic and Old Lace”, the senior class play of Holmes High School.

However, this time I lost my exalted status and became one of Joy's 13 victims! This, too, was prophetic in a way that I will come to later in the narrative.

But to go back to my messenger role: to play it I had to wear grease paint which rubbed off on my long-johns and that made Mama so furious that she gave me a whipping. No big deal, as she beat Fred and me often and thoroughly. She believed in "Spare the rod, and spoil the child" to the nth degree. She did not appreciate my showing so much skin either, and I was much relieved when we closed the show (after performing for each class). More than anything, Mama was incensed that I had gone without my "longies" in a class play. Ah, the price we struggling artists pay in order to exercise our talent!

CHAPTER 12

EXTRA-CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES

Ignorance is exploited, always,

A Line by “Umberto D” in the eponymous 1955 film by de Sica

Ignorance never settles a question, Benjamin Disraeli, 1866

Mother, may I go out to swim?

Yes, my darling daughter:

Hang you clothes on a hickory limb,

But don't go near the water.”

—Anonymous

You Must Have Been a Beautiful Baby

(But, Oh look at you now!)

Johnny Mercer and Harry Warren, 1938

Mama, the Irresistible Force

This was to be the pattern of all after-school activities: Mama resisted all outside, that is, secular influences. Is it any wonder that, instead of becoming a basketball player or track star, I became taken with religion and escaped the domicile through attending church activities? Or, instead of becoming a football player, or an editor on the school newspaper (as did *all* my friends), I became an omnivorous reader (like Dad!), and sedentary to an alarming degree (like Dad!). Needless to say, my situation was like that of the daughter in the rhyme at the head of this chapter.

What We Needed in Our Childhood Was a Green Light

We needed a green light saying “go” to the normal, healthy, social activities that our friends engaged in. Dad might have provided this but he was asocial except during his own *Walpurgis Nights*. Eldridge was out of it, living with Uncle Ira and Aunt Kathryn in Evansville since the age of 14 (when I was just two years old) and had suffered the same

fate in his childhood. Louise made out the best because she was a girl, and also because of her ability to extract so much fun out of what was allowed. She had a laugh for everything and everybody, and was overflowing with goodwill and friendliness. She managed to make prayer meetings, and choir practices great fun.

Louise's Injury Became Ours

Mama was afraid that what happened to Sister would happen to us. For in the 9th grade, she had to have a tumorous growth removed from her back which may have grown from a skating injury. The surgeons removed a large tumor mass. Forced to miss a year of school to recuperate, she never went back. At the time this did not appear to be such a tragedy—her work at home, and pay-check from her job, were most welcome in a depression-ridden family. No one ever heard of Women's Lib in those dark days.

Umberto D: "Ignorance Is Exploited, Always"

Nevertheless, looking backward, I think that Sister took a bum rap. Dad ought to have been more supportive; especially Mama ought to have *made* her continue. If only Mama had seen Vittorio de Sica's 1955 film, "Umberto D", but that wasn't made then. *Ignorance is exploited, always* is the moral of the movie, and a comment that Umberto made to the young maid, Maria, who helps him, after he finds out that she has not been doing her homework. She is pregnant, but doesn't know which of her two lovers is the father. Needless to say, neither lover will admit to being responsible. Umberto himself had become a victim of inflation when his meager government pension for a life of servitude proved inadequate to live on. His better-off former friends turned a blind eye to his condition, and a deaf ear to his pleas for help.¹ Only his adorable pet dog gave him the strength to go on living, and he raced to the dog-pound to save him when the dogcatcher picked him up.

But there is a lot more to the story: "By taking the girl out of the house, being a father to her . . . [just] might . . . solve their problems. Nothing of this sort happened. Human beings have this perennial, ancient fault of not understanding each other, of not

¹ The "D" of his name is an indication of the impersonality of bureaucratic shuffling of this worthy man, much as the use of my initials "CC" represented that for me, and GL and JR for my Navy pals, while we were in the Navy. See Chapter's 59, and 60.

communicating with each other.”² . . . “He [Umberto D] is closed and hostile; it seems that he has lost contact with the world from which he comes.”³ (My Brackets.)

*She was poor, but she was honest,
And her parents were the same,
Till she met a city feller,
And lost her good name.*

*It's the same the whole world over,
It's the poor wot gets the blame,
It's the rich wot gets the pleasure,
Aint't it a bloomin' shame?*
Anonymous Song, circa 1915

“Ignorance never settles a question”—Benjamin Disraeli, 1866

² This is extracted from “Italian Film in the Light of Neorealism by Millicent Marcus” (see Bibliography), Chap 4, “De Sica’s *Umberto D*: Dark Victory for Neorealism,” p.100. This Chapter shows the complexity of the forces, which I can only allude to here, arrayed against Umberto D, and Maria. There are several love affairs going on in the house, and Umberto’s room is needed for one of them for the high rent it brings the landlady, who also is having an affair. *See?*

³ Ibid. p.102

CHAPTER 13

SOUTHSIDE BAPTIST CHURCH

Throw a nickel on the drum, / Save another drunken bum.

Sing Hallelujah! Sing Hallelujah!

Salvation Army Song in “Guys and Dolls,” by Damon Runyan;

Also, in the 1955 movie, starring Marlon Brando,

Jean Simmons, Frank Sinatra, and Vivian Blaine.

The more I study religion the more I am convinced

that man never worshipped anything but himself.

Richard Francis Burton, 1821-1890

Every day people are straying away from Church and going back to God

—Lenny Bruce, 1925-1966

Comedian born in New York City, and frequently arrested for obscenity.

Jesus, Jesus, Jesus, Sweetest name I know

Fills my every longing, Keeps me singing as I go!—Baptist Hymn

Another influence that weaned me away from the Gang was Southside Baptist Church between 15th and 14th Streets on Holman, a good hike away, 4 to 5 blocks further than 5th District. I would go there 4 or 5 times a week, for Choir, Baptist Young People’s Union, or BYPU, Boy Scouts, and, of course, Church, often noon and evening services.

Why did we go to a Baptist Church? I suppose because it was the closest Protestant Church, or that the Baptist Church is strong in the Southern states. St. Augustine Catholic Church on 19th Street was four or five blocks closer, but of course, that was never an option, as I have explained previously.

In Theory . . . Baptists Aren’t Protestants . . .

I should have said “non-Catholic” instead of “Protestant”. Well, you can look it up—the Baptist claim they descended from John-the-Baptist, and not Christ, since John baptized

Christ, and influenced him by his example, and through his teachings. (See the book, “John the Immerser,” John was devoted to clean living, and a healthy diet that excluded wine)

. . . And In Theory . . . Have No Dogma

The dogma is that the Baptist Church pre-dates the Catholic Church, and therefore was not “Protestant”. A salient aspect of the Baptist Convention is that *there is no credo to which everyone has to subscribe* to as there is in many other churches, especially none of the complications of Catholic dogma such as the Infallibility of the Pope, or the Immaculate Conception. Another thing is that all worshipers are equal in the Baptists’ eyes, and that knocks out the Pope first off.

Anti-Semitism

In my lifetime, especially since World War II, much has been said and written about the horrors of anti-Semitism, both about Hitler’s “Endliche Lösung” (*The Final Solution*) and the Holocaust. (See Chapter 49.) And for very good reasons: official anti-Semitism is one of the most virulent present-day afflictions of political life. However, in my youth the Jews were barely mentioned, and I never heard the accusation that the Jews were Christ-killers until around 1970 when a Jewish friend refused to go to an Easter service because the Christians made him nervous that “time of the year” for the stated reason. My wife Molly was given a ditty by a high school friend, obviously made up, that illustrates the kind of bigotry, although humorous, found in the South, e.g., in her case, in Texas:

Oh, it's good to be a Baptist, The scriptures plainly tell / That a member of the Baptist Church / Will Never go to Hell. / We will gather by the river / And look down into the pit / Where the Jews and the Catholics / Are turning on the spit.

The Case of Sam Perlis: Similarly, I was dumfounded years later at Purdue University when one day, right as I had finished requirements for the Ph.D. in Mathematics, and was about to move to Michigan State for my first job after being a Teaching Assistant for four years, the wife of my respected Ph. D. adviser told me that her husband, Sam (Perlis), couldn’t move (from Purdue) because “*He’s Jewish!*” This came up as I was moving to Michigan State after my Ph. D., a place that Sam revered for its beautiful campus, and several friends he had there. (I think that I might have made a remark like, “If he loves the place so much, why doesn’t *he* go there?”)

I Was Stunned. I hadn’t realized the long history of anti-Semitism in and out of universities, especially not after WWII, and the Holocaust. It was a well-kept secret in

Baptist circles! For one thing, the schools ignored the accomplishments of the Jews, and secondly, in order to enjoy assimilation, Jews had to accept being “non-persons” in the sense of not being mentioned in history books. Of course, blacks and females had it even worse, numerically speaking, but it was the same kind of emasculation by denial of one’s identity. (I dislike using the word in such a nonsexual content and anyway you cannot emasculate a woman but I do not know a word that signifies such a loss of vital power. Germaine Greer’s title, “The Female Eunuch” is also a misnomer.)

“Gentleman’s Agreement”

In the 1947 movie, based on Laura Z. Hobson’s novel with the title quoted above, a magazine writer (Gregory Peck) looks for a new angle for an article on Anti-Semitism by pretending to be Jewish. His new identity changes his life in unexpected ways but predicted by his army buddy, convincingly played by John Garfield. This almost alienates his very conventional fiancé (Dorothy McGuire), but does contribute to the success of his magazine series. (Taken in part from the 2001 Video Hound review.) This was a most controversial movie in its day, and still pertinent, because like the many-headed hydra, anti-Semitism keeps renewing itself.

One might say that “Gentleman’s Agreement” ought to have prepared me for Perlis’ plight. Had not of the vital work of so many prominent Jews in World War II, e.g., J. Robert Oppenheimer, and William Teller¹ working on the Atomic and Hydrogen Bombs, earned Jews a respected place in society? Moreover, the reverence society had for Albert Einstein whose $E = mc^2$ made the concept of an atomic bomb possible, and the noticeable impact on science and education in the universities of the Jewish “Intellectual Immigration”²—many of my most influential teachers in Graduate School had been Jewish, Perlis, for example—made it seem inconceivable to me that Perlis would have been a victim of prejudice.

Yet, as I think back, the Chairman of Mathematics at Michigan State University, when I was there, 1955-1957, namely, J. Sutherland Frame, boasted that he was not Anti-Semitic, since the percentage of Jews in the Department matched the percentage of Jews

¹ Oppenheimer (1904-1967) was born in New York City, and Teller (1908-2003?), in Budapest. Teller worked with Enrico Fermi (1901-1954), who was born in Rome, with a team that produced the first nuclear chain reaction (1941), and he worked under the Directorship of Oppenheimer at Los Alamos on the A-Bomb project (1943-1945.) Oppenheimer was Director of the Institute for Advanced Study, while I was there in 1960-1962.

² See the book of this title with the subtitle “Europe and America 1930-1960” by Bernard Bailyn and Donald Fleming, Harvard U. Press, Cambridge, 1960. Also “Illustrious Immigrants: The Intellectual Migration,” by Laura Fermi, Enrico Fermi’s wife.

in the nation! Wow! How could an obviously gifted man like “Sud”, as he was called, be so blind?

The Hidden Meaning of Slurs. Underlying defamation, or calling a person a bad name (such as an ethnic pejorative) is the desire to demonstrate the impotence of the offended person. (This somehow has sexual significance for the perpetrator, maybe akin to that of scalping for Indians, or circumcision for parents, or religious authorities.) In 1969 while teachefing mathematics at Rutgers University, I was insulted in the Rutgers College School Newspaper, “The Targum” in a letter to the editor from a Frosh Ag major who said that I ought to be “castrated”. Now this severe punishment was in no way commensurate with my crime that involved my negative opinion that I had published in Targum of a free-standing “abstract” sculpture in front of Brower Commons. But about this punishment I would like to say that it is close to being the one that I have noticed that most men have in mind whenever they want to punish someone—take away their procreative power, make eunuchs out of them. They achieve this in many ways. The least of which is probably seducing the man’s wife (rending him impotent) and the worst of which is raping the man’s daughter. In other words, I am supposing that *these acts are directed not only against the women but also against the men*. But even more, *the hidden meaning of slurs is to force the victim to accept his lower status in order to weaken him and render him powerless*.

Victor Camillo’s Quip: A friend of mine, and a graduate student at Rutgers, Victor Camillo, read the Frosh’s letter and quipped, “He’s too late!” Lest I thought that he was insulting me, he quickly added that I *already* had (two) children. So, as usual, Vic saw the point before I did.

Uncle Ely’s Castration: Soon afterwards, when I told him about the student’s letter, Fred told me that a jealous suitor to Uncle Ely’s fiancée had castrated him the night before he was married!! *It was the reason*, Fred said, *why he disliked children so*. Once again, I was stunned to find the etiology of Uncle Ely’s misanthropy. Abelard was castrated by Heloise’s uncle, but only after she had a child by him. Then he became a monk, and she a nun, and later, as Abbess, she provided a home for him in his old age. Not a bit like Uncle Ely. (I don’t know which of my uncles was Ely, since he is not listed in either the Foster or Faith Family Trees. I had heard that Grandma Carrie Foster, whom Carrie Mae had been named after, had been twice married, so Uncle Ely may be a son of hers by the previous marriage in that case.)

Jimmy Carter’s Excuse: Now all this blah-blah on sex is naturally upsetting, I suppose, but not to the Southern Baptists who blah-blah about it all the time. When Presidential candidate Jimmy Carter wrote about lust in Playboy Magazine saying that God does not approve but “he forgives me for it”, he was speaking the way a Baptist speaks. Sin, especially carnal sin, is so prevalent that it is impossible not to get

a little besmirched by it. The best thing is to beg forgiveness and “Go and sin no more” (until the next time?).

A strict Baptist mother give her daughter before going out on a date a list of No-Noes, including dancing, drinking, holding hands, kissing, going to a movie, etc. When her daughter came back, her mother asked her what she did, and she described it: “We f—ed.” She went on to explain: “*Mother, it was the only thing you didn’t tell us not to do!*”

Go and Sin No More? This attitude is really one of the ones that Protestants (which I am not) most dislike about Catholicism—the “Go and sin no more” syndrome. They claim that Catholics get off too early via the confession to a priest too aware of his own sin-prone body. Jews dislike both Catholic and Protestant theology because “Christ did all the suffering for you”. Furthermore, there are no unpardonable sins, whereas in Judaism sin may be, provided that the sinner is truly repentant. In some cases, say sinning against a neighbor, you can ask for forgiveness but he may deny it to you; in which case it is unforgiven by God. (In retribution, I suppose God may not forgive the injured man his excessive pride.)

Absolution? Catholic friends of mine have reassured me, e.g., Vic Camillo, that once the concept of Original Sin is drummed into you at an early and impressionable age, there’s no escape from the knowledge that one has sinned, and no amount of absolution at confession can erase the resulting guilt. Could it be that hypocrisy is a necessary kind of amnesia about one’s own sins, while not forgetting those of others? On the other hand, many serial killers feel no remorse whatsoever.

At the beginning of this chapter, I stated that Jews were not the objects of scorn in the Baptist Church but hinting at who were. I am ashamed to say that Catholics were. Surprise? Peaselsburg was densely populated with Catholics, and St. Augustine church loomed at the bottom of Howell Street, at 19th Street, a huge structure that dominated the eye and all the streets leading to it. Anyway you turned, you saw St. Augustine. No church in Covington had such a spectacular situation, and though made of red-bricks, it still had an imposing and dignified appearance with its tall steeple and its colored glass windows. (I did not know what stained-glass windows were then, and I hardly ever entered this awe-inspiring structure although I passed it four times daily en route to 5th District. I don’t remember anything about Frankie Haake’s funeral except that the Cortège started there.)

Mama’s Bigotry: Throughout my friendship with Joy Kinsburg, stretching over my entire elementary, junior and high school education, in fact all my life, and dating her, Mama, and Sister, both strict Baptists, never uttered a word or breathed an innuendo about Joy’s being Jewish, at least not to me. Was I blessed, or what? But there was an entirely different story when on August 5, 1950, Fred eloped with his beautiful Catholic wife, Mary Elizabeth Corns, named after the Virgin Mary, while she was a

Seaman in the Navy (see at WAVES) in Millington, Tennessee. I was not only sad at not being able to witness Fred's marriage but angry at Mama for being the reason for the elopement; I threatened to leave home for good if she didn't stop her invective against Mary. (A year later I did anyway when on August 11, 1951 I married at a ceremony at Southside Church, and Fred was best man.) I reminded Mama of the Commandment, *Thou shall not bear false witness against thy neighbor* (Exodus, 20:16). Since no Catholic ever harmed us, we had no right under our religion to speak ill of them.³ In any case, *Love thy neighbor as thyself* (Leviticus 19:18), was a well-established principle of our church. For whatever reason, she did put a damper on her bigotry, at least while I was around.

It's not just the origins of anti-Semitism that defy human comprehension, but the contagion of bigotry that's everywhere. I thought WW II was fought to stop such insanity, but no, look!

If Jesus came back today and started teaching, we would put him on the cross quicker than we did 2,000 years ago—Billy Graham and the Great Society. *San Francisco Chronicle*, December 25, 1965, also in "Quotationary," p. 105.

Christianity is the highest perfection of humanity—Samuel Johnson, 1709-1784, *Letter*, *ibid*.

If Christ were here today, there is one thing he would not be—a Christian—Mark Twain, *loc. cit.* p. 106. *There has been only one Christian, and he died on the Cross*—Friedrich Nietzsche, *ibid*.

³ And even *if* they had harmed us in some way, *as* Christians we were pledged to follow Christ and "Turn the other cheek (*Resist not evil, but whosoever smite thee on the thy right cheek, turn the other also*—Matthew 4:39)." Mary said of her marriage to a non-Catholic, "I would rather go to hell for marrying Fred than live on earth without him." A beautiful tribute from a beautiful soul. How often I wished Mama could see that in Mary.

CHAPTER 14

MAMA

Mama's pearls: "Carl, you don't have the brains
you ought to have been born with.
"You are nothing but a smart Aleck."
"You will be late for your own funeral."

Ralph: Mom, I love this girl.

Bessie: So go knock your head against the wall . . . If she dropped in the ocean I don't lift a finger . . .

With me it's one thing—a boy should have respect for his own *future*—*Clifford Odets, Awake and Sing* (1935)

Quoted as an epitaph to Alfred Kazin's *Starting Out in the Thirties*—something that Mama could have said.

From morning to setting sun, / A mother's work is never done—Saying

Given the precision and plentitude of Mama's prohibitions, you would either expect a lot of conflict, or extremely passive children. In retrospect I think we were about average in conflict, although as noted, more than average in passivity at home. This contradiction was resolved by *The Call of the Wild* à la Jack London's story of the sled dog that longs to join the wolf pack when he hears its howls. The moment we got outside the house we took to our heels, and ran as fast as we could to get out of earshot. This device was a result of long experience—Mama would call you back at the slightest whim, and ruin your morning, afternoon, day or hour.

"No-Noes"

For example, she might see you with a boy with his cap on backwards the way baseball catchers wear theirs to facilitate putting on the mask. *That* was a No-No (a term incidentally that we did not have in those days!) Mama had an extraordinary list of No-Noes for us

and we were the panty-waists (now definitely a sexist term, like “being a Patsy”) of Herman Street because of it.

The Call of the Wild

It therefore behooved us to remove ourselves from the scene of any future, punitive, real or imagined, crime that could be observed by Inspector (La) Mama. Not that we did anything the other kids did not do. We were not all that imaginative, and besides, there was plenty to do as it was, without taxing our undeveloped brains, the rational side of which was distinctly Neanderthal or Simian (I forget which).

But That Gave Us No Immunity From Punishment Later

Nevertheless, being out of earshot and eyesight of Mama, while it allowed us to engage in “crime”, did not give us immunity from retribution by the Arm of the Law (Mama). It gave us the freedom to break tabus, but not the license; and of course Mama, the licenser, was having none of this.

Mama Wasn’t Born Yesterday

Not having been “born yesterday,” Mama did not need radar or TV to know what went on in the criminal minds of little boys and girls. (Note: even adult criminals do not break the law all the time!) Actually, in the course of the years, virtually everything went on there, and in due time we were apprehended, prosecuted, convicted, and sentenced to pay for our “crimes”.

The Telltale Signs of Crimes

Our most detectable sin was smoking, and of course, she had the telltale sign—the smell. One whiff grounded you for weeks. Smoke from a bonfire in the railroad yard was just as incriminating, even if “it happened to blow in my direction as I was coming home.” With cigarettes, I could explain that Buddy Dotson or some other bully *blew smoke in my face*, and you would draw a lighter sentence. Ironically, Mama hated bullies as much as we, because they sullied our clothes for one thing; and they sullied our morals for another. Mama was a “living Saint” in the grand Christian (I almost wrote Irish) tradition—the devil may tempt her but she would never give in to him (or her?).

Mama’s No Saint: Mama’s discipline was much more violent than you would expect from a “saint”—she would slap you silly without warning. But sometimes it worked in our favor; she would neither let us out long enough, nor often enough, to get into any *real* trouble. I could do anything once, but nothing habitually because I never knew when I would get out again. As I have said, ‘logic’ was beneath Mama’s contempt.

She would lay down the law, and there it lay, frozen in perpetuity, and nobody could ever make her relent, not Dad, not Sis, not Eldridge—not even the preacher.

We Often Were Treated Like Farm Animals

An aspect of life that derived from Mama's and Dad's growing up on farms in Paducah was that in discipline we were treated like farm animals, to be slapped against a wall, thumped on the head, thrashed by a switch or a razor strop, or even the broad side of a butcher knife. This went way beyond the adage "Spare the rod, spoil the child," and created a barrier between us since we were small and unable to defend ourselves. To us they were giants like the one in Jack and the Beanstalk. How could they have hated us so much as to treat us so brutally, especially for often very little misdemeanors? Corporal punishment was the norm, not the exception in Peaseburg. No wonder we learned to lie like the devil incarnate. Although we weren't perfect as Eldridge and Louise had been, we never thought we ever did anything that deserve such harsh punishments.

Bellow's Sadistic Father and de Kooning's Sadistic Mother

Still, on reads of even worse childhoods: even the Nobel Laureate Saul Bellow came into his share from a father who was "violent, strong and authoritarian" and who "beat us with a strap or his hand, whichever came first." (Playboy Interview of May 1997.)

Willem de Kooning (1904-1997), a top American artist, noted for his abstractions, especially of women, was born in the Netherlands, and as a child, was beaten by his mother with a wooden shoe! Ouch! A recent biography of him (see Bibliography) states: "As a child he knew small cold rooms lit by hot flashes of anger." Well, my mother supplied the anger while I kept my cool, hoping she might cool off. (Dad's whippings were much more dispassionate.) However, Fred was tempestuous: the injustice of our beatings inflamed him, so much so that he never forgave our parents.

Stone Walls Do Not a Prison Make,

Stone walls do not a prison make, / Nor iron bars a cage;

.

If I have freedom in my love, / And in my soul am free,

Angels alone that soar above / Enjoy such liberty.

Richard Lovelace (1818-1858), "To Althea: From Prison," 1649, st.1.

Lizzie Borden

Lizzie Borden took an axe / And gave her parents forty whacks.

When she saw what she had done, / She gave them each forty-one.

(Wish fulfillment?) Rhyme popular after the trial of Lizzie Borden, in which she was acquitted, in Fall River, Massachusetts, June 1893

CHAPTER 15

THE LIE DETECTOR

*But I am not guilty, said K.; it's a misunderstanding.
And if it comes to that, how can any man be called guilty?*

Franz Kafka (1883-1924), "The Trial", 1916, IX

The cruelest lies are often told in silence,

Robert Louis Stevenson, 1850-1894,

Viginibus Puerisque, 1881, I, Ch. I

4. Truth of Intercourse

*Them that asks no questions isn't told a lie,
Rudyard Kipling, 1865-1936, "A Smuggler's Song"*

Man is the only animal that blushes, or that needs to—Mark Twain.

There are three kinds of lies: lies, damned lies and statistics,"

Disraeli also attributed to Mark Twain—see the Quotationary.

Guilty Until Proven Innocent (The Napoleonic Code)

Mama was her own lie detector: She knew us so well that she could tell we were lying—and she did not need the minute fluctuations of a galvanometer to convince her of it. She worked on the presumption of guilt—the Napoleonic Code: you were guilty until proven innocent. And she was usually right. Smoking and playing with fire were immediately detectable, and she was right in her attempt to bar these life-taking substances. And we swam in Banklick Creek, a tributary of the Licking River, without lifeguards. Even after Frankie Haake drowned at the confluence of the Licking River and the Ohio River, we continued as if nothing had happened.

Fred gave me this account of the tragedy: The rivers were in a flood stage, but Frankie and several friends nevertheless got onto a raft in the Licking River. The swift current swept them into the main channel, and when they reached the Ohio, they

panicked and jumped out of the raft. Frankie was the only one who never made it to shore.

So Mama tried to pin us down—where we were, how long, why our pants were muddy, our hair wet, etc. She was such a good lie detector because she knew us so well that she could break down our poorly constructed lies with a searching look. Plus the fact that she always *knew or guessed* the truth undermined our resistance.¹

To be fair to both parents and children is well nigh impossible because parents also lie. They may think they are “white lies,” but they also tell deep, important lies, lies of omission, or lies of exaggeration.

Lying and boasting are the same.—Welsh Proverb

Lies are part of the protective coloration of the human species. It is apparent that there could be no individuality without privacy, and privacy consists of holding things back out of the public scrutiny. And lying takes this form.

The cruelest lies are often told in silence.—R. L. Stevenson, *Virginibus Puerisque*

I am not trying to justify lying but to explain it.

The cleverest of lies lasts only a week.—Japanese Proverb

Tell a lie and you will hear the same repeated as true.—Spanish Proverb

The Hunger For Truth

There is in human beings, nevertheless, a hunger for truth. It may be argued, no matter all the evidence to the contrary, that truth is central to the proper function of the mind. Otherwise why does a lie wreak such physiological changes measured by the lie detector machines (increased pulse, sweating palms, shallow breathing, etc.)?

Western justice is based on the principle that every human being of age knows the difference between right and wrong, and therefore may be held responsible for his or her actions. And if a person is judged incapable of making that distinction, he is declared insane, or retarded.

¹ The award-winning TV series “Law and Order” created by Dick Wolf employs this stratagem in every episode! Jerry Orbach, an actor known for his Broadway roles, played a stellar detective, “Lenny,” a twice-divorced alcoholic, with a tough guy mien, with a heart of gold. He died in 2005, but in one of his last roles, he cracked this joke: “When I die, I want to nod off like my grandfather, not kicking and screaming like the other guys in the car he was driving.”

A White Lie for Christmas

Fred remembers a “white lie” that I was able to fool Mama with. Mama hid our Christmas presents so they would surprise us on Christmas day, but in a small three-room house, how many hiding places are there? Inevitably we would find them out and indulge our fantasies in trying to guess what the wrapped package contained. Some were easy, say boxes of clothing, or the tinker toys’ silo shapes. Once Mama discovered us “sneaking peeks” but I alertly put her off with a white lie: “Mama, don’t come in, we are wrapping *your present!*” Boys can be so shameless. As Mark Twain said:

Man is the only animal that blushes, or that needs to.

CHAPTER 16

RIDING THE RAILS AND OTHER DANGEROUS STUNTS

Don't shoot, Mister! Don't shoot! I give up!

Blood-curdling cry by my brother, Fred, caught stealing apples.

"Don't shoot Colonel, I'll come down:

I know when I am a gone Coon," David Crocket, 1786-1836

"The obscure we always see sooner or later;
the obvious always seems to take a little longer."

Edward R. Murrow (1908-1965):

Riding the Rails

The most dangerous stunt: riding the rails out of town to Banklick Creek. This was a truly *death-defying* stunt, swinging onto a moving freight, you had to put your foot on the rung some three feet above ground, and if you missed it, you were thrown off balance. If you were lucky, you fell down and away, but every so often someone fell in between the wheels and lost a leg. (Nobody from Herman Street that I remember.)

Mama hated the railroads: the dirt, the noise and the dangers. Herman Street abutted the yards. She begged us to walk over the wooden bridge at 26th Street, but few could be persuaded to make this long detour especially when they were late for class at Holmes High School. She also worried about our making friends with hoboes that rode the rails looking for work.¹

¹ The word hobo dates back to 1848. A suggested derivation is the expression "Ho boy," in the Random House Historical Dictionary of American Slang, where many literary references are given. Hobo coffee is made with coffee grounds in boiling water, and is a tasty drink. (If you haven't tried it, do!)

Crossing the Boxcars: Under, Over, Between, or Through?

But the worst part was not just that you crossed the railroads en route to school, but that you crawled under the boxcars when the way was blocked by a long freight.

There were three schools of thought:

1. Crawl under them, and be prepared to drop flat if the freight started up.
2. Climb over them, and ditto the warning for # 1.
3. Crawl between the boxcars over the coupling, and be prepared to withstand the jolt if the train started.
4. Climb through the boxcar, and keep the doors from rolling shut if the train started.²

No doubt many who climbed over, under, or in the boxcars did so for the thrill. Children are notorious thrill or sensation-seekers: ritualistic climbing of trees—to the highest pinnacle; climbing the water-tower rung by rung in a heavy gale; rock and mountain climbing. An essential feature of all these activities is the *danger*. (One could also include swimming without lifeguards, gliding, flying, floating. Once a Gang member fell from a sycamore but luckily his heel caught in a fork of the tree, and he hung screaming, until he could be extricated 15-20 minutes later.)

Mama's Worries

There virtually was no end to Mama's worries. In retrospect I see that in every case she had the best reasons for worry, but compared to modern mothers, she was a bit over-anxious. Still, I remember the following most terrifying incident that justified all her fears.

² W. H. Davies was born in Wales, left home in 1883, and came to the USA. "After losing a leg while hopping a train, he returned to Great Britain discouraged. He self-published his first book [a book of poems in 1905] . . . The "Autobiography of a Super-Tramp"(1908) describes his years as a vagabond." "Hobo's Train," is an excerpt printed in "Writing the Rails." Another interesting character that rode the rails is Bertha Thompson, aka "Box Car Bertha." According to the excerpt from her Autobiography, *Op.Cit.*, . . . "she took to the road in adolescence, and during the next fifteen years became a hobo," and even taught at "Hobo College." She eventually settled in New York as a social worker. Many of the articles excerpted in "Writing the Rails" are about the hobo experience. "Work Gangs" is a poem there by Carl Sandburg that starts out "Box cars run by a mile long. / And I wonder what they say to each other." Now that's genius for you—I never ever thought they could talk, only squeak.

The Apple Orchard

For years boys had been helping themselves to apples from the Apple Orchard up from James' Confectionary at Warren and 24th Streets. This despite an eight-foot metal fence with barbed wire leaning out. Well, the diamond-shape of the net made a good toe-hole for a toe-hold, and the barb-wire could be pushed down while standing on it for the final jump. Unfortunately for the Herman Street Gang, getting in proved to be easier than getting out, because you had more time!

The owners tried everything to discourage stealing, including a watch dog, but the Gang just made friends with the dog, fed it surreptitiously, and would pull the job so quietly that no alarm was raised.

The Age of Specialization

Not everybody had to go over. In fact this is the age of specialization. Just the best climbers, or the bravest, I forget which, went over, and they tossed apples to the hungry masses! A part of this scheme was based on necessity since the pickers needed both hands to get back again, and pockets bulging with apples would not only make the climb more difficult, but also be an encumbrance at the barb-wire. Occasionally the orchard owner would catch some boy, take him home, and let his parents discipline him. But this did not work because, often as not, a child's father would scold him for *being dumb enough to get caught!* And the father might then regale his son on his own apple-stealing exploits as a child. This could only serve to justify crime; inspired children would go forth—and *next time he made sure he would not get caught!*

Carl's Dilemma

At stealing time, I was "fringy"—one foot on the side of crime so as to qualify for my share, and the other foot half-way home in case of disaster. I was also, as they say, "fleet of foot", especially when frightened half-to-death.

Now the apple owner decided to take the law in his own hands, rather than into the seat of the pants of the law-breaker—he got a double-barreled shotgun loaded with salt-shot, and waited for poachers.

“Don't Shoot, Mister, Don't Shoot!”

We heard him running out of his house towards the tree, and the pickers were scrambling up the fence, and true to form, I was halfway home when I heard this exchange: “Stop or

I will shoot.” Bang! (Shot in the air). Then the most heart-wringing wail that I have ever heard: “Don’t shoot Mister, don’t shoot! I give up!”

And that voice was all the more frightening in the certain knowledge that it was Fred’s. Fred told me recently, e.g., in January 2005, that actually he peed in his pants! In Sartre’s short story called “The Wall,” men facing the firing squad also wet their pants. See his “The Wall and Other Stories.”

CHAPTER 17

TINY BOO-BOO

Happiness is a warm puppy.

Charles Schultz (Cartoonist of “Peanuts”)

The better I get to know men, the more I find myself loving dogs.

General Charles de Gaulle, 1890-1970, Time Magazine Dec. 8, 1967

& referenced in the “Random House Quotationary,” p. 27.

The one-L lama, He’s a beast;

The two-L llama, He’s a priest.

And I will bet a silk pajama,

There isn’t any three-L llama.

Odgen Nash, 1902-1971

The best thing about animals is that they don’t talk much—Thornton Wilder, 1897-1975

Mama: Pets Are Pests

After a couple of tries, Mama finally forbade our keeping dogs as pets. Either they died of distemper (a catarrhal infection of puppies caused by a filterable virus), were run over, ran away, or created nuisances in our, and the neighbor’s, yard. Mama would get fed-up and give our dog away, once to Jim, the once-a-week vegetable-and-fruit truck vendor. She assured us, and Jim assured us, that Rex would be happier on a farm, and we swallowed it hook-line-and-sinker, and thought: *wouldn’t the same be true of us?* (Duh, that was a no-brainer.)

The World of a Child

There you have it—the children’s puzzling world in capsule form. Grownups, who make life possible, also make life impossible! As I grew older, I was amazed to find how really easy it was to keep a dog happy *and* obedient through distemper shots, vitamin pills,

scientific diet and obedience training. But in those days veterinarians were rarities and I never heard of a dog-clinic. Also, I never found a way to keep a dog from barking his fool head off at anything that moved.

Mind-Body Problem

Someone wrote that it takes 27 years for the brain to catch up with the body. Based on my teaching experience, I find that a credible estimate, although maybe a little optimistic. So imagine what it is like being a child of ten, say, in a world completely governed by minds 27 years old or older!

The person who gave the 27 estimate based it on his studies of people of genius—Einstein¹ was one—and their age at their moment of greatness—the discovery of general relativity for Einstein.

The main difference between the brute animal and *Homo sapiens* is the reasoning faculty. (Well, also the opposable thumb, etc.) The thesis of the short story “*The Most Dangerous Game*” is that the contest between instinct (animal) and reasoning (man), reasoning always wins. (Well, maybe not *always*.) And that is why, according to the author, man is the “most dangerous.”)

On the subject of beasts, is the following risqué (risky?) limerick”

An Argentina Gaucho

An Argentina gaucho named Bruno,

Once said, “There is something I do know,”

A woman is fine,

A sheep divine,

But a llama is numero uno!

Anonymous

¹ Einstein was Time Magazine’s “Man of the Century” in the millennium edition, and ranked in the first 25 of the century’s greatest by a panel of distinguished artists, scientists, writers, musicians, etc. for Cable TV’s “Arts and Entertainment” channel on New Years Eve, 1999. (Gutenberg [1397-1468] was rated #1 in this same program.) It’s ironic that Einstein’s father asked a teacher at Einstein’s elementary school what career his son should follow. “It doesn’t matter,” he was told, “He’ll never make a success at anything!” This boo-boo ranks with that of an art teacher of Pierre Matisse, the world-renowned artist, who told Matisse, “You’ll never learn how to draw.” And in some wonderful sense, he didn’t, at least, not the old way. And he didn’t paint in the old way either. “His most characteristic paintings display a bold use of primary color organized within a rhythmic, two-dimensional design”—Cambridge Biographic Dictionary. He also pioneered in Cubism, Fauvism, etc.

Well, a child is closer to the brute because of the excruciatingly slow development of the brain, and this is the most convincing reason for children's love of animals.² Children instinctively relate to animals, personify them, and animals reciprocate: I always thought that dogs understood me a lot better than adults!³

Adults Forget Their Childhood

Unfortunately, adults forget what it is like to be a child. Maybe it is an unpleasant experience for most adults and maybe unpleasant experiences should be forgotten, but nevertheless should the next generation of children be punished for the convenient amnesia of adults?

Monkey-See, Monkey-Do

Although children are “monkey-see, monkey-do” in their imitation of adult behavior, as witnessed by their early addictions to sex, alcohol, drugs, stealing, lying, etc., the psychological and physiological facts show how wide the gaps are between childhood and adulthood.

Tiny Boo-Boo

On Herman Street one dog reigned supreme—a large mostly white (with black patches) mongrel called “Tiny”. Fred and I, who had affectionate names for everything we loved, named him Tiny Boo-Boo. I do not have the slightest idea where we got the name Boo-Boo, maybe at a movie. We called Mom and each other ‘Tobey’ after seeing a movie in which a woman (Mary Astor?) glances alluringly at a man, and, stroking the back of her head upward with her hand, said, “I would not say that Tobey!” Tobey became a term of endearment and signal for affection, and often we greeted each other with, “Hello, Tobey (or Tobe).”

Boo-Boo Was Our Greatest Love

There was not anything we would not do for Boo-Boo. There was an indefinable aspect of his appearance that inspired undying love. True his conformity was nil, and his coat often mangy, but his soulful eyes and loveable muzzle could melt the heart of even the most hard-hearted Herman Streeter.

² In his TV show, Bill Cosby says jokingly (?) about his TV children that they are “brain damaged!”

³ On this subject, see Kristen von Kreisler’s “The Compassion of Animals”, or “Pack of Two” by Caroline Knapp, both listed in the Bibliography.

Dogs Are Anarchists

The reason adults think that dogs are nuisances is that dogs do not follow adult rules, and, of course, this fact is keenly appreciated by children. Dogs observe no boundaries, pay no taxes, neither marry nor divorce, do not go to school or maybe under duress only to reform (obedience) school, do not apply for passports, and *in most ways live outside the law, much the way children do.*

It is precisely this *anarchy* that children love. A dog pees when and where it pleases, while a child has to squeeze his wee-wee to hold back. Or dance up and down.

Mary Loves The Lamb, You Know?

The story of Mary's lamb: *Why does the lamb love Mary so? Because Mary loves the lamb—you know?*

Dogs love us because we love dogs and need each other. Dogs like the warmth of the human body and will try to sit on or near you to capture it.

Boo-Boo was an anathema to Mama who did not like dogs despite her rational reasons for giving ours away. Coming from the farm, she can be forgiven for this callousness because on the farm a dog had a purpose. Either, it was used in hunting, or else it was a watch-dog that kept marauding animals "at bay," but it was rarely a useless pet.

Old Dog Tray

*Old Dog Tray, ever faithful
Grief cannot drive him away*

He is gentle, he is kind

I will never, never find

A better friend than Old Dog Tray.

Kind of sad, but true. A dog is ruled by instinct, and the master's hand that feeds him.

King Boo-Boo

As I have said, Tiny Boo-Boo reigned supreme on Herman Street: he could lick any dog on the street, except for a German Shepherd from Warren Street that now and then beat up on him. Jimmy Townes reminded me of this in a telephone conversation on April 13, 2005. Jimmy also disclaimed ownership, saying that Tiny was "a neighborhood dog" that is, everybody fed him. So Tiny was homeless, and yet at home everywhere!

Along with marbles, and mumbley-peg, dog-fighting has virtually disappeared. I once commented on this to a friend who surmised that "fighters" were nuisances and had

to be destroyed, so the fighting instinct was bred out of them. I would never have hit upon such a simple explanation. I would have thought suburbia and fewer dogs per square mile, or more food, may have reduced the opportunities and reasons for fighting. (This is a perfect example of the differences in viewpoints of people who believe that one's heredity is determinental in one's life, and others who believe the same of one's environment.)

Everybody Loved a Dog Fight?

On Herman Street, everybody loved a dog-fight. (This was a pre-television world, so maybe TV was a factor in the decline of dog-fights!) The Lord knows how many dog-fights were egged on by the kids. And when one started, everybody screamed "dog-fight" and the whole block came running, adults and all.

The humane thing we should have done was to have stopped it. Some people did, notably the Kelly's whose house was in front of the favorite turf of the Gang (the street between two vacant lots). I remember more the breaking up mating dogs with buckets of water than the breaking up of fights!

And Still Champ

Tiny rarely lost a fight—with dogs. And never won one with cats. (His nose was too tender—my, how they raked his nose!) I wonder if Fred and I would have loved Tiny quite so much had he not displayed such courage in his battles? It is true that I never loved a dog better than I loved Tiny, but could I have loved a quitter? We often bragged that Tiny stayed with us so much because he was ashamed of Jimmy who did not like to fight. Not that we did—we just hid our fear—hypocrisy starts young.

Dog Heaven?

We fervently believed in dog heaven, and claimed we would never go *anywhere* that barred dogs. But then we grew up. O to be like James Barrie's "Peter Pan," whom my daughter Heidi adored, and emulated, much to her credit. ("I won't grow up!" Maybe we ought to have named her Petra Pansy! Ha-ha. She is a barrel of fun, lives in a menagerie of two dogs, Shannon and Dakota, and a "Psycho Kat." Contrary to what Thornton Wilder claimed at the top of this chapter, her animals talk a lot: "say hello to Grandpa!" (Heidi knows that I am in touch with my animal?)

"If a girl has a dog and a bike, she has all she needs to be happy," said my daughter Cindy, who at age 14 or 15, had both. Ah, youth!

All animal-lovers know that animals have their own vocabulary of utterances and inflections that reflects their needs and desires. A cat purrs and dashes to the empty milk-

bowl, and a dog races from one door of the house to the other, anticipating which we are going to enter, and, as I have said, barks at everything that moves. They lay sticks at your feet and growl for you to toss in a game of “go-fetch.” Their keepers and admirers have studied the complex language of apes, not to mention the large vocal range of birds, e.g., the operatic mocking bird, or vocal parakeets and parrots. Whales too have their own language that has been recorded and understood by “whale-ologists.” (Who else?)

The next is several lines of a poem by Wallace Stevens on birds and their existential meaning for us.

Sunday Morning

She says, “I am content when wakened birds,

Before they fly, test the reality

Of misty fields, by their sweet questionings,

But when the birds are gone, and their warm fields

Return no more, where, then, is paradise?

.

She says, “But in contentment I still feel

The need of some imperishable bliss.”

Death is the Mother of Beauty;

.

At evening, casual flocks of pigeons make

Ambiguous undulations as they sink,

Downward to darkness on extended wings.

From Verse IV of “Sunday Morning” by Wallace Stevens;

I owe Dr. Victor Camillo a great debt for the pleasure he gave me,

reciting this and other poems back in 1969-72, while we

sat in coffee shops in New Brunswick, NJ, working

on math problems for his Ph. D. thesis.

CHAPTER 18

HERMAN STREET CRIME

*It is not only the duty of the District Attorney / To prosecute to the fullest extent of the law,
But to defend with equal vigor . . . /* Introduction to a radio show, “Crime (Gang?) Busters”
*I came from at rough neighborhood.
I put my hand in cement and felt another hand—*Rodney Dangerfield.

I was born, see! Sure, dat’s de charge. / Write it in de blotter. I was born, get me!
Eugene O’Neill, 1888-1953, from “The Hairy Ape, 1922.

Our chief crime was: we were *boys*.¹ Has there ever been a greater crime perceived in the eyes of an anxious, nay, over-anxious mother? (Of course, as I found out growing up poor, poverty is also viewed as a crime.) And did she ever heed the oath of the District Attorney cited at the head of this chapter? Ha! My mother seemed to regard boyhood as a criminal offense, but some mothers indulged their boys to their heart’s content, even if their sons landed in jail or an alcoholic ward, whichever came first. But some geniuses have been greatly indulged by their mothers, e.g., Marcel Proust, Albert Einstein, Johnny von Neumann, Richard Feynman, to name a few of many. I doubt that Leonardo da Vinci ever delivered papers, stocked shelves, or pitched coal. I could be wrong, but I don’t think so.

Truants . . . and Recidivists

One childhood friend of ours, Stanley, was so inept in school that when he quit the truant officer did nothing about it even though he was several years short of the mandatory school age. And his mother did nothing about it either, unless the giving him a dollar- or half-dollar-a-day for drinks and smokes was a hindrance to cutting school. Herman

¹ See the quote from “The Hairy Ape” above. Today, thanks to biology, you need a YY chromosome to qualify as a “criminal type” instead of the single “Y”.

Street kids would get caught stealing, be convicted, serve time “up-the-river”, and, before you knew it, would be back in the Gang, breaking into stores or houses. Stats indicate that most criminals are recidivists.

Mothers Against Crime

Arrayed against crime were the “hard-nose” mothers, like Mrs. Kelly, Mrs. Edmondson, and Mama, who kept their children on a short leash, and in tough times, no leash at all. No doubt *all* mothers were against crime, but these I knew well. Sadly, there were many incompetent mothers and fathers who had no idea of discipline beyond corporal punishment, which added meanness to their children’s wickedness. “*It was pouring on gasoline to put out a fire!*”

I mentioned “being boys”, but “being girls” was the dual crime for the parents so disposed. By being boys, I meant the abundance of energy that blesses boys before the age of rationality. I am certain that rationality depends not so much on the growth of the brain as it does on the growth of the bones, that is, the shutting down of the excessive hormones, e.g., testosterone.

Another possible explanation is that rationality is not something we are born with—it *is arrived at after everything else has been tried and found wanting*.

In other words, you would say that a person is rational when he lives up to certain expectations that only experience in living can achieve. You would expect that a person of a certain age has tried everything and found most of it wanting, leaving only the expected response possible. But, as the newspaper stories of murder, mayhem, child-molestation, rape, incest, torture, and other crimes document, it does not always work that way. Most criminal are recidivists, as their rap sheets clearly indicate. It might well be that irrational modes of behavior are the domain of people of exceptional energies that enable them to escape the expected or inescapable conclusion of wearier humans.

This certainly fits the description of boys: bundles of energy with no visible controls when their Mamas are out of sight!

Carl Jung on Children and Archetypes

No less an authority than Carl Jung, the noted Swiss psychologist, analyzed the situation and concluded that children are the parents’ biggest (worst) enemies in that, in all probability, they will supplant their parents by out-living them. (*This sounds more like a phobia than an observation, Doctor!*) He also expounded on the fact that children of goody-goody parents so often are little devils: *They see that their parents are not happy, so they try the alternative route.*

While he was a prepubescent child, Jung dreamed of a throne with a lighted ruby-colored stone at the tip of the throne's back. He later recognized that he had dreamed up a phallus, without knowing what a phallus was. This led him to the theory of archetypes, namely that we view people not as individuals, but as the archetype we recognize. Thus, the eternal or seductive woman (Eve), the mythic man (Adam, or Adonais), the all-loving, forgiving mother, (Gaia) the threatening, or judgmental father (Moses, or God), and countless other archetypes like the Greek or Roman "good." One has to be wary of this because one is being judged against type. *You get the feeling that what they see is not the "real you."* What's worse, one may not see the self that one is. What George Jackson said about racism—it made him less than he might have been, applies to all stereotypes.

"Les Enfants Terrible"²

Besides stealing and robbery, the major Herman Street crimes were adultery, rape, sodomy, pederasty, onanism, sadism, incest, and certain other perversions such as "gang-bang" and "circle-jerk." Sodomy is carnal sex between male persons, or beasts. Anal sex was "corn-holing" on Herman Street. Onanism is sex withdrawal before orgasm, or masturbation. The latter was called "whacking-off," now also "fucking-off.") I am not going into details because that would make the crimes seem more lurid than they actually were. These were just work-a-day crimes; your every-day average that police rarely got "involved in." Nobody ever called the police to report a rape because the raped would not even tell their parents! And if they did, the parents blamed the girl for associating with (bad) boys. And there was the double-standard: pregnant girls were "bad" girls who got boys in trouble in order to get married.

Another reason that crime was not reported was that it was group-crime and you cannot arrest 20-30 people even if there was a "hard-core" of two or three practitioners. Furthermore, we were minors, most even too young for reform school. The people most likely to get a summons would be the parents (for negligence).

To penetrate the inner workings of the Herman Street Gang was extremely difficult, and none of the concerned adults, Mama, Mr. Kelly, Mr. Edmondson, or Mr. Townes, ever completely succeeded. They mostly got their own children off the streets, and left the rest to warm themselves by the "Fires of Hades."

² The title ("The Terrible Children—read "The Little Terrors") of a 1950 film "adapted from his own play by Jean Cocteau." It is a "classical, lyrical treatment of adolescent deviance"—quotes are from the Video Hound.

CHAPTER 19

THE HERMAN STREET JUNGLE

*It's like a jungle out there sometimes,
It makes me wonder, / How I keep from going under.*

Sung by Grandmaster Flash, a song written
By Sylvia Robinson and Duke Bootee, 1982;

*Now this is the Law of the Jungle—as old and true as the sky;
And the Wolf that shall keep it may prosper; but the wolf that shall break it must die.*

.
*Now these are the Laws of the Jungle and many and mighty are they;
But the head and the hoof of the Law and the haunch and the hump is—Obey!*

Rudyard Kipling, 1865-1936,
The Second Jungle Book (1895), sts. 1 and 19.

“If once a man indulges himself in murder, very soon he comes to think little of robbing and from
robbing he comes next to drinking and Sabbath-breaking,
and from that to incivility and procrastination.”—from *Murder Considered as
One of the Fine Arts*, by Thomas De Quincey, 1827,

“Well I reckon I got to light out for the territory ahead of the rest because Aunt Sally she’s going to
adopt me and civilize me and I can’t stand it. I been there before,”
from “Huckleberry Finn” by Mark Twain.

Kipling might also have added “tooth and claw” to the “haunch and the hump”. How did he know so much at the age of 30? He did grow up in India and his closest childhood friend was an Indian boy whom he played with, and whom he never forgot. Can we ever forget our childhood friends? But in Kipling’s case, or so I have read, his life and work was a bit like Proust’s “In Search of Lost Time,” in that Kipling was never to recover the intimacy with an Indian youth that he befriended as a child. Kipling wrote a poem, “Gunga Din,” and here is a line from it:

*Though I've belted you an 'fayed you,
By the living God that made you,
You're a better man than I am, Gunga Din!*

Whoever sees the 1939 movie “Gunga Din”, starring Cary Grant, Victor McLagen, Douglas Fairbanks, Jr., & Joan Fontaine, will not likely forget it. “Three veteran British sergeants in India try to suppress a native uprising, but it’s their water boy, Gunga Din, who saves the day. Friendship, loyalty, and some the best action scenes ever filmed. Based loosely on Rudyard Kipling’s famous poem . . . the story is credited to Ben Hecht, Charles MacArthur, and William Faulkner.” (The quote is from the “Video Hound” review of the movie.) The tragedy of Kipling’s youth is that the racial divide prevented him from recapturing it except, like Proust, in his writings.

Bongo-Bongo-Bongo

Here’s a pop piece I remember from long ago:

*Bongo, bongo, bong, I don't wanna leave the jungle, Oh no no no no!
Bingle, bangle bongo, I'm so happy in the jungle, I refuse to go!
Don't want no bright lights, false teeth, doorbells, landlords, I make it clear
That no matter how they coax me, I'll stay right here!*

(Repeat the first two lines)

Don't want no penthouse, bathtub, streetcars, taxis, noise in my ear

(Repeat the last line of the first stanza, followed by the first two lines)

There’s more. Search Google at “Bongo, Bongo, Bongo.”

Our “Jungle”, in addition to the “Hill”, was the overgrowth directly between Herman Street and the railroad yard. It provided protective foliage that made detection virtually impossible. The kids could comfortably squeeze between the high swamp grass stalks, or burrow a tunnel through it, but a full-grown person would find it heavy-going, and would end up full of briars, burrs, and scratches. There were tall sycamores, which concealed tree houses, and also provided lookouts. By the time intruders reached base (no pun!) camp, we could manage to look innocent as lambs. Even in the rare instance someone was caught red-handed, they were able to concoct some fantastic fabrication that attested to their innocence. And to be sure, they were innocent in their own eyes; or rather they were victims, and thereby deserving of better!

The Criminal as a Rebel

There is a secret sympathy in society for the criminal-as-underdog, or rebel, although hardly anybody except professionals such as R. D. Laing or B. F. Skinner can publicly admit it with impunity. I would guess that this empathy for the criminal has its source in our rebellious childhood, when many truly innocent acts are treated like high crimes: broken dishes, broken toys, misplaced tools, fondling oneself, picking one's nose, bickering between children, dirtying or tearing clothes, not eating all that's on your plate *ad infinitum*. Unquestionably childhood is the time for the development of a sense of responsibility and a respect for law and moral order, but many parents pass this burden on heavily-handedly. A love of wisdom, or say, wonder at nature, love of science, or even just plain kindness are healthier legacies for children than a fear of retribution which can cripple a child intellectually, emotionally and even morally, as Jean Genet's writing, notably "Thief's Journal" and "Miracle of the Rose", testify to. Also see the semi-autobiographical film, "The 400 Blows," which initiated François Truffaut's career and catapulted him to international acclaim about the trials and rebellions of a 12-year French schoolboy.

Family Function: Control the Ego?

I have read that one function of the family is to control the ego of the child, to shape it so the child can go into society with the right size! (Isn't it lucky that the Einstein family failed with their son Albert? Ha-ha.) If that were the case, then we have to conclude that families ought to be abolished, although the kibbutz also has its problems, according to B. Bettelheim in his book "Children of the Dream." This estimate is not based just on my childhood, but rather on my experiences as a teacher in colleges for forty-seven years: *so many students fail because they think of themselves as failures*. In other words they were labeled failures in the family and they are paralyzed by their conviction of the truth of this label. Perhaps "truth in labeling" a federal law, ought to be extended to family labeling! Does not every family have its "black-sheep", its "beauty," its "ugly duckling", or "genius"? Does not every village have its "idiot", every class its "moron", and every losing team its "goat"? Every idiot seems to have its village too! (E.g. Woody Allen's film "Love and Death," has a hilarious "Idiot Village").

All of this led Herman Street children to accept their status as "outlaws" or outsiders in the social structure, and accept the double standard of adult society—the private vs. the public morality. No matter how much we loved our mothers, we broke faith the moment we stepped into the jungle, the moment we lit up, the moment we cursed or

blasphemed. And minutes later we might pick up our fallen wings and become Mama's little angels again if we had to go home.

And so, when caught red-handed, the criminal would throw up a smoke screen that would enable him to escape. Even his face and demeanor would change from that of a fellow conspirator to an angelic cherub that had come there by mistake—an innocent bystander—like the chicken-thief who answered the farmer's question, "There ain't nobody here but us chickens." Society requires, nay, demands, hypocrisy for survival. Many people have lost their lives for lack of it.

As a Gang member, I suffered from my own ambiguities, but I also benefited from the same: I did not qualify as a leader, but perhaps as a consequence, I never became a follower. I liked my independence too much for either role, although I wasn't a loner either. Rather a bit like the traveler in Robert Frost's "The Road Not Taken":

Two roads diverged in a wood, and I—I took the one less traveled by, And that has made all the difference.

I make another analogy, this from Shakespeare: *Neither a lender nor borrower be, . . . And it must follow as night the day, Thou canst not the be false to any man—Hamlet I, iii, 75.* And also from Bacon: *Be true to thyself, as thy would not be false to others—*"Essays," Of Wisdom for a Man's Self.

Nevertheless, I could rise to an occasion—in class, a game, or other activity. There's a Law of Balances that states: *Everybody has the virtues of their faults, and conversely, the fault of their virtues.* E.g., a wimp chooses not only *not to be hurt* but also *not to hurt anyone*. And a "righteous" person often has the "redeeming flaw"—self-righteousness, etc. Every virtue becomes a vice when it is excessive, e.g., too proud, and conversely for a vice: "Folks who have no vices have few virtues"—Abe Lincoln.

Fear of Death: Frankie Haake's Face

But in the back of my mind Frankie Haake's face and flaming red hair would appear: *I was afraid to die. And Mama was my guarantee.* For this reason, I could not go far away from her physically or emotionally. And of course, along with my sister and my brothers, I was Mama's guarantee of, Ha-Ha, genetic immortality. There you have the indissoluble bonds between mother and child. What kind of mother lets her child die? What kind of child kills his mother by killing himself? This love, mother-child, forms the link for all human experience: *everybody has this relationship.*

Maybe every child dreams of becoming "the President" to glorify his mother, and maybe every mother wants him to be President. "My son, the doctor" as the Jewish mother's joke goes, illustrates a universal rather than just a "Jewish" mother's dream.

Mama: My Guarantee

I thank my lucky stars that Mama and I honored our guarantees to each other. Dad was too phlegmatic to go beyond the basics, and he barely observed these. If he ever wanted his sons to go beyond his own status, he kept it to himself. When the question of reform school came up because of some undisciplined aspect of behavior, Mama would say with absolute conviction: “No child of mine is ever going to jail as long as I have breath in my body.” And you know, I believed her, and her statement made me happy, although I never ever broke the law. I was more afraid of Mama’s wrath, than that of the law. In any case, Mama’s statement was not directed for my benefit, yet I derived so much benefit from it because it gave Fred and me status: we were absolutes. No ambiguity there. All doubts ceased; Mama was 100% behind us—she was an absolute.

I used to ask her if she could still love us if we, somehow, ended up in jail, and she never hemmed or hawed, “Sure I would!” and I asked “Why?” and she said, “Because you are my child. After all I went through to have you, and to raise you, do you think I could ever stop loving you?” And I said, “Suppose we murdered somebody, would you stop loving us then?” And she would go off saying, “Quit saying crazy things.” But I would follow her and persist, but the answer was always the same, “You are my child. I will always love you no matter what you do. Even if I don’t like what you do, I still love you.”

I know other mothers may be just as committed to their children, but not being their child, I never had the opportunity to check them out. Of course, everybody jokes about the Jewish mother, but Mama was just as proud of her children’s accomplishments, and I have the same pride in those of my children. (See Acknowledgments.)

Mama’s feeling and attachment to the family was a form of religion, and not a result of religion, if by religion you mean what is dearest, deepest, and most sacred in your life, and what you would gladly die for rather than give up, betray or abandon. *This doubtlessly explains why many errant youth nevertheless are loved by their mothers.* Blood is thicker than water—English Proverbs, c.1670, collected by John Ray.

To Beat, Or Not To Beat, That is The Question

Is following the “laws of the jungle” in Kipling’s phrase at the head of this chapter an option in a civilized nation? Ought children be beaten not only for serious transgressions, but also for minor violations of parental law? On Herman Street they thought so, for “Spare the Rod, Spoil the Child” was the general rule there. From the New York Times, April 23, 2004, I quote something from Patricia Volk’s book review of a book “The Noise of Infinite Longing: A Memoir of a Family and an Island” by Luisita López Torregrosa that brought back vivid memories of whippings at 2439 Herman Street long ago: “Luisita

listens to the snapping sound of leather on flesh.” At this she expects her all-powerful mother to intervene. Instead, María Luisa (her mother) “sat helpless, weak afraid, and I saw that fear in her eyes, and I was terrified.” Then, when the author, a straight-A student gets a C in deportment, she too is beaten.

Are beatings *ever* justified? Do they produce the desired effect of obedience, or do they produce outward submissiveness and inner rebellion, and resentments? I think we know that the answers to these questions is “No!” but children do not have the ability or power to prevent parents from their jungle rule. Years later, I abstained from spanking my own children after I realized that I too was following “the law of the jungle.” Parents really do not beat their children in order to improve them. Indeed they beat them to vent their own anger at, and resentment of, children. And, of course, the less “well wrapped” the parents, the more the venting of their hatred, and maybe even their envy of the children’s youth. There are countless examples of children brutally beaten, and even killed, by their parents, and sometimes, as adults they return this brutal treatment in kind.

The reviewer, Patricia Volk, also raises some legitimate questions about Luisita’s, and by analogy, all memoirs. *What part does memory play in grief? Do all people have two childhoods, the one they experience, and the one they remember? Can you love a person who hurts you? And most difficult: Can you love someone who hurts someone you love?*

These conflicted emotions are carried into adulthood.

Poison Ivy

Whoever lived through childhood without being afflicted with poison ivy, or its relative, poison oak? They thrived in our jungle, and one could hardly play there without contacting one or the other. The only palliative was calamine lotion, which dried into a white powder on the skin. We still live in a kind of jungle here in Princeton, New Jersey, and calamine is a staple in medicine cabinets. (From the label: a zinc oxide and a small amount of ferric oxide dissolved in mineral oils. Like other oxides of heavy metals, ironically, it is poisonous! (Zinc’s atomic number is 30. and atomic weight 63.37)

CHAPTER 20

UP THE HILL

*Breathless we flung us on the windy hill, / Laughed in the sun, and we kissed the lovely grass.
You said through glory and ecstasy we pass, / Wind, sun, and earth remained,
the birds sing still./ "And when we are old, are old, . . . And when we die /
All's over that is ours; and life burns on
Through other lovers, other lips," said I— "Heart of my heart, our heaven is now, is won!"*
Elinor Hoyt Wylie, 1885-1928, "The Hill", st. 1

*I've looked at life from both sides now, / From win or lose and still somehow
It's life's illusions I recall, / I really don't know life at all.*

Joni Mitchell, née Roberta Jean Anderson, 1943-

Another verse replaces "life" by "clouds", and "win or lose," by
"up and down"—see "Oxford Dict. of Modern Quotations"

*Nature has much to teach us how to live, and how to love.
Nature never deceives us; it is always we who deceive ourselves.*
Jean Jacques Rousseau (1712-1778)—from "Emile; or On Education," 1732

*Milkweeds, any of numerous plants, having a milky juice and pods that split open
to release seeds with downy tufts—from the American Heritage Dictionary.
In sunlight they look like spun silk—they are fun to watch and catch!*

"Up the Hill" was the most frequent answer to Mama's eternal question. The Hill must have been 600 feet high. The "Hill" not a high hill, but it dominated Covington on its western side. Before they built the reservoir (sometime after the 1937 flood), and the Ida Spence Homes, the Hill, it was a wilderness area—pristine and verdant. Anyone living near a largish geographical feature (and who does not?)¹ knows the mystical even spiritual effect, or mystique, it has on the citizenry.

¹ The flat country of Texas and the prairie states makes this seem silly, unless you consider "The Big Sky" a geographical feature. And even in Texas, you have Big Bend National Park, and the "Hill Country" in the triangle formed between (and also west of) Austin, Fredericksburg and Georgetown.

*'O Shenandoah I long to hear you,
Away you rolling river.*

Across the wide and rolling river.'

Ah-ha, I'm bound away 'cross the wide Missouri.

"Shenandoah," last stanza, Anonymous.

See the Faber Book of America, pp.31-32

Hills

Some hills have names such as Grandfather Mountain near Boone, N.C.), Devil Mountain, or Mt. Diablo near Walnut Creek, California), Heartbreak Hill of Boston Marathon fame, Walnut Hills in Cincinnati, Beverly Hills in Los Angeles, but ours was just "The Hill". The Hill had its practical side—blackberries proliferated, and so did wildlife of all kinds. During the destructive 1937 flood of the Ohio River, we used the pure spring water in lieu of polluted tap water, and each summer Mama canned blackberries, huckleberries, and raspberries, that we picked on the Hill—enough to last the winter. Although hunting was prohibited, you could hear the retorts of shotguns in all seasons. Dad refused to hunt there because of the proximity of residences. Instead he would borrow Charley Menefee's car, and hunt on the Menefee farm in Williamstown 35 miles south of Covington on US 25.

But by far the most productive use the Hill had was for the pleasure of those hundreds of urban souls who would climb it to flee city life, or even to view a concert in Devou Park. You were immediately cut off by the dense foliage and bushes, not only visually but auditorially. Then the sylvan hush could work its magic: you were Simon Kenton or Daniel Boone stalking a deer or a rabbit or a pheasant. Or you were a Shawnee stalking game for the evening meal, or maybe stalking Daniel Boone, or, maybe, stalking a deer hiding in the bushes, watching, and listening. As I wrote elsewhere, Kentucky is the Indian name for "dark and bloody ground." Many, many, states have Indian names. See, e.g., Michigan.

Mother Nature

Nature was an integral part of our lives, and part of our being needed to communicate with nature at a primitive level². Otherwise why was I drawn so often to run "up the Hill", to the very top, and fling myself down and watch clouds?³ Or watch the downy tufts of

² Nobody does this better than Annie Dillard in "Pilgrim's Creek."

³ *Breathless we flung us down, and kissed the lovely grass/ You said through ecstasy and eternity we pass* (Elinor Wylie, *ibid.*) In watching clouds, you can see "two sides now," as in Joni Mitchell's song at the top of this chapter. Also, see at Mitchell in the Index and Glossary.

milkweed float in the air. Or to stare dreamily at the Ohio River far below, at the Suspension Bridge, and Cincinnati's seven hills? I could see Union Station, and near it Crosley Field (the old home of the Cincinnati Reds), and Eden Park on the eastern flank of Cincinnati, Mt. Adams, or Burnet Woods (near the University) and maybe even Mariemont.⁴

I also could see the Licking dividing Covington from hated Newport belching yellow-black smoke from its Steel and Rolling Mills; and, maybe, Bellevue and Ft. Thomas beyond.

The Spires of Covington

The most striking aspect of Covington from the top of the Hill was the large number of spires attesting to the religious roots of the people. And the reds from brick houses, which poked through the abundant leaves of trees. Not all that different from Heidelberg in Germany as I observed from the Philosopher's Walk in 1959—and why not? Covington, Cincinnati, and Peasenburg have their large German populations and influences. I felt at home in Heidelberg. On the Philosopher's Walk I looked down on the Neckar River as I did the Ohio from The Hill.

The Song of Hiawatha

By the shores of the Gitche Gumee,

By the shining Big-Sea Water

Stood the wigwam of Nokomis,

Daughter of the Moon, Nokomis

.

From the waterfall he named her,

Minnehaha, Laughing Water.

Henry Longfellow, 1855

From "The Song of Hiawatha", Part I.

⁴ A model village endowed by a woman named Mary. See "Yesterday's Cincinnati" or "Cincinnati", in the American Guide Series (the WPA's Writers' Program).

CHAPTER 21

CONEY ISLAND

*Goodbye my Coney Island Baby, / Farewell my own true love. /
I'm going to go away and leave you, / Never to return again. /
So goodbye, farewell, so long forever,
Goodbye my Coney Isle, / Farewell my Coney Isle, / Goodbye my Coney Island Babe!*
“Coney Island Baby,” Lou Reed, 1975; see Da Capo’s Companion, p.785;
“Coney Island,” prize-winning movie short, 1951, with music by Albert Hague,
See Ewen’s “All the Years etc.”, p.435

Try as you might, you could not see Coney Island from the Hill; it was around the big bend of the Ohio River. Coney Island was the giant amusement park about 15 to 20 miles up the Ohio from the Suspension Bridge. Coney was not an island, but rather got its name from Brooklyn’s famous amusement park. Children and adults revered it equally—it was *the* place for fun. The Zoo was another. (Like many things, the original Coney in New York was named by the Dutch, from “konijn,” meaning “wild rabbits.” That Coney is in Brooklyn also named by the Dutch.)

I can think of no place that has generated more happiness for more people. To be sure, I had the Hill, and other had their car, boat, or fishing, but Coney Island was the common denominator. Lived there a person so dreary that they could not enjoy themselves for a day at Coney? Surely anyone could find *something* to do or laugh about!

The House of Fun

Why you could stand in front of the House of Fun (Laff in the Dark?) and watch people being frightened out of their lives by alarms, screams, whistles, beeps, honks, screeches, squeaks, and much more. Sudden apparitions in your path, flabby hands on your shoulder or at your throat, cobwebby strings in your face, abrupt changes of directions, mazes to

lose yourself in, barrels to fall over, and many other forms of mayhem. Is not dying fun? Especially when you know it is not for real?

Ride the Wildcat . . .

For real death-defying activities where you could prove your virility and stupidity in equal measure, you take the ‘roller-coaster’, affectionately called the Wildcat. At the top of the first climb, you shoot (what looks like) straight down: in effect, gravity takes over, and at the bottom you suddenly shear and come back up at an angle which feels like upside down!

How many young men won their first—you-name-it—on these curves? (If the road to hell is paved with good intentions, I wonder what the road to heaven is paved with: Naughtiness?)

Shoot a Pellet . . . Throw a Ball . . . Eat A Coney . . . Or Go For a Swim

Or you could shoot a perfect score at the shooting gallery, or knock down three bottles and win a stuffed animal, or slam down a sledgehammer and hit the bell to win a prize, or pitch a ball into a cup . . .

Time out for lunch: buy a “Coney Island, a heavenly concoction of hot dog, bun, onions, and Chili; have an ice-cold root beer; sip an ice; eat a candied apple; stuff on popcorn, sip a lemonade or coke, lick an ice-cream cone, or Creamy Whip, chew a Mr. Goodbar,¹ or Milky Way, and keep on stuffing until you had a belly-ache and more.

Or Go For a Swim in “Sunlite Pool,” Advertised As the World’s Largest Circulating Pool

The water was always cool and refreshing. And if you were dumb, climb to the 35-foot tower, and dive in! And if you were lucky, survive it! How many happy lovers got their first peek of their loves at the swimming pool? And how many ever recovered from their disappointment? Or how many even admitted their disappointment? But, then, a dance at Moonlight Gardens with her and then *you had it all*, all over again. When does the thrill of dancing with your beloved end? Never!

¹ A movie, “Looking for Mr. Goodbar,” stars Diane Keaton as the victim of a predator who stalks lonely women in bars.

Coney Island: Where the Rules Were Suspended

For our family, Coney Island was the one place where the rules were suspended. You actually got to spend money for trifles—not a lot of money, but for us—it was a fortune: each of us got \$1 worth of tickets and some rides were just a nickel! The monster wildcat—10 cents—but that still left 90 cents!

Dad was as big a child as the rest—he wanted to ride everything, but (naturally) Mama demurred. We would plead, but she never even got on the merry-go-round! (A people-mover, e.g., and escalator, was more Mama’s style, but they had not invented that expression yet.)

The Island Queen: Coney Island was always a family success. We came back the way we went—on the gorgeous *Island Queen*. It had “two side paddle-wheels, one on each side driven by two one-cylinder steam engines, and could turn on a dime,” according to Walter Waymeyer in his letter of January 25, 2005. (Walter is a graduate mechanical engineer with a Ph. D. from the U. of Cincinnati, and has a Ph. D. in that subject from UCLA. Later, he worked for the US government on stability problems for rockets, involving electricity. He has some interesting stories to tell about this.) You could hear Coney’s calliope miles away; *the party was not over!* Oh, no! You could “stuff yer face” on the Queen, and play your last pennies in the penny arcade grasping at treasures which eluded you at the last second.

Another feature of “The Queen” was a dance floor on top, and if I remember, a dance band. Clyde Trask’s band supplied the music at Moonlight Gardens and Walter Waymeyer played in it!. (Sadly, the Island Queen burned down in a freak accident in 1947. See the Index and Glossary.)

“The Coney Island of the Mind”

The Queen chugged down the River as you sat on the top deck, watching the lights on the water, thinking how great life was, and not knowing that you have been permanently afflicted with an incurable condition.

Oh, it was not a *physical* affliction! “Dr.” Fehrlinghetti (the San Francisco poet) named it: you had contracted *The Coney Island of the Mind*. And forever! I once saw Ringling Brothers Circus at Madison Square Garden² at 38th and Seventh Avenue in New York City, together with Molly and our four sons. The Emcee came out strutting in his colorful garb including boots and Jodhpurs, shouting, “*May All Your Days Be Circus Days!*” Well, at Coney Island, they are!

² Three things to remember about MSG: It’s not on Madison, it’s no square (it’s round), and it’s not a garden (except in the sense of a public arena.)

CHAPTER 22

FUN AND GAMES

*The battle of Waterloo was won on the playfields of Eton—Sir William Fraser,
“Words on Wellington”, 1889
East Side, West Side, all around the town, / The tots sang “Ring-a-rosie,”
“London Bridge is falling down,”/
Boys and girls together, Me and Mamie O’Rorke, / Tripped the light fantastic,
On the sidewalks of New York.*
—“The Sidewalks of New York”, 1894; James W. Blake, lyrics, Charles B. Lawlor, music.

Our most successful game was checkers, at which Dad excelled, then Eldridge, Fred, and me. Mama was terrible at games, and neither she nor Sis took games seriously enough to study them. The adult game was Rook which Mom and Dad enjoyed enough to invite friends over to play. Sister’s boyfriends in turn would pick up her hand while she dressed, or primped, and play for her. I was never invited to play but picked up pointers by kibitzing. By the time I had it straightened out, they had quit playing. Playing checkers, or any game, hit a chord in the family harmonium. Chinese checkers was a popular game in the thirties, and so was Backgammon a two-person game like checkers. I was an eager Domino player but not much good. I preferred to stack them up and watch them fall down in the familiar chain reaction. (This little activity is supposed to help us understand international intrigue!) Oh, and Tinker Toys! What fun!

Mama and Sis were compulsive embroiderers and crocheters, whipping at the needle in an idle moment. Adept at our Singer sewing machine, they did all their own dressmaking, and took well-deserved pride in their creations. To do this, they, and we, spent a lot of time in stores that sold “notions,” that is, needles, buttons, thread, ribbons, and other accoutrements of dressmaking. I found “notions” (from Latin *notio*, with bars above each “o”) a strange word then and still do, although it’s no longer in use. In fact, notions are hard to find anymore.

Red Rover, Go-Sheepie-Go, Leap-Frogging

Outside the house, evenings, the children would line up for red-rover, where playmates lined up on the sides of the street, and, try to race across to the other side without being tagged out by the one in the center, and if so, then becoming the one in the center shouting “Red Rover, Red Rover, I dare you to cross over!” “Go-Sheepie-Go” was a variant of this, and both were played indefatigably, until called home. (An hour might pass before we would respond!) Another enjoyable vigorous game was “leap-frogging” or jumping over a series of bent-over playmates, and then assuming the same position at the end of the line. Like the others it could go on forever, or exhaustion.

Mama hated the game of “Cowboys and Indians,” especially if they involved cap guns, or other metal guns. Therefore BB guns were also taboo. Having lost an eye to meningitis, Mama was understandably fearful even if sticks were used in place of guns, for fear someone would get an eye poked out. What is the difference between a parent being protective, and over-protective, or nourishing vs. castrating boys? There’s a thin line that divides these alternatives, and every parent draws their own line.

Little League: Yogi Berra had this to say it: “I think Little League is wonderful. It keeps the kids out of the house.” Little League baseball, and also football and basketball, were played in season. I never learned how the seasons were determined: they appeared like magic, and left the same route. These games required considerable skill, and only those who practice regularly could hope to master them. A curve is not an easy pitch to throw, at least not over the plate, and impossible to hit; a hook shot must go in while you are moving away from the basket; and the shape of a football, while good for passing, is also good for fumbling!

The “Ins and Outs” of Games: People unacquainted with the “ins and outs” of a game may think it silly, but once you know the subtleties of a game, it’s fascinating. E.g., the various strategies such as “the hit and run” play in baseball, “the backdoor play of basketball”, the various iron and wood shots of golf, “the statue of liberty”, or “the hail-Mary pass”, or what a “quarter-back sneak,” or the difference between the T-formation, the single or double wing formations of football. And it wouldn’t do much good to read a book about it, because it’s not really a literary subject. Hence its broad appeal: *What you see is what you get.*

Swimming and Drowning: Swimming was something everybody, except Mama, enjoyed. I never learned until years later how to do anything but crawl, or side-stroke. Swimming dog-fashion was low caste. In high school I began to practice the art of diving in Rosedale Swimming Pool, and at the “Y,” and managed a passable jack-knife, swan, and back-one. (In Lest We Forget, “Hopie” Cummins wrote me a reminder of those days.)

After Frankie Haake died, I used to wonder what caused drowning, and how it felt, especially as I continued swimming in Banklick Creek (which emptied into the Licking).

The place where Peaselburg kids learned to swim was the city park west of Howell Street between 19th and 21st. (The only name it had was “the park”.) Many childhood diseases must have originated there, not to mention frequent earaches and sore throats, because of the poor sanitary precautions. Back-washing a pool was unheard of then, and I suspect that many kids saved themselves a trip to the urinals by emptying themselves in the pool, judging by the smell. The YMCA has a curious rule: you *had to* swim naked! I found it embarrassing to say the least.

Poliomyelitis, or Polio, for short, also called *infantile paralysis*, a misnomer, was a constant threat, and parents worried themselves sick in fear of the crippling disease. The first major outbreak of polio began in June 1916. New York was hit especially hard with more than 9,000 cases and 2,343 deaths. In many of the worst epidemics, 30,000 or fewer people contracted Polio, a far lower number than such other childhood as chicken pox, measles, diphtheria, and whooping cough. Although in my childhood I never knew a polio victim, escaping it was something to be grateful for. Franklin Delano Roosevelt was stricken August 8 (10?), 1921 at his home on the Canadian Island, Campobello.¹

Marbles was the most popular game, and you could judge a player by the beauty of his taw, a large striped marble used for shooting. Only agates were considered proper—glass marbles chipped, or worse, slipped. “Connie-thumb” was the sexist epithet for generally poor shooters who gripped the taw clumsily with the fingers completely covering the bent thumb and the taw. The expert way to shoot applied much more force to the taw, while more difficult to master than Connie-thumb, was less accurate at first. However, it provided much more spin to the taw, which increased its game capabilities, e.g., by keeping it in the ring. A well-executed shot would knock the target out of the ring, leaving the taw just about where you wanted it in position for the next shot. When marbles blocked your path, you would hike up on the back of your hand and shoot over them. One downside of playing marbles is that you had to kneel in the dirt in order to

¹ Roosevelt, polio’s most famous victim, made possible its eradication through the “March of Dimes,” an annual campaign he and a former law partner, Basil O’Connor, organized in 1937 to collect money for research on this disease: Dr. Jonas Salk’s killed-virus vaccine in 1954 immunized ensuing generations from the crippling disease. Dr. Albert Bruce Sabin’s attenuated live-virus vaccine was available in 1957-58, although batches of it proved to be too virulent through sloppy (or hasty?) production and infected numerous people. Today, the Salk vaccine is the more used in the USA today, according to “The Splendid Solution” by J. Kluger. (Cf. *Polio: An American Story* by D. Oshinsky.) The 1960 film “Sunrise at Campobello,” starring Ralph Bellamy who reprised his Broadway stage role as FDR, graphically showed the pain and frustration of Polio victims. In an “incandescent performance Greer Garson” won the Golden Globe and other awards, portraying the incredible devotion and political growth of Eleanor Roosevelt. (Quote from the Video Hound.)

shoot, and that led to the usual complaints from Mama about wearing out our knickers or pants, or dirty knees if you had on shorts. We could have used kneepads but like everything else we did without. *You fight with the army you have instead of the army you want*—Donald Rumsfeld, Secretary of the Defense in 2005 about the complaints of the soldiers in Iraq about insufficient armed forces, and body and vehicular armor! Whatever happened to the scout motto: “Be Prepared”?

Girls: Play’em or Leave’em? Girls were excluded from most games, usually by mutual consent—they were not good enough, and they knew it. (Naturally such an attitude, if directed at anyone, would be self-fulfilling!) Boys would keep on trying, hoping to master *something*. Girls did best in pickup jacks, hop-scotch, jumping-rope, especially Double Dutch, where two ropes were whirled in opposite revolutions: the jumper had to duck into the double helix and jump like hell to catch the double cycle.

The Thigh Bone’s Connected to the Knee Bone

Most biological differences between boys and girls were obvious, but many were not. I did not know, for example, that the arms of girls were better constructed to carry, e.g., books, cradle-fashion, whereas boys carried their stuff like one would carry a pail of water. Then, too, girls’ hips are wider and the thigh-bone meets the shinbone at a greater angle than the more piston-construction of boys’ legs. This gave boys the jump over girls in sprints, as needed in the major sports. Furthermore, girls cannot throw as straight or as hard for much the same reason.

Since we did not know these things, there was a lessening of esteem for girls by the Gang. Sports esteem was based on observation and comparative performances. Of course, *some* girls could play better than *some* boys, but this did nothing to raise the general esteem. (See “The Female Eunuch,” by Germaine Greer. Also see Alan Dundes’ “The Crowing Hen and the Easter Bunny Tale Chauvinism” in his book “Introduction to American Folklore.”)

A student of sports has compiled statistics to show specifically how size dominates field events, whereas, in gymnastics people of smaller stature can and do excel. As Sigmund Freud’s comment, in a different context, also applies to sports: “Anatomy is destiny!” But, of course, so is the desire to win. In all things, passion is the determining factor.

Street Hockey: A game Peaselburg kids played was street hockey, which differed from field hockey in several respects. First the ball was a tin-can that was beaten into a roughly spherical shape; second, we used clubs cut from saplings with knobs at the base. (These were obtainable on hills, where phototropism came to the aid of fun!)

The problem with street hockey might be *guessed*—it was a lethal game. The compacted tin-can had a murderous density so much more than a cork filled baseball.

(Kapok, a cottony or silky fiber, from a tropical tree, used for mattresses, flotation material, and insulation, and then centers for baseballs came later.) A variation on this game was the simpler “kick-the-can”, using the foot for a club! Furthermore, as is true of field hockey, the sticks are lethal, but unlike field hockey, there were no positional restrictions on wielding the club! So it was left to chance or agility if a player were to escape decapitation by a club or mangling by the can.

Combateness of Children’s Games: As I reflect on the truly rugged, even fierce-combateness of children’s games, I wonder why this is so necessary to the survival of the species. To be sure, the weak get killed off, but surely some of the brighter boys are lost this way. Are the “toughest” the “fittest”? The question is like the riddle: which came first, the chicken or the egg? In Darwin’s theory, who, what, or that which survives *is* the fittest (period). That remains just as true if cockroaches, rats, or ants take over the earth as has been predicted. So competitive were our games that many boys were coached by their fathers in order to make the team, or to excel, and coincidentally become their papa’s immortality guarantee. I used to think that only the fathers who had been lousy players as children did this. And nothing I have learned since has changed this opinion. The situation is similar to coaching: the best managers often were not the best players; Casey Stengel or Leo Durocher, are examples, whereas Ted Williams, one of the greatest hitters of all time, was a flop as a manager. (See them in the Index.)

Jack Kaiser, who the best player in everything, taught not only himself but also his slightly built brother, Bob; *consequently Bob was able to make all the teams*. Sonny Borchers was a fine player but was constantly supervised by his father, who called him “Boy.” Mr. Borchers was a fine man who helped us get a playing field out of the railroad right-of-way, and then got the city to grade it, but nevertheless I would not have liked being pushed by him. I am convinced there is a certain amount of anarchy under which children grow best, although the boundaries are not well-marked: *children contrive to provide what anarchy is needed anyway!*

The Playfields of Eton: Childhood games thus run into adult games, or as the quote by Sir William Fraser said of the Duke of Wellington’s victory at Waterloo over Napoleon, “The battle of Waterloo was won on the playing fields of Eton.”

Blue Goose and Mumble-Peg.

The wickedest practice in games was the right to “Blue Goose!” This gave anyone uttering these two words the right to grab the marbles out of the ring! Only bullies dared, and here again, girls could not have prevailed against the generally stronger boys. Another favorite, which has just about died out, was mumble-peg (also, mumble-the-peg, or mumblety-the-peg.) This required a well-balanced knife, usually a pen-blade pocket knife, to be balanced on the back of the hand, tossed in the air like a body in a

back-dive, and falling straight down to the earth. Points were awarded for a perfect throw with the blade embedded vertically in the ground. Fewer points were given for non-vertical embeddings, and none at all, of course, if the knife failed to stand-up.

Those who failed had to pick up a peg from the ground with his or her teeth. I can never recall a girl playing this game for the simple reason that girls never carried knives while every boy of a certain age did. Then, too, back then, girls never wore jeans, and the frocks that they wore did not have the deep confiding pockets of Levis. Unfortunately girls were denied many athletic pursuits simply by their gender, even though there were some “tom-boys” who tried to match the boys in everything, including peeing on a bonfire, which they tried to do as well. Unfortunately physical differences preclude this. “Peewee” Pressler got her nickname for her size, not her prowess, but she wasn’t the only one. Her older brother “Beans” could pee the farthest—so far not an Olympic sport.

Yo-Yos were another obsessional game in which you could splice the string attached to the yo-yo so that it would stay down, or walk along the sidewalk or floor, called “walking the dog.” Other variations were figure eights, loop-the-loop, around the world, etc.

Soap Box Derbies. The racecars for these were homemade, constructed using a 6 ft. half-inch board for a chassis, wagon axles and wheels, a soapbox hood, a steering mechanism using ropes, and greased to speed down Megley Court to certain disaster at the bottom! Yikes!

CHAPTER 23

GERT AND JESSE

Einstein's theory of relativity: "I get going when relatives are coming"—
Paraphrased from "Absolute Zero Gravity," or some other book of humor;
maybe "Einstein Simplified"?

The Ramseys

Mama's oldest friends in Covington were the Ramseys, who lived in a comfortable house behind 5th District School. Their children, Clyde and Melvyn, were good friends of Sis and Eldridge, before I could remember anything about their friendship. We rarely visited anybody, although I vividly remember the Ramsey's spacious house that rented for the same rent that we paid for the tenement at 2439. The Ramseys were the recipient of a noble landlord who never raised their rent over a 15-year span—maybe even 20 or 25 years altogether. Unquestionably the Ramseys were worthy people. Certainly I never met a closer-knit happier family, but I wonder whether or not their good fortune did not contribute to the closing off of the friendship? If, as has been said, families cannot survive prosperity, can friends?¹

However in the end, Mama needed no *reason*—she kept everybody at arm's length and farther! She had plenty to do without social obligations. She enjoyed her casual conversations with neighbors, the grocer, the baker and the cobbler, etc., so why did she need friends?

But of course, she did need friends, and would have saved herself much anguish if she had confided in somebody. When she was sick-a-bed, her friends showered attention on her and made her ashamed of her aloofness in health.

¹ Robert Klein who grew up in the Bronx had this to say about his childhood: "Our home was rent controlled; it was sacrosanct. We were secure even though we owned nothing." (From his autobiography, "Amorous Busboy of Decatur Avenue," reviewed July 19, 2005 in the New York Times by Sam Roberts who also quoted Charlie Chaplin" as saying, "Life is a tragedy when viewed close but a comedy in a long shot."

Gertrude and Jesse Barnes

Our nearest (in distance relatives and in contact) were Gertrude and Jesse Barnes, and their three children, my cousins, Eleanor, Urban, and Janet. Gertrude was Aunt Susie's daughter, so Mama was Aunt Vila. Aunt Susie was the eldest in Mama's family and Mama the youngest. The upshot was that Gertrude was very nearly Mama's age, which did nothing to cement the aunt-niece bond (on the contrary). It was a pity because Gertrude was the most likeable, *nay*—loveable person in my childhood. I adored her, and she gave me hundreds of reasons to do so. It is true that Gertrude had her share of faults, even more than her share if you counted Mama's way, but Gertrude's faults were faults of her great humanity.

Gert's greatest "fault" was her animal good looks. She would have made a perfect "Sadie Thompson", or, even better, "Carmen," personality-wise, and she had the physique of a *diva* too: a magnificent chest, a crown of flaming red hair, and a fiery temper to match. Dad, who never rose to any occasion when visitors presented themselves, always perked up around Gert and, of course, that blacklisted the Barnes: they simply were not welcome, and Mama would not, could not, welcome them.

It was my good fortune, and Fred's good fortune of Fred, that Gert was not insensitive to Mama's hints; *she was positively deaf to her open suggestions!* In other words, Gert was a grand actress, and she played "poor relation" and "your only niece in Northern Kentucky" or "Aunt Susie's only child" to rapt audiences consisting of two *true believers*—Fred and me.

The Barnes' Family Gave us Status

Aside from the vivacity and diversion Gert brought us, she gave us status. Here were people lower (economically) than we were, so naturally we crowded around to look at really poor people. It seemed that the Barnes often came because they were hungry, but predictably they would not say so. Instead they used a ploy, destined to become famous in our family, the cue to our amusement being: "Bless my heart you know you're hungry!" With this, Gert would reprimand her children for refusing Mama's (very belated) offer of food. Gert was full of "Bless your hearts" and other catch-phrases and you had to love her for her openness and naiveté. Obviously Gert was more like an overgrown child than an adult. She was hysterical, and her life was an emotional roller-coaster, ending tragically in the early death of Jesse. Although she had henpecked him unmercifully, she was never able to replace him in her affections.

Gert and Happy Times

Paradoxically, many of the family's happiest times came at the instigation of Gertrude. She was indefatigable in her pursuit of a good time, and she organized innumerable

outing: Coney Island, picnics, movies, and walks through the park. The route to her success in all this, in the face of Mama's notorious whimsicality, was the bloodline: *she was family*. "Home is the place where, when you go there, they have to take you in"—Robert Frost

Nobody else within 200 miles could make that statement. If I have given the impression that Mama was an old stone-face that could not be melted or made to laugh, it is simply a false one: she could be teased into anything (the point was that she could not be *talked* into it). Gert had the knack for it. She was like Aunt Susie. She had the gift of laughter, and she knew Mama's nickname, "Kick", and her weaknesses, but the main thing was the cliché: *Blood is thicker than water*.

Sunday Visits Were A Blast

Sundays were the days Gert visited. Typically she came on *no* special occasions (although we saw her on *all* special occasions!), *after* church, and *before* dinner! (Sunday we had dinner at noon or shortly thereafter.) Well, you could hear a pin drop despite all the "God love you's" and "Bless your heart's", Mama's indignation showing through her good manners: she was polite but *barely*. What was lacking was warmth: Gert was not welcome and everybody knew it. But humans being animals are prone to make the best of a crowded environment—dogs will lie down with dogs that they first chased away. A persistent dog, a young dog, will wear down an older dog every time: the old dog just wants to go back to his habit, but soon he may be romping like a puppy with his young friend.

Mama would thaw imperceptibly, and soon her generosity betrayed her logic and her heart went out to Gert's children. "Are you hungry?" "No, Aunt Vila". "You must be hungry, you haven't had dinner?" "We ate before we came."

"Bless Your Heart, You Know You're Hungry."

Then, Gert would expose her children's lie with her patented: "Bless your hearts, you know you are hungry!" That was the introduction to a flood of sympathy and food from Mama, and for the fun that would follow. On Sundays Mama cooked enough for two meals, dinner and supper, so she wouldn't have to cook twice.

Dad and Jesse Smoked While We Played

So that night, we would eat scrambled-egg sandwiches instead of left-overs. But, my, what fun we had with the Barnes! Dad liked Jesse and they spent the day talking "man's

talk” and smoking like smoke-stacks because nobody would bother to tell them not to. And we children also escaped parental observation and had our puff or two in the shed out back. One thing always leads to another in the child’s mind, and maybe we would poke our “thing” in a knot-hole and pee through it. I cannot remember undressing any girls but we may have played “doctor” with them which amounted to a good deal of feeling around for “lumps” and I do not remember what, if anything, else.

Smoking Ruined Jesse’s Health

Jesse was in bad health most of the time—his teeth were rotting out of his head and he was so afraid of the dentist that he left the stumps in. Dentist-phobia is wider spread than people know, and I have encountered it in such “rational” people as world-famous mathematicians. But in those days it was easy to plead poverty as a cover-up for cowardice. The invention of novocaine must be counted as one of the most humane discoveries of all mankind for nothing has made man suffer more throughout the ages than his teeth. Novocaine is so benign that despite the fearsome Dr. Caligari-sized needle, if you close your eyes, you may not be able to tell when it is injected. (Similarly for blood samples, but that does not prevent people from passing out at the sight of their own blood!)

Jesse’s Irrational Fears

Jesse had these irrational fears to a higher degree than most, and I suspect Gert did too. At bottom, most of us remain children all our lives, and have to be cajoled into doing what is right or good. Even Picasso hugged his bed and had to be coaxed out of it: “Why should I paint anymore? Haven’t I done enough already? Who needs another Picasso?” But before long, his wife reported, he was up and about and threw his whole being into his work.

Jesse’s Heart Gave Out . . .

Eventually Jesse’s heart gave out, and he landed in the hospital. I will never forget, no matter how long I live, all the life-support machinery everywhere, and Jesse barely visible under the oxygen tent. Tubes were run down his nostrils and digitalis leaked from an overhead bottle into his arm. Jesse looked almost dead. It scared the living daylights out of us, and Dad was particularly upset.² He said he would rather be dead than have to go through all that, and in the back of his mind was the fear that he might have to. Jesse died within a week.

² See my poem “Dad, Your Heart Attack” in “The Seduction of Humming birds”, published in 2004 by Xlibris. Also see “Ghosts of Yesteryear” at the end of Chapter 69

. . . Leaving the Barnes' Ship Rudderless

Although Jesse was by no means a dominant man, his death left the Barnes' ship rudderless. He held them together by his loveableness—not that he was all “sweetness and light”. But his vulnerability made him accessible to his family. He smoked and drank and cussed and cried and lied, but these weaknesses added to his charm. Urban was a lot like him, and so was Janet, but Eleanor resembled Gertrude more. Some years later Urban and Janet drifted away and lost contact with Gert and Eleanor.

The Rest of the Story

I wish I could tell you that the Barnes family prospered without Jesse, but Eleanor seemed sane. (How I cannot say.) Gert married a “rich” man twenty years her senior, but it turned out that he lied about his wealth for fear she would not have him. In that, he misjudged Gertrude, for she had a big heart, and was a sucker for a sad story. In any case, she stayed with him for some time after their marriage. Fear of loneliness causes people to make weird decisions.

Miss Lonelyhearts

Gert could have written a letter to *Miss Lonelyhearts*³ because after Jesse died she was lonely, and drifted from one man to another. She also bulked up the Foster way, and her rouge and lipstick and eyeshadow kept pace. She smoked and drank too much, had a stroke, recovered, went back to smoking and drinking and died while I was away from home. I never had the chance to pay my final respects and what I owed her. I hope that I won't be criticized for picturing the Barnes' lives in such a harsh light. Gert was so much bigger than life that on the contrary, I believe, like Mama, that Gert was driven by almost maniacal forces, for which she never received psychoanalytical treatment. She, and her family, might have been spared much suffering if she had only had an inkling of insight into the problems she struggled with. On the other hand, when you consider the sad stories of celebrities who have had lots of psychiatric help, and still mess up their lives, you wonder: What is the answer?

Gertrude's Big Heart

Gertrude had a big heart. Why, she even gave me a silver dollar once when I came home on leave from the navy—to “buy cigarettes with”, and gave me the biggest hug I every

³ I am using the title of a 1933 novel by Nathaniel West in which “Miss Lonely Hearts” is the name of an advice column to forlorn readers.

got (before or since). Little did she know that at the Navy PX I could buy them for a nickel-a-pack. But I learned a painful lesson from the Barnes—*no amount of impetuous generosity, or wishful thinking can substitute for the good sense they seemed to lack about things, big or small.*

I really could not blame Gert and Jesse for their problems. I could not believe them stupid, yet I wondered about the irrational forces that continued to govern them, regardless of the disastrous consequences, which continues to beset them. Of course, poverty in the Great Depression, the War, the quarrels between Mama and Dad, and Dad's neglect of our needs contributed to our own disasters. Gert's and Jesse's were merely blips on the radar screen, compared to our own problems.

Fear had a real impact on my development: I was slow coming out of the cocoon. Where others rushed in and on, I hung back. You might say I was bottled up—afraid to uncork!

If you are waiting to see if I ever “uncorked”, then you will have to read the sequel to this book, but I'll give you a hint: I became a mathematician!

CHAPTER 24

PADUCAH AND COUNTRY COUSINS

*O Susanna, don't you cry for me,
I've come from Alabama / With my banjo on my knee,
I'm goin' to Louisiana / My true love for to see,
It rained all night the day we left, / The weather it was dry;
The sun's so hot / I froze to death, Susanna, don't you cry!*

Stephen Foster, 1848

*There's a lone green valley, by the old Kentucky shore, / Where we whiled many happy
hours away.*

*Sitting and a-singing by the little cottage door, / Where dwelt my lovely Nelly Gray.
Oh, my poor Nelly Gray, they have taken you away, / And I'll never see my darling anymore.
I am sitting by the river, and I'm weeping all the day, / For you're gone from the old
Kentucky Shore.*

Benjamin Hanby, 1861

Enjoy the honey-heavy dew of summer—Shakespeare, from *Twelfth Night*, II, I, 207

Paducah, laid out in 1827 and chartered in 1856, was named by William Clark, Superintendent of Indian Affairs, in honor of his Chicasaw friend, Chief Paduke. Situated at the confluence of three rivers, the Ohio, the Tennessee, and the Cumberland, Paducah is the most important commercial center of West Kentucky. In the big flood of 1937, its entire population, then some 26,000 people, had to be evacuated. And, to think, we thought we had it bad in Covington.¹

¹ The naming of Paducah is from the *Dictionary of American Places*, while the information about the evacuation in 1937 was obtained from a "City Confidential" documentary on Paducah, narrated by Paul Winfield, who died in 2004. These reports most often center on the murder and apprehension of the murderer of a popular civic leader, but also cover important aspects of the city. When civic leader identified herself as Ro (?) Morse, I recognized her face and her name as that of one of our married cousins.

Besides Gertrude, daughter of Aunt Susie, our Paducah cousins on the Foster side were Carrie Mae and Pauline, daughters of Aunt Nona and Uncle Tom, and “Bo,” their son. (“Bo” was short for “boy” and we called him “Bo-Bo,” but I think his first name was Tom, the same as his father’s.) When they visited merriment rang out in the house. It seems that I am descended from a family of teasers. A German woman I knew in Heidelberg in 1959-1960 told me “Wer neckt sich, liebt sich,” meaning, “Whoever teases you, loves you.” Uncle Tom was a big tease—I believe he gave Mama her nickname “Kick.” His whole family was not only teasers, but beautiful people too! Carrie Mae, a strawberry blonde, Pauline, a brunette and Aunt Nona with hair now silver, would seduce the proverbial life out of you with their Southern charm, while Bo was as handsome as the day is long, with long wavy blonde hair, and an infectious grin. Oh how we loved them!

Since brother Eldridge and sister-in-law Mary were closer in age, quite naturally they visited each other more frequently. Eldridge loved the short drive from New Palestine, Indiana to Paducah, especially with southern fried chicken, corn pone, hush puppies, hominy grits, and gravy in mind all the way. Sister and Charley also maintained close relations with them. However, the Fosters were city folk living in Paducah, whereas Aunt Irene Foster, and Uncle Simon Perdew, lived on a farm some distance away. When you visited them, they put you to work too, sticking tobacco, milking cows, feeding the chickens and livestock, but that was a blast! You made up for it at the groaning table piled two feet high with chicken and all the trimmings, as you sat down with the hired hands and family for supper. The catch was, neither Fred nor I liked milk “from a cow”. We didn’t realize what we wanted was cold milk that we were accustomed to, so Aunt Irene winked, and said, “next time.” And she did, serving it in a real city bottle, which she had on hand, the difference being that it was ice-cold from the ice-box! They really knew how to make kids happy. They knew how illogical kids are, and never tried to reason with you the way Eldridge or Mama did.

The Happiest Summer: Country Cousins

Our “country” cousins were the Perdews & Eliots, Irene and Simon’s daughters, Marie, Audrey, and Eva, and Marie and Clete’s son Louis Eliot. Marie was a stunning raven-haired beauty with a dazzling smile, and would draw you close to her whenever you were in arm’s reach. Unfortunately, my only photograph of them, entitled “Kissing Cousins,” does not do justice to these handsome people, faded that it is (like memories?) We learned a lot from our cousins in Paducah that summer, the happiest summer of our lives,” and reached new levels of consciousness with our city girl friends.

Sweet Pain of Remembered Innocent Pleasures

To write about this is to feel the sweet pain of nostalgia for these truly innocent pleasures, which turn into major crimes when you reach puberty. What made them innocent was the biological impossibility of anything happening before puberty. It may be compared with the euphoria correspondents experience in times of war *when the rules are suspended*. Back home they may be Ernie Pyle, Bill Mauldin, Bernard Fall, Gloria Emerson, but in a theater of war, you are lucky to be alive, and nobody has the time, energy, or mandate to ask you if you had any naughty thoughts, or whether you broke a few rules. People are dying everywhere, and then you meet someone for the first time and you have a chance to touch each other and express tenderness and human emotion. Who is going to look at your ring-finger at such a time?

Before Childhood Existed

Sociologists have explained that in the 19th century childhood stopped at puberty: children then went to work and married, had children routinely before they were out of their teens.² This occurred before the discovery of adolescence, a comparatively modern state of affairs, created by improved economic and humanitarian conditions. This ushered in the ages of the teenager and drop-out, the hippie, the delinquent, and the shook-up generation. When people worked 80 hours a week beginning age twelve, there was no time, and worse, no energy for turbulence.

When the capacity for adult behavior (read adult sin) is attained, *then* adult behavior begins in a sufficient number of teenagers as to ruin it for the majority. Not everybody is into drugs and sex perversion, but some are, and people suspect that *you* are. We romped in the haylofts of our Paducah cousins, watched the glowing skin and maturity of our beautiful cousins, entirely free of guilt because it was what they were used to: freedom. They watched their farm animals cavorting in the pasture, or mounting each other in the barn, and thought nothing of it: they would not have understood it if anyone had snickered when the stallion's penis hung half-way to the ground. *City people are cheated of so much; city life perverts the citizens by denying them their animality, especially their being animals in nature.* This is another instance of Freud's study, "Civilization and Its Discontents." As I understand it, perhaps superficially, Freud determined that our animal sickness, that is, the denial of our bodies, causes mental sickness.

² Certain states permitted marriage of children twelve years old. A case in point occurred in August 2005 when an 18 year-old Nebraska man married his pregnant 12 year-old sweetheart in Kansas (where it was permitted), and was arrested in Nebraska for child abuse.

CHAPTER 25

THE SHIRLEY THEATRE AND RADIO DAYS

Stolen pleasures are sweet

English Proverb (derived from Proverbs IX, 17)

Stolen sweets are best—Colley Cibber, 1671-1757,

From “The Rival Fools,” 1709

Fruits are sweet, but stolen fruits are sweeter still.

Anonymous? (I couldn’t find it in Bartlett.)

Mama was a Puritan, so we were not allowed to go to the movies on Sunday, but *in principle* we could go any other time. Since school nights were out, that just left Friday or Saturday evenings, and the dime it cost to get in. Since Sunday afternoons were the most exciting times for children because that was when the “serials” ran, we did not generally exercise our weekend movie options, unless of course some favorite star was featured. In a film clip on the popularity of movies in the 30s, it was claimed that 75 million Americans went to the movies at least once a week, or more than half of the population at that time.

The Rise of Comedy and Escape Movies

The rise of Charlie Chaplin, Stan Laurel and Oliver Hardy, ignominiously referred to as “Fatty and Skinny” by everybody, the Marx brothers and Buster Keaton, that is, the rise of comedy was not only a consequence of the depression that began in the late 1920s, but also of the advent of sound in movies that occurred about the same time. People needed something to laugh at, and comic movies, the Talkies or the Silents, provided plenty of that.

At a less exalted level of comedy came the Keystone Kops, Mickey Rooney, Judy Garland and Ann Rutherford in the Hardy Family series with Lewis Stone’s impeccable fatherhood. Like the Katzenjammer Kids (Hans, Fritz, and der Kaptain) in the comics, Mickey Rooney was popular *because* he was *always* in hot water.

But it was not just comedy that prospered in the Depression, the likes of Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer, Twentieth-Century Fox, Paramount, and Columbia Pictures all made moola in the 30's (so much, that the producers were called moguls!).

But I knew nothing about all this then. I just knew that I could not go to the movies on the only day that counted, to see the *Perils of Pauline* being re-enacted every Sunday as she escaped certain death from buzz-saws, the wrack, collapsing rooms, bridges, buildings, maniacal fiends, drugs, guns, knives, poison, ropes, and I do not know what all.

Sunday Moratorium: The hardest part of it was being branded by the other children as something out of this world. Imagine, a family that will not let their children see these juicy tortures on Sunday! Well, it was not unimaginable, it was unthinkable! And so, from the age of cognizance to the military age, I was just a freak in the eyes of my betters, the ones who could view those delicious terrors at the Shirley Theatre at 18th and Holman Streets on Sunday afternoons.

I offer my brother, Fred, and myself up for a kind of uniqueness, because in modern life who is prohibited from seeing such R-Rated films as "Dirty Harry" (Clint Eastwood), Peckinbaugh's "The Chainsaw Massacre", "Taxi Driver" (Robert De Niro, Jodie Foster), "Don't Look Now" (Don Sutherland, Julie Christie), "Psycho" (Anthony Perkins), "The Last Tango in Paris" (Marlon Brando, Maria Schneider), or "Pretty Baby"? The last one is a 1978 film by Louis Malle about the New Orleans photographer, Bellocq (Keith Carradine), who is besotted with, and subsequently married to, an 11-year-old prostitute, played by Brooke Shields, who recited "I loved you once, I loved you twice, I really loved your beans and rice." He also photographed her Mom (Susan Sarandon), exclaiming as she bared her bosom, "This makes me very, very happy!"

A Short List of Great People

A theory of mankind persists that asserts the uniqueness of every individual, no matter how much herd activity casts doubt on it. This point of view lists the great people of each age: Euclid (and his Elements of Plane Geometry), Pythagoras (e.g., his great theorem about the right triangle), Diophantus (and his equations), Homer (The Iliad and The Odyssey), Plato (The Republic, and The Dialogues based on the teachings of Socrates), Aristotle (who wrote The Organum on Logic; and on Metaphysics, Ethics, Politics, Poetics, and De Anima), Alexander the Great (who conquered the world, and reputedly wept because he had no more worlds to conquer), Hypatia (one of the world's first women mathematicians of note, see Chapter 40, p. 133), Moses (who gave us the 10 Commandments), Solomon (noted for his wisdom), David, King of the Jews, Gautama Siddhartha, or Buddha (who taught respect for all

life, including insects, and to renounce violence in all things), Lord Jesus (who gave His laws, life and example to the world, and was crucified for doing so), John-the Baptist, who baptized Jesus, Galileo (who taught us that the Earth and other planets revolve around the sun, not vice versa, and was excommunicated for doing so), Copernicus (who saw that the planets travel in circles around the sun at the center), Kepler (who corrected Copernicus, and saw ellipses instead of circles, with the sun at one of the two foci), Newton (who gave us Calculus, and the Laws of Motion), Beethoven, Bach, Rembrandt, Michelangelo (all gave us so much music and art), da Vinci (who invented so many machines, e.g., the catapult, who gave us Mona Lisa, and a treasury of drawings, e.g., details of the body, and internal organs), Joan of Arc, Martin Luther (the first Protestant, who had the Bible translated into German from Latin, that is, into the vernacular so the people could read it and not depend on priests, and who was excommunicated for doing so), Cromwell (who also defied the Pope, established the Church of England so that he might divorce and remarry), Goethe (who wrote “Faust”, poetry and drama, was called the Shakespeare of Germany), Locke (Philosophy), Washington (military genius of the War for Independence, the Father of our country and its first President), Jefferson (our third President, who wrote the Declaration of Independence with the help of many, e.g., George Mason,¹ Benjamin Franklin, James Madison, and others, and, under his Presidency, acquired the Louisiana Purchase in 1803, which doubled the area of the country, and a great architect who designed his home Monticello and the University of Virginia in Charlotte), Lincoln (who led the USA in the Civil War and issued the Emancipation Proclamation, for which he paid with his life²) Einstein (who furthered Newton’s Laws to include relativity, from which he derived $E = mc^2$, the worlds greatest equation.), Sonia Kowalewky (an outstanding woman mathematician, see Chapter 40, p.133), Madame Marie Sklodowska-Curie, who exploited Roentgen’s discovery of an exposed photographic plate to isolate radium and point out its therapeutic values in radiation therapy, and who died of radium poisoning for her efforts. She and her husband, Pierre Curie, shared a 1903 Nobel with H. Becquerel, and she won one in Chemistry in 1911 (see Index.) Winston Churchill and Roosevelt

¹ On July 3, 2004, the cable network CNN stated that Jefferson never made any claims to originality in the declaration, and had gathered ideas from many sources, most notably from George Mason who had written a tract from which phrases had been lifted onto the Declaration verbatim.

² Damn John Wilkes Booth, the assassin! Lincoln was considered a military genius in his own right, and his war plans were studied by the military in other countries as well as ours. Abe Lincoln lost every race for public office, in fact 15 or 16 straight, before he won his first. On his very next try, he was elected President of the USA.

who led Britain and the Allies to victory over Nazi Germany, Roosevelt, who led USA out of the Great Depression, committed the USA to supply the Arsenal of Democracy via Lend-Lease and troops for victory for the Allies in World War II, Tolstoy, after repenting of his considerable carnal sinning, e.g., with the maids on his estate, followed Christ, wrote *War and Peace*, “*Anna Karenina*,” and a treasury of moral short stories and tales, e.g., “How Much Land Does A Man Need?”, Gandhi, who preached non-violence after the example of Tolstoy, who followed Christ’s teachings and example, and led India to Independence, and on and on. How dissimilar they, and their great contributions to humanity, are! And not only that, but how far away the closest competitor for uniqueness seems e.g., Einstein as the modern Newton, Lincoln as the American Solomon, or Gandhi as the Indian Christ. *The trouble with lists is that there is no end to them!* I left out Gutenberg his Bible, Descartes, almost all the great painters, and most of the great poets and musicians—the longer the list; the more glaring is the omission. So why start?

As I read over the list above, I thought of a quip by Edgar Allen Poe to the effect that man is born to diddle. “*A crow thieves, a weasel outwits; a man diddles. To diddle is his destiny.*” (Quoted in an article “Making Books” by Martin Arnold in the New York Times, p. E3, June 6, 2002.) I wonder what Poe thought any of the above people were doing? Diddling? Well, yes, I would think so.

The Lumières and Edison: The Invention of Cinematography

The Lumière brothers, Auguste Marie Louis Nicholas, 1862-1954, and Louis Jean Lumière, 1864-1948, gave the first public showing of a cinematic film in 1895. Auguste, who pioneered in the invention of the camera, was quoted as saying that it was of no practical value. An amusement maybe? The Lumières were two people who liked to diddle. Another, Thomas Alva Edison, 1847-1931, America’s greatest inventor, received a patent in 1887 for a kinetoscope, a device that produced moving pictures. (Edison had introduced his invention of the phonograph in 1877.)

The Shirley as a Beacon and an Eye

To me, the gleaming white lights of the Shirley Theatre marquee, and the white Bakelite exterior give it all the glamour of the Taj Mahal (which I saw 30 years later in Agra in 1968), and since it was all but forbidden to me, it seemed just as exotic. I must have been 15 or 16 before I ever got Sis in tow to take me. In other words, two or three years before I was old enough to go to into the Service, in which men risk their lives, I was allowed to see the same thing on a movie screen! (*In a century films have gone from silent to unspeakable*)—Doug Larson.)

Radio Days: At home, I listened to the scariest radio³ shows:

Who knows what evil lurks in the hearts and souls of men? Hee! Hee! The Shadow knows. It is not only the duty of the District Attorney to prosecute to the fullest extent of the law, but to defend with equal vigor. He's got him helpless in the corner, he's pounding him with everything he's got, he's cut him badly over the eye, his face is bathed in blood . . . No, no Joe, don't shoot, I'll tell you everything! Aaargh!

This phrase I taught to my nephew Billy Menefee, who, as a child, would shout it out in Southside Baptist church when I would make a gun out of my right fist and pointed my index finger at him. It got both of us into a lot of trouble with his mother, my sister Louise. Recently, I asked Billy, now in his sixties, if he ever regretted our caper, and he said, “(Expletive deleted) No!”

Louie, put down that gun! You ain't goin' to hurt (harm?) anyone!

Uncaring Authority Leads to Rebellion? Stolen Pleasures?

But, not being allowed to go to movies made me feel deprived and an outsider—I learned to sympathize with minorities, especially Blacks who weren't allowed to even sit on streetcars, or luncheon counters with Whites. (It also made me go one step further in disobeying Mama, for when I got old enough to be allowed out Sunday afternoons, I used to pay the dime admission and have a “stolen pleasure”. Italo Calvino has written about the psychological perspectives of movie-goers in “Autobiography of a Spectator,” published in “The Autobiographical Eye” (Daniel Halperin, Ed, Ecco Press, Hopewell, New Jersey, 1982. Calvino's essay also appears in his book, “The Road to San Giovanni,” but the title is translated by Tim Parks as “A Cinema-Goer's Autobiography.”). I mention this not only because of his passion for American and Italian films, but because it too represented for him freedom from “family repression” (which was followed by fascist repression, banning American cinema. See p.34, *op. cit.*)

Quemo Sabe? Going back to the radio, everybody loved to hear “Hiyo Silver” of the Lone Ranger to the background music of the William Tell Overture. His Indian companion, Tonto, quizzically referred to him as “Quemo Sabe,” which doesn't mean anything as far as anybody has ever figured out. (However, “Quién Sabe?” means “who knows?” in Spanish.) Here's a 60s joke about the pair:

³ Woodie Allen made a delightfully nostalgic movie, “Radio Days”, starring Mia Farrow, and highlighting the submarine scare off the Atlantic coast in World War II. See DeMarini's “The Year of the Zinc Penny,” R.

Lone Ranger: "Tonto, there are Indians to the north, Indians to the south, Indians to the east, and Indians to the west. Tonto! We are surrounded! Tonto: "What you mean, *we*, white man?"

Amos and Andy: This comedy program made its network radio debut on NBC starring Freeman Gosden and Charles Cornell. The fact that the two and their friends, including "Kingfish," *represented* blacks, but none of them *were* black, raised the hackles of unemployed black comedians. They also were resented for lampooning black people. Nevertheless, the program was popular with other Americans. To quote Ronald Reagan's autobiography: "A radio set would be placed on the stage while everybody sat quiverly [*sic!*] in their seats for a half hour listening . . ." (The New Yorker, Oct. 18, 2004, p.195.) Andy: You don't know nothing about music. What is a scale? Amos: A scale is a feather on a fish. Andy: Fishes don't have feathers. Amos: How about flying fishes? (1929 Radio—From the New Penguin Dictionary of Modern Quotations.) Jack Benny played a tight-fisted would-be violinist and Mary Livingston played the straight-lady, with a black "Rochester" in a raspy voice the role of Benny's valet (or what was he?) To illustrate Jack's love of money, here's a sketch from the radio program. A masked man approaches Jack and says, "Your money or your life," and Jack *slowly* replies, "I'm thinking. I'm thinking." Jack Benny was an acknowledged master to the perfect timing of his lines. But what a great bunch of writers he had! Once upon accepting an award, Jack quipped, "I don't deserve this, but then I have arthritis and I don't deserve that either!"

Another popular radio program was "Easy Aces," a comedy team that ran 1931-1945.

PART II

Growing Up

Gather ye rosebuds while ye may,

*Old Time is still a-flying,
And this same flower that smiles today
Tomorrow will be dying*

—from “To the Virgins to Make Much of Time”

By Robert Herrick, 1591-1676

If youth knew, if old age could.

(Si jeunesse savait, si vieillesse pouvait.)

Henri Estienne, 1521-1598, from *Les Prémices*, 1594

If youth would, if old age could.

(This is the way I remember the above quote.)

“Youth is a blunder; manhood a struggle; old age is a regret”—Benjamin Disraeli, 1844.

Youth is when you think you’ll live forever.

Old age is when you wonder how you lived this long,” Anon.

Youth is a wonderful thing. What a crime to waste it on children.

—George Bernard Shaw, 1856-50—in *Reader’s Digest*, April 1940

You are what your parents made you. But it is your fault if you stay that way

—Mark Twain

Youth would be ideal if it came a little later in life—Herbert Henry Asquith

Childhood shews the man, and morning shews the day—John Milton in “*Paradise Regained*”

*Those whom the gods love grow young, Oscar Wilde, 1894; see Quotationary, 960,
I'm not young enough to now everything—Oscar Wilde*

*Like other writers of working-class stock—one thinks of D.H. Lawrence and
Maxim Gorky—Esenin was a child in his childhood, unlike Proust,
for instance, or Yeats or Rilke, bourgeois poets who seem to have been born
middle-aged . . . Esenin [Yesenin] had enjoyed the incomparable privileges of an under-privileged
childhood, of a childhood, that is to say without any of the
cultural interference that made a horrible little adult of Proust's Marcel—
Geoffrey Thurley, p. 9 in the Introduction to his translation of
Esenin's "Confessions of a Hooligan."*

*What I had thought was merely personal turned out to have meaning for other people—Nuala O'
Faolain in "Are You Somebody?" p.190.*

*I do not know who has painted the pictures of my life imprinted on my memory. But whoever it is,
he is an artist. He does not take up his brush simply to copy everything that happens; he retains
or omits things just as he fancies; he makes many a big thing small and small thing big; he does
not hesitate to exchange things in the foreground with things in the background. In short, his task
is to paint pictures, not to write history. The flow of events forms our external life, while within us
a series of 0pictures is painted. The two correspond but are not identical—
From "My Reminiscences," in Rabindranath Tagore: An Anthology.
See Bibliography.*

Don't worry about avoiding temptation . . . As you grow older, it will avoid you—Anonymous

*By the time a man is wise enough to watch his step;
he's too old to go any where—Anonymous*

*Down by the old Millstream, / Where I first met you,
Dressed in Gingham too, / With your eyes so blue;
It was there I knew, / That I loved you true,
You were sixteen, / My Village Queen,
Down by the old—not the new—but the old Millstream.
—Down by the old Millstream*

*Down in the valley, valley so low,
Hang your head over, hear the wind blow.
Hear the wind blow, dear, hear the wind blow,
Hang your head over, hear the wind blow.*

*Roses love sunshine; violets love dew; / Angels in heaven know I love you.
Know I love you, dear, know I love you. / Angels in heaven, know I love you.*

*Write me a letter; send it by mail / Send it in care of Birmingham Jail.
Birmingham Jail, Dear, Birmingham Jail,
Send it in care of Birmingham Jail.*

Traditional—There's much more!

PHOTOGRAPHS FOR PART II



Fred, Carl, Eleanor Barnes, Zella Mae, Urban Barnes and Eldridge



Dad

Mary

Mama

(At Eldridge's graduation from Indiana University, Bloomington, 1938)



Eldridge and Louise
(Entrance to Holmes High School)

Carl and Fred
(Ostensibly proud to have our feet on the “running board” of
Charley’s 1939 (?) Plymouth (?) or Chevy (?). 2439 Herman Street
is right behind the Hollyhock bush.



**This Photo was snapped the same day
That the Photo for the Frontispiece was taken.
As usual, I am hugging Mama.**



Kissing Cousins

The Greatest Summer of My Life: Our visit to Paducah, Summer of 1941.

**At the farm of Uncle Simon and Aunt Irene Perdew,
Lewis (Marie's son) Fred, Dad, Carl, Mama, Eva and Son, Marie
Audrey, Aunt Irene and Simon**

Close-up: Minus the "Smallfry" plus Grandma Foster



Troop 13 Camping Trip Circa 1942

X = Unknown (Back Row)

George Edmondson	X	Freddie Weeks	Charles Kelly
Gene Mischke	X	X X	Vernon Kidwell
X Russell Eldridge		Carl Faith	Jimmy Townes



Scout Leader Mr. Herbert Kelly and Patrol Leader Charles Kelly in full uniform outside their home on Herman Street, Covington, Ky.



Carl and Fred
In their first suits, summer 1943



Joy Kinsburg Dreaming (As usual)



Joy Kinsburg Shy (As usual)



Ditto for “Benny, Joy and Carl (soft-shoe-buck and wing) “Benny” in coat and tie for a picnic!

**Lou Elva Oldham and “Benny” Craig Clowning.
(As usual)**

Spring 1945

Junior Department
Ninth Grade

HOLMES HIGH SCHOOL

RECORD OF Faith, Carl GRADE 9th

214 TERM Spring YEAR 1942

	Days Absent	Times Tardy	Phys. Ed.	English	English	Latin	French	Spanish	History	History	Choir	Mathematics	Mathematics	Biology	Phys. Geog.	Physics	Chemistry	Economics	Science	Science	Bookkeeping	Com. Law	Com. Geog.	Shorthand	Typewriting	Office Prac.	Printing	Man. Train.	Mach. Draw.	Cooking	Sewing
1st Report																															
2nd Report																															
3rd Report																															
4th Report																															
Exam.																															
Average																															

I (parent or guardian) have carefully inspected this report.

FIRST REPORT Mrs. Faith THIRD REPORT Mrs. Faith

SECOND REPORT Mrs. Faith FOURTH REPORT

(over)

HOLMES SENIOR HIGH

REPORT OF PUPIL PROGRESS

COVINGTON PUBLIC SCHOOLS
GLENN O. SWING, SUPERINTENDENT

HOME ROOM 220

Record of Faith, Carl Term Fall 1943

No. of Courses

	Days Absent	Times Tardy	Phys. Ed.	English	English	Latin	French	Spanish	History	History	Choir	Mathematics	Mathematics	Biology	Phys. Geog.	Physics	Chemistry	Economics	Science	Science	Bookkeeping	Com. Law	Com. Geog.	Shorthand	Typewriting	Office Prac.	Printing	Man. Train.	Mach. Draw.	Cooking	Sewing
1st Report																															
2nd Report																															
3rd Report																															
4th Report																															
5th Report																															
6th Report																															
Exam.																															
Average																															

I (parent, guardian) have carefully inspected this report.

First Report Mrs. Faith Fourth Report Mrs. Faith

Second Report Mrs. Faith Fifth Report Mrs. Faith

Third Report Mrs. Faith Sixth Report

(over)

HOLMES SENIOR HIGH

REPORT OF PUPIL PROGRESS

COVINGTON PUBLIC SCHOOLS
GLENN O. SWING, SUPERINTENDENT

HOME ROOM 240

Record of Faith, Carl Term Spring 1943

No. of Courses

	Days Absent	Times Tardy	Phys. Ed.	English	English	Latin	French	Spanish	History	History	Choir	Mathematics	Mathematics	Biology	Phys. Geog.	Physics	Chemistry	Economics	Science	Science	Bookkeeping	Com. Law	Com. Geog.	Shorthand	Typewriting	Office Prac.	Printing	Man. Train.	Mach. Draw.	Cooking	Sewing
1st Report																															
2nd Report																															
3rd Report																															
4th Report																															
5th Report																															
6th Report																															
Exam.																															
Average																															

I (parent, guardian) have carefully inspected this report.

First Report Mrs. Faith Fourth Report Mrs. Faith

Second Report Mrs. Faith Fifth Report Mrs. Faith

HOLMES HIGH SCHOOL REPORT CARD, 1943 & 1944

HOLMES SENIOR HIGH **REPORT OF PUPIL PROGRESS** HOME ROOM 220
 COVINGTON PUBLIC SCHOOLS
 GLENN O. SWING, SUPERINTENDENT

Record of Faith, Carl Term Fall '44

No. of Course	Days Absent	Times Tardy	Phys. Ed.	English	Latin	French	Spanish	History	Civics	Mathematics	Phys. Geog.	Hygiene	Chemistry	Economics	Science	Bookkeeping	Com. Law	Com. Geog.	Shorthand	Typewriting	Printing	Woodwork	Mech. Drawing	Food	Clothing	Eng.
1st Report			A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A
2nd Report			A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	
3rd Report			A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	
4th Report			A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	
5th Report			A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	
6th Report			A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	
Exam			A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	
Average			A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	

I (parent, guardian) have carefully inspected this report.

First Report True Faith Fourth Report True Faith
 Second Report True Faith Fifth Report True Faith
 Third Report True Faith Sixth Report True Faith

(over)

HOLMES HIGH SCHOOL REPORT CARD, 1944

HHS

Holmes High School
Junior Department

Hereby Certifies that

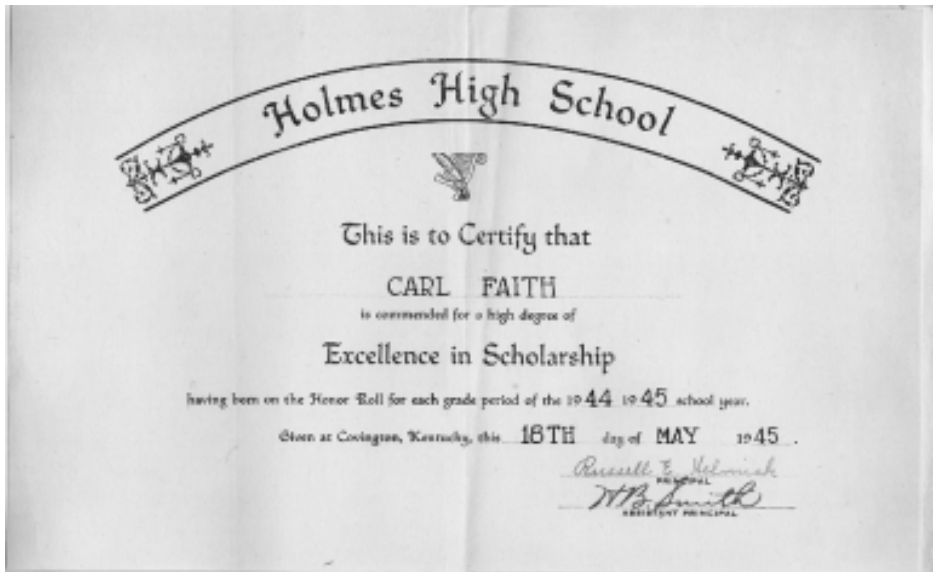
Carl Faith

having served faithfully as Student Aid during the year
1939-1940 and having maintained an honorable rank in
 scholarship and school citizenship is presented this

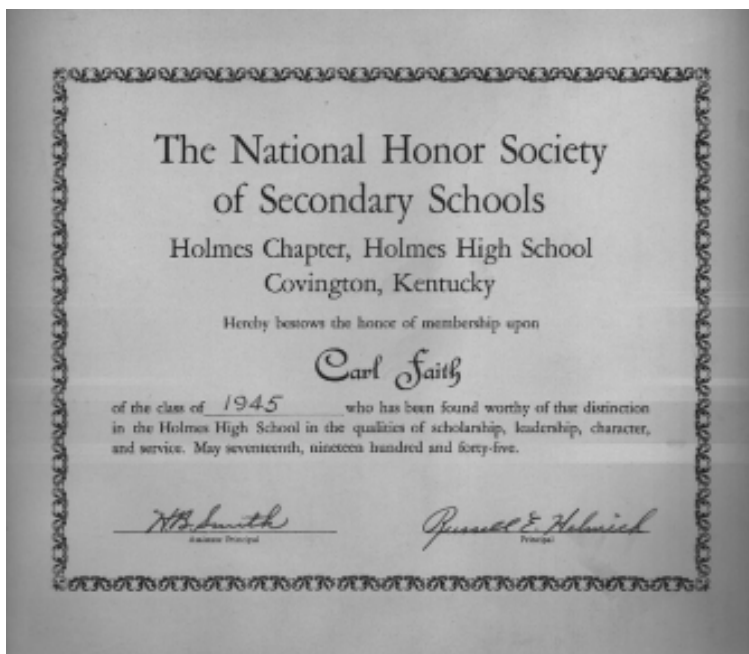
✦ Award of Service ✦

May 21, 1940 H. H. Hines
 Principal
Quinn E. Hines
 Assistant Principal

CARL-STUDENT AID AWARD 1939-1940



**(PICTURE OF) SCHOLARSHIP AWARD 1944-1945,
Presented May 18, 1945.**



Picture of National Honor Society Certificate

NATIONAL FORENSIC LEAGUE

Joy Kinsburg, Barbara Holman, Mary Jane Griffin,
Jo Larson, Norman Newman, Leslie Norman,
Forest Williams, Clark Gebelt, Bonnie Hansen,
Jim Knauf, Leta Lee

NATIONAL THESPIAN SOCIETY

Doris Rudy, Farna Williams, Betty Jane Clark,
Jacquie Freppon, Bonnie Hansen, Joy Kinsburg, Jo Larson,
Leta Lee, Diane Schellinger, Clarence Hartman, Don Busick,
Jen Gold, Walter Ferguson, Daley Jo Graham, Grace Fisher,
Ed Holt, Jim Knauf, Leslie Norman, Jane Scherwin,
Myrtle Stone, Lois Strother

NATIONAL HONOR SOCIETY, 1945

Nancy Meinger, Bill Reeves, Helen Williams,
Frances Stephenson, Edward Holt, Mary Carpenter,
Carl Fash, Lois Strother, Paul Gardner, Ruth Stephenson,
Arne Edith Hagert, Edward Quade, Thomas Tromper,
Mary Elizabeth Friedhoff, Wellington Gayard,
Thomas Skelton, Arthur Potteff, Dee Frank

NATIONAL HONOR SOCIETY, 1946

Nancy Ann Good, Betty Hall, Richard Carlson,
Richard Urey, Donie Rosenow, Elmer Potteff,
Marjorie Lewis, Jack Elson, Robert Frasier, Glenna Waddell,
Barbara Peterson, Shirley Rudy, Clark Gebelt, Faye Elliott,
Edda Libada, Gwendolyn Slaughter, Karl Nipple,
Shirley Quade, Marion Callerman, Gilbert Thurman

Honor Day

SENIOR DEPARTMENT

HOLMES HIGH SCHOOL

MAY 17, 1945

THE RAINBOW GIRLS

Jo Larson, Jean Osterdorf, Virginia Tromper, Loretta Elton,
Lorena Caldwell, Barbara Power, Marion Gubertson,
Mildie Jones, Edna Anderson, Gerty Thomas,
Wilma Browning, Virginia Cunningham, Margaret Bird,
Doris Gentry, Betty Jane Clark, Marjorie Lewis

The Pianofers Ann Scherwin, Thelma Scott

The Glee Girl Marjorie Siegel

1946 Class Banner Bob Held

National Honor Society Installation Cecil Craig,
Joyce Blades, Anna Lauro, Fannie Elton, Joyce Lewis

Dresses Bob Plummer

Solo Jane Mosser

Accompanist Bob Porter

SENIOR TROPHIES

Scholarship: Joy Kinsburg, Walter Waymeyer
Athletic-Scholarship: Bert Bennett

BOYS' SERVICE CLUB

Cecil Craig, Phil Gardner, Preston Schell, Gus Berger

CHEER LEADERS

Virginia Cunningham, Mildie Jones, Bonnie Hansen,
Naomi Leister, Diane Schellinger, Ruth Stephenson,
Bill Holiday, James Haino, James Floyd

LIBRARY

Ted Adams, Richard Carlson, Faye Elliott,
Dell Enosson, Lou Elva Oldham, Gwendolyn Slaughter,
Robert Smith, Robert Sparrow, Gilbert Thurman

MUSIC

Thomas Tromper, Walter Waymeyer

HOLMESPUN

Nancy Bishop, Devono Brice, Bob Cayton, Bob Cox,
Cecil Craig, Peggy Frank, Loraine Gooch,
Jen Hensley, Bob Kramer, Leta Lee,
Joyce Lewis, Marjorie Lewis, Lou Elva Oldham,
Victor Peley, Shirley Rudy, Bob Ruhl,
Bill Sager, Thomas Tromper, Mary Lou Wilson

STUDENT

Roberta Anderson, Nita Banks, Louise Boarder,
Dorothy Blank, Betty Sue Bokitt, Joanne Carmina,
Fannie Elton, Fay Fields, Grace Fisher, Mary Lou Hill,
Joy Kinsburg, Joy McGarry, Nancy Meinger, Ruth Stephenson,
Lois Strother, Jan Vaughan, Forest Williams, Marion Zeller

Picture of Honor Day Program, Honor Roll

May 17, 1945

Holmes High School
cordially invites you to attend a party
in honor of the pupils who have not been absent or tardy
and the pupils who have been on the Honor Roll,
Wednesday, June the sixth at three-fifteen o'clock
in the cafeteria

Carl—Honor Roll Party
June 6, 1945

HOLMES HIGH SCHOOL, Covington, Kentucky
TRANSFER OF CREDITS

This is to certify that Carl Sand (give name in full)
of _____ (teacher and school) (city) (state)
who was born April 27 19 27
attended the Holmes High School, Covington, Kentucky, from September 12, 1944 to June 12, 1945
and was graduated June 12 19 45. He was enrolled in this school 8 semesters.
He
He received at graduation 17 in class of 28 and made an I. Q. of 119 in the Stanford-Binet Intelligence test.
Below is a partial statement of the high school record of this pupil:
Dated August 27 19 45 Reuben L. Holmes Principal

COURSES	Year Taken	No. of Weeks	Points per Week	Rank	Grade at Entry
English—First Year	1	40	5	86	1
Second Year	2	40	5	88	1
Third Year	3	40	5	87	1
Fourth Year	4	40	5	84	1
Public Speaking					
Latin—First Year	1	40	5	93	1
Second Year	2	40	5	93	1
Third Year					
Fourth Year					
French—First Year	3	40	5	90	1
Second Year	4	40	5	95	1
Spanish—First Year					
Second Year					
German—First Year					
Second Year					
History—Anc. and Mod.	1	40	5	88	1
Modern					
United States	4	40	5	85	1
Other	4	40	5	85	1
Civics—First Year					
Second Year					
Physical Education—First Year	1	40	2	78	1
Second Year	2	40	2	85	1
Mathematics—					
Algebra, elementary	1	40	5	87	1
Plane Geometry	2	40	5	95	1
Algebra, advanced	3	40	5	85	1
Solid Geometry	4	40	5	80	1
Trigonometry	4	40	5	76	1
Physical Geography					
Biology	2	40	7	84	1
Physics	2	40	1	88	1
Chemistry	4	40	5	89	1
Bookkeeping—First Year					
Second Year					
Third Year					
Business Science					
Sociology					
Recreational					
Commercial Law					
Commercial Geography					
Economics					
Bookland—First Year					
Second Year					
Typewriting—First Year	4	40	5	88	1
Second Year					
Painting					
Wood Turning—First Year					
Second Year					
Shack Shop—First Year					
Second Year					
Music					

Fading mark to school, 70; Number of credits for graduation, 16; Length of education, 48 semesters.
(Indicate below)

Holmes High School
Transcript of Grades

17 Be.

HOLMES HIGH SCHOOL
TRANSCRIPT OF GRADES

Program

Screens from the Sierras	Helena High School Band	David Bennett
*Annunciation		Smith
Invocation		Rev. Milton A. Finley
Address		Dr. William S. Taylor Dean, College of Education University of Kentucky Lexington, Kentucky
Feedback	Helena High School Band	Schlesien
Presentation of Class		Principal Russell E. Heinisch
Presentation of Diplomas		Harvard J. Kaufman Chairman, Board of Education
*Alma Mater		
True blue as the blue of Kentucky skies And strong in the strength of our ancient hills. We are bonded in old Helena in loyal ties. And deep in our hearts our dear names dwell. Dear Helena, there's a guide in our hearts for thee, A love that the years will not take away, A love that will live in our memory Dear Helena, the love we pledge to thee.		
Benediction		Rev. Milton A. Finley
*The audience is requested to sing		

EDUCATION STUDENTS

Joe Delworth Kinsburg	91.61	Bert A. Bennett	91.15
Jack Joe McCarty	91.71	Carl Upton Felt	91.31
Carl Cline	91.11	David Max Hardy	91.15
Walter E. Vesperse	91.31	Anna Catherine Loren	91.22
Gail Walden	91.55	Frances Sue Stephenson	91.28
Lester Levine Eyer	91.94	Edward C. Holt	91.11
Beverly Wright Westland	91.14	Joyce Lee Lewis	91.00
Thomas Joyce Blanton	91.05	Mary Ellen Carpenter	91.00
William M. Francisco	91.79	John Stanley Bowdler	90.95
Conny Lee Stange	91.72	Frances Dorothy Hunt	90.61
Melvin D. Perkins	91.71	Edward C. Quake	90.61
Edwin Lester Williams	91.31	Walter Baker Ferguson	90.18
Virginia Lee Farris	91.07	Ann Edith Rogers	90.15
Lois Page Rockland	91.00		

MEMBERS OF THE GRADUATING CLASS

GENERAL COURSE

Editha Mary Anderson	Rank Joe McCarty
James H. Boone	Patricia McHenry
Harold Ray Dalton	Lois Jean Manning
Earl A. Bennett	James Louis Allen, Jr.
George W. Bueger	Edgar Lynn Ellis
Joseph A. Bishop	Lois Elyse Norman
Lisa Gene Shales	Berry O'Grady
Thomas Joyce Blanton	Lee Edna Wilson
John Stuart Galtren	John Harry Foster
Mary Phyllis Carpenter	Johnnie Edwards
Joyce Lee Lewis, Jr.	Harry Donald Perkins, Jr.
J. Robert Cox	Edna Perlett
Carl Craig	Mary Elizabeth Pritchett
John L. Gwalt	Arthur Kenneth Pritchett
James Carl Carpenter	Neal Eugene Ransom
Andra Hope Carpenter	George Rian
John E. Downing	Philip Lee Riley
Freud, Jack	Margery Rodgers
Lois Russell Eldridge	Ann Edith Rogers
Forrest Elliott	Thomas William Rooden
William M. Francisco	Frances Thomas Schall
Phyllis Louise Filer	Vera Louise Schlegel
Carl Gibson Felt	Mary Catherine Scherzer
John Herman Fowry	Thomas Leslie Shuman
White Fisher Ferguson	James Warren Shum
Emory Alton Fisher	Gail Smith
William A. Forbes	Clyde V. Smith
Donald H. Frank	Walter Edward Stewart
Philip Lawrence Gardner	Walter Stark
Robert Lewis Grady	Frances Dee Stephenson
Stanford Lawrence Hall	Ruth Carolyn Stephenson
Donald F. Hanger	Lois Shelly Strayer
Donald Hickey	Phyllis Louise Swingle
Jack H. Hunsom	Ruth Marie Tinsell
Richard Alan Johnson	George R. Townes
UD B. Jones	Jim Jackson Vaughan
Donald W. Jones	Carl Wilkin
Emma Marie Kautenberg	Lester W. Weller
Joe Kenneth Kautenberg	Allen J. West
William Alfred Knox	Lois Joyce Wilson
James Lee Lyle	Beverly Wright Westland
Joan Elsie Logan	John A. Russell
Margaret Lonsdale	

INDUSTRIAL ARTS COURSE

Lawrence W. Berts	Charles Eugene Rendon
Donald G. Bishop	Robert S. Hayward
Oliver L. Black	Edward C. Hall
Wesley Lewis Bowering	Robert J. Jones
Jack E. Brown	Robert Baker
John Donald Bynum	Marion C. Kennedy
William L. Clark	Arnold J. Knott
Sam W. Cook	Joseph Anthony Larkin
Glennie Ruby Daugherty	Frank Joseph McGarity
Joseph Charles Hene	Robert Montgomery
Russell Hinkle	Robert D. Perkins
Donald Ray Edwards	Edward C. Quake
Edward Joseph Horner	Clifford G. Rasmussen
Wendell N. Huns	Lawrence Rogers

Inside of Graduation Program

Holmes High School—June 12, 1945

Cornelius William Schaeffer, Jr.
John Schaeffer
Charles Schaeffer
Leslie B. Schaeffer
Robert L. Schaeffer
Robert P. Schaeffer
Raymond Schaeffer

Robert J. Lewis, Vice President
Walter C. Geyer, President
Jack Collins, Staff
Thomas G. Wilson
Lyle L. Wilson
Robert J. Wright

COMMERCIAL COURSE

[illegible][illegible]

4. *Epiloma gracile* in alvarado

REPORTS - ELEVENTH

Holmes High School

在以下情形中，則應予以注意：

BOARD OF DIRECTORS
WILLIAM L. KATHOLAKIS, Chairman
DR. C. W. STEEL, Vice Chairman
JOHN S. HICKMAN
GEORGE F. SMITH, JR.
L. V. STARR

DE LAURENCE, J. 1997. *Unpublished manuscript*.

Tuesday Evening, June 12, 1945

● 2014 年 10 月 1 日起实施

Front and Back of Holmes Graduation Program

June 12, 1945



Holmes High School - Class of 1945

Holmes High School—Class of 1945

- First Row:** Alene Castleman, Betty Jo McCarty, Louise Bearden, Faye Fields, Wanda Hill, Esther Jahnke, Farralee Elliston, Anne Rogers, Lois Strother, Mildred Requardt, Mary Ann Pingel, Dorothy Ann Cabage, XXX, XXX, Phyllis Swingle, Emma Marie Kannenberg, Phyllis Brannon, Marian Holton, XXX.
- Second Row:** Melvin Perkins, Betty Mercer, Frances Stephenson, Thelma Joyce Blades, Shirley Moss, Mary Steward, Utha Lutz, Ann Fraser, Marie Swing, Elva Blades, Jean Cooper, Jeannette Danner, Jeanne Cummins, XXX, Evelyn Dayberry, Wanda Garriott, Kathryn Meyer, Bill Kenner and Anna Leers.
- Third Row:** Joe Luchte, with Ruth Stephenson in front of Joe; Edward Elsener is in back of him; Ed Winters is on side of him; Bobby Morgan is in back of Ed; Tom Wilson is next to Ed; Grace Fisher, Gus Berger, in front of Gus is Leslie Switzer; in back of Gus is Grace Lorraine Sumner; on side of Gus is Joyce Lewis; in front of Gus in pigtails is Gwen Allen; in back of Joyce Lewis is Margaret Lauderbach; June McCoy is in middle of page with Clarence Harden next to her; Edgar

Mills, XXX, XXX, Betty Sue Bobbitt, Frances Stout, Harold Beldon; next to Beldon is Edith Helterbride; above Edith is Barry O'Grady; Don Jones is on the end.

Fourth Row: Jeanne Crowe is in middle of page with Jim Cobb next to her; Jeanne Morgan peeking out behind Jim; then Marian Zeller; Evelyn Morgan is in back of Marian Zeller, with Nila Banks next to her; Virginia Points, Alice Feiler, Ruth Thompson, Don Frank, Frosty Williams is in front of Don Frank; below Frosty is Charlene Landrum; to the right of Frosty is Wilma Kuchenmeister.

Fifth Row: Don Busick, XXX, Bill Jones, Jan Vaughn, XXX Daisy Jo Gresham, Nancy McMillan in back of Daisy; Don McGee, XXX, XXX, Thelma Shelton, Lorraine Gooch, Joan Sothard, Lou Elva Oldham, Doris Rudy, Bill Krout, Audrey Sine, Carl Faith, Calla Smith, Dick Jolson, XXX, Bob Stith and Jim Lawson.

Last Back Rows: Elden Pickett is in last row in middle just past the door; about four over is Frank Duff; in front of Frank is Wellington Garrard; on side of Wellington and peeking out behind Walter Waymeyer is George Reis; Walter Waymeyer stands out next to Wellington Garrard, with Lee Memmering peeking out behind Walter; about four more over is Jim Siles; Arthur Puthoff, below Arthur is Martha Price; next to Martha is Mary Lou Hill; over some more is Phil Riley.

These ID's were made to the best of our ability and are not guaranteed to be correct. Mary Ann Pingel Unkraut and Carl Faith.



Some Blow Up Photographs

First row: Shirley Moss, Mary Steward, **Second Row:** Leslie Switzer, Gwen Allen (in pigtails), **Third Row:** Grace Fisher, Gus Berger, Grace Lorraine Sumner (peeking behind Gus) and Joyce Lewis.

First Row: Marie Swing (our class sponsor) Elva Dean Blades, **Second Row:** Clarence “Lefty” Harden, Edgar Mills, **Third Row:** Jeanne Crowe, Jim Cobb, Jeanne Morgan (peeking behind Jim) and Marian Zeller.

First Row: Evelyn Morgan, Nila Banks, Virginia Points. **Second Row:** William Krout, Audrey Sine, Carl Faith, Calla Smith, Dick Jolson. **Third or Fourth Row:** Walter Waymeyer (stands above the crowd with a cowlick), Lee Memmering peeking behind Walt, **Fifth Row:** Wellington Garrard, **Sixth Row:** Frank Duff (behind Wellington Garrard.)

First Row: Utha Lutz, Ann Fraser, **Second Row:** June McCoy, **Third Row:** Jeanne Crowe (in back of June McCoy to left.)

First Row: Mildred Requardt, Mary Ann Pingel and Dorothy Cabage. **(Bottom Right)**

First Row: Mary Phyllis Brannon, Marian Holton, Mabel Elkins **(Bottom Middle)**



**Joy Deborah Kinsburg
Graduation Photograph
Holmes High School
Covington, Kentucky
June 12, 1945**



**Carl Clifton Faith
Graduation Photograph
Holmes High School
Covington, Kentucky
June 12, 1945**

CHAPTER 26

WORK

You work all day like a Devil for your pay . . .

So drill you terriers drill! And Strike!

English Miners' Drinking Song

The proletarians have nothing to lose but their chains.

They have a world to win. Working men of all Countries unite!

Karl Marx (1818-83) and Friedrich Engels (1820-1895),

The Communist Manifesto, sec. 4, 1884.

Lazy bones, sleeping in the sun, / How're you going to get your work done?

You'll never get the day's work done / Sleeping in the noonday sun—Traditional

If you get up early, work late, and pay your taxes, / you will get ahead if you strike oil—

J. Paul Getty, whose wealth was incalculable.

Nice work if you can get it, / And you can get it if you try.

Ira Gershwin, "Nice Work," "From "Damsel in Distress", 1937

Most people work just hard enough not to get fired,

And get paid just enough money not to quit—George Carlin

My father taught me to work; he did not teach me to like it—

Abraham Lincoln, in the Quotable Dad

Laziness travels so slowly that poverty soon over takes it—Benjamin Franklin

Eric Gill: *Work is sacred, leisure is secular.*

Georgia O'Keefe: *The days you work are the best days.*

Matisse: *Work is paradise.* And Flaubert, to keep us honest: *It passes the time.*

—"Working Journal" by Donald Hall, Extract from

"Our private Lives, Journals, Notebooks, and Diaries."

"The whole work of mankind seems to consist in nothing but proving to himself every minute that he is a man and not a piano key"—from "Notes from the Underground" by Dostoevsky, quoted

in Dubos' "So Human an Animal."

Wash or Dry? I barely can remember when I did not either wash or dry the supper dishes, while Fred did the complementary chore. I used to marvel at the miracle of clean hands that others referred to as “dish-pan”. And why do finger-tips shrivel up in the water?

Drain Dry? For all that, I much preferred drying, and especially the “drain-dried” method. In this as in all innovations, Mama was anti-scientific, and refused to believe that drain-dried dishes could be more sanitary than towel-wiped dishes, even when the towel was plainly soiled by the food particles it raked off the dishes.

After the initiation into the wonders and mysteries of how dishes could be clean if they came out of that dirty, greasy water with food particles floating in it, I was gradually introduced to other “miracles” like how clothes got clean when the water they were washed in was coal-black (literally), and then were hung out to dry in the yard where they were exposed to Newport’s daily emissions. You did it with “bluing” that banished “tattle-tale gray”! *The Lord moves in mysterious ways, His miracles to perform.*

Eventually I was “promoted” to the full range of chores: going to the grocery (The Kroger grocery where we traded was 1/2 mile away), hanging out clothes, chopping wood and splitting kindling, hauling coal, cutting grass, cleaning wallpaper, paintings, and other odd jobs that came to Mama’s fertile mind. (She would not take “no” for an answer.) Furthermore, when the neighbors saw what splendid workers we were, we were hired out to do the same for them. For sure, we worked harder when getting paid than we did working *gratis*. I remember the bathroom in the house we rented at 416 W. 16th Street in Covington that Mama cleaned except for a little corner over the bathtub that she couldn’t reach, and I brazenly left there untouched for months, before Mama shamed me into cleaning it. Shame dies hard. I was the modern Tom Sawyer, a “lazy bones.”

The Price of Coal—Black Gold?

In that (dark?) age, coal was delivered to your sidewalk and dumped there, usually a ton at a time if you could afford it, and 1/2 ton otherwise. (Some “swells” up the street had coal delivered in 2-ton lots.) The last price I recall for delivered coal was \$13 a ton—and this was considered exorbitant¹.

There it would lie, in all its anthracite dust, black gold gleaming in the sun, until somebody came with a wheel-barrow and carted it away. And that somebody was always

¹ In an article in the New York Times of June 16, 2004, Colorado coal was priced at \$18 a ton, and shipping to the east and Midwest at \$20 to \$35 a ton. Doubling the totals obtains a retail price of \$76 to \$106 a ton, not counting delivery to the door, which would add at least \$25 more. Go figure. I couldn’t find whole-seller or retailer of coal in the Mercer County telephone directory, since most people have switched to oil or gas heating. Anyway, in New Jersey coal probably would come from Pennsylvania.

Fred and I. Our problem was complicated by the four feet (or higher) slope in the front yard, so we had to pitch the coal between 6 and 7 feet or more into the barrow at the top of the steps, and then wheel it around the house to the coal shed another 30 feet behind the house.

Unfortunately the door to the shed was too narrow to wheel it right in, so you had to shove as much as would go in with the wheelbarrow flush against the door, and pick the rest up and toss it in by hand! It was exhausting work, and when there was a thaw, we had to lay down boards in the back yard to run the barrow on. It required much strength and agility to maintain the momentum needed to stay on the board! Unfortunately, more often the strength was lacking because we overloaded the barrow to cut down on the number of loads.

Such Waltzing Wasn't Easy

To steal the title of one of my favorite short stories: “*Such Waltzing Wasn't Easy*”², I thus learned early in my childhood that manual labor takes a good deal more strength than I had, or cared to have. (Of course, this was before the age of mechanization!)

Dad was a beautiful “hunk”—he was muscular, with enormous biceps and forearms earned from carpentering I suppose. He made coal hauling look easy, as he did everything requiring strength: I admired him no end.

But unlucky for us, Dad was usually not available afternoons and early evenings to put the coal away, and besides, he already had put in a full day at work, so Fred and I did this dirty, fatiguing work, shoveling and hauling coal.

Black Lung Disease?

We ended up not only with coal in our eyes, ears and noses but in our lungs. Pity the coal miner who is threatened with black lung disease, not to mention all laborers exposed to toxic elements, and other dangers.

But coal in your lungs was nothing new thanks to the Newport Steel Mills across the Licking River just about two miles away. Smoke stacks dumped tons and tons of coal and carbon dust on the simple, docile people of Northern Kentucky for decades. (On a visit back to Covington in 1982, the first thing I noticed was the smoke stacks still belching forth those hideous yellow-brown columns of smoke! (*Plus ça change, la plus c'est la même chose. The more things change, the more they stay the same*—famous oxymoron of Alphonse Karr, 1808-1890, in “Les Guêpes,” 1849.)

² The short story was by Delmore Schwartz, in “In Dreams Begin Responsibility,” 1938, I believe, but the title was taken up by Theodore Roethke in a line in the first stanza of a poem, “My Papa’s Waltz”, in 1948. See Bartlett’s.

Dad hawked up that nauseous dust-speckled slime all his life—so much that I never wanted to see another steel mill or coal pile. A former in-law of mine had this to say about the appropriately named Ashland, Kentucky: “In order to have places like Princeton you have to have Ashlands—Robert (“Bobby”) Compton to my daughter, Cindy, on her visit there.

Isinglass

We burned the coal in a pot-bellied stove with Isinglass windows in front (made from thin sheets of mica) so you could see the glow of the coals. In order to light coal, you have to “build a fire”, and you did this by laying kindling wood on heaps of paper, and then laying on small pieces of coal after the kindling ignites. You need a fair amount of luck to get it “going” the first time, and if you did not, then you ended up with pieces too hot to handle. But handle them you must—because you had to rebuild the fire. On top of that, you are faced with all the smoke from the smoldering embers—too hot to handle but not hot enough to burn. Aaargh!

Dad Was the Fire Builder; Carl Was Ogg, Son of Fire!

Dad was better at building fires than anybody, having had more experience, but there are too many variables to be scientific about it: the paper could be too damp, the kindling too green, the coal too big or even too small. Besides all that, you had to create a “draft”, or “back-draft”.

We envied people who could afford to burn coke—it was a dustless coal product that could be fed by a “stoker”, a machine that moved the coke by a trestle into the stove. It worked automatically and was controlled by a thermostat. (Oil furnaces were unheard of on Herman Street.) I imagine you could have had stokers for coal but people rich enough for them were rich enough for coke.

Well, guess how you got kindling? You split it from logs with an axe—a wicked, murderous-looking instrument. You were lucky to grow up with your extremities intact. In fact, Dad lost the right forefinger to a power saw, and I practically de-capped my knee with an axe when I was just twelve years old. (It took a year to heal, and I still carry the scar. In this, as in all calamities, Dad was my doctor—he kept applying a powder designed to hasten healing.) I felt like the comic book character, “Og (or Ogg?), Son of Fire.”

Because of the slope in the front yard, cutting grass was excruciating for a small boy and I stayed small and underweight until late in my boyhood, but it did not get me out of work. Although everyone expected me to grow up big and strong like Dad from such heavy chores, that never happened. Even after delivering papers for years; the weight of the paper bag did nothing for my muscular development—I was too skinny to have muscles.

“Skin and Bones”

Mama always nagged me about my weight, said I was just “skin and bones” but that never helped. I was not handicapped in any way, nor more lethargic than other boys. But I day-dreamed a lot.

Furthermore, Fred who was sturdier and shorter than I (up to the age of 16 when he shot up to half-inch over 6' 3") experienced exactly the same difficulties in his chores. The hard work and the chastisement for not being perfect created an insoluble bond between us even to this day, 70 years later.

“If They Could Only See Me Now!”

I owe much to my gym teacher, especially Mr. Allen of Holmes High School, for their reassurances on my health. He, and others, were kind enough to talk to Mama about my excellent physical condition despite my lack of bulk, but she had her own ideas of what constituted good health: *you had to carry fat*. I'm reminded of the song sung by Shirley MacLaine from the 1969 movie *Sweet Charity* “If They Could Only See Me Now,” all 190 lbs of me.

Other jobs I had outside the house were much more congenial and better paid than washing dishes, delivering papers, or shoveling, wheeling the wheelbarrow and tossing coal. I worked as a stock boy, bagger, and finally, when they learned that I could add (this was before calculators) I was allowed to clerk at Remke's Grocery Store, and later at Krogers, the chain where Dad worked as a baker.

CHAPTER 27

“SAVING FOR COLLEGE LIKE BROTHER ELDRIDGE”

The life which is unexamined is not worth living.

Attributed to Socrates, see “Dialogues”

Apology, 24, by Plato, 428-348 B. C.

By my eleventh birthday in 1938 Eldridge who was born on December 4, 1915 was just two months away from his Bachelor of Science Degree in Chemistry at Indiana University. Although Bloomington was not very far away, we rarely saw Eldridge who was “working his way through college.” A further inducement for him to stay close to school was his engagement to Mary Metler, whom he married Christmas Day six months after graduation. Although we saw very little of him, he was a big presence in our family, a palpable manifestation of Mama’s dream: intelligent, hardworking, successful, and altogether a good son. He justified her high hopes for him and helped to ease the heart-aches of her floundering marriage.

Eldridge started out at DePauw College (now a University) in Greencastle, Indiana, about 40 miles west-southwest of Indianapolis. No doubt he had what Ronald Reagan had at Eureka College and I quote from Reagan’s autobiography, “An American Life,” p. 45: “I had saved \$400. But it wasn’t enough for four years at Eureka . . . but fortunately for me, I was convincing enough to talk them into giving me a Needy Student Scholarship, which covered half my tuition, and they promised me a job that would pay the cost of my meals.” On p.44, *ibid*, Reagan wrote: “In the 1920s, fewer than seven percent of the high school graduates in America went to college . . .” Reagan was born in 1911 just four years before Eldridge who resembled him in many ways; they were about the same size, both had healthy good looks, and both conservative Republicans. (Cf. Reagan in Index.)

Eldridge was the antithesis of an irresponsible, duty-shirking father. He was so honest that once we had to retrace our steps on a hot summer day to return a nickel that

the ice-dealer had “long-changed” him with, all while the ice melted away in my red wagon that I trundled behind me. That was a new dawn in my life, and even though I thought it was a corny thing to do, I admit that Eldridge impressed me.

Eldridge: Our Guiding Light

While Mama may have been the propeller and pilot of my ship, Eldridge was the lodestar, our guiding light. He was so impressive in his accomplishments, his knowledge and authority (e.g. a polymath), that nothing he did could permanently keep him in the “jerk” category that Fred and I consigned to him soon after his arrivals for visits. “He was too good to be true.”

Did the study of chemistry make him supercilious, or was it vice versa? In any case, his deadly seriousness was a killjoy that made him cranky, and his deprivations had made him stingy. Even when what Fred and I had cost him nothing, he could not tolerate his little brothers’ piggishness at the dinner table, nor our playfulness, boisterousness, and sloppiness in all things. In short, he was a prime example of Freud’s “Civilization and its Discontents”: overly civilized, Eldridge could not bear his barbarous brothers. And he never did anything to help us financially, or even by kindness. He must have felt quite oppressed. Now that I can view the mindless energy of children of those ages, 9 and 11, dispassionately, I can sympathize with Eldridge’s consternation. So much of what he did required a deadly earnestness and enormous will that children naturally subvert. In brief, *Eldridge was, like millions of others, a victim of the Great Depression.*

Unfortunately for Eldridge, his victimization was my gain in that he taught me by example and by criticism to take life seriously and above all that pitting your energies against adversity can lead to success. If it had not been for Eldridge, where would I have learned this lesson so meaningfully? The most idealistic form this inspiration took was that from the time I barely knew what the word meant, I was going to “college . . . like brother”. (I was just seven years old when he was a Frosh at DePauw College.) And the most practical form of this inspiration was that I was going to “save for college like brother.”

By September 1946, after my service in the Navy, I was ready to start college and had about \$800 saved up. In order to save this much, I had voluntarily (?) given up my right to spend any of it and turned over all my wages to Mama. Part of this came from \$25 monthly allotments that I made out to Mama while in the Navy. Surely Mama deserves *all* the credit for this stupendous sum, since she socked all my earnings away in the bank in a joint account. Naturally I was proud of myself. In those days, when tuitions at the state university were something like sixty dollars a semester, that and a part-time job would get you through four years of college, especially if you lived in private quarters and cooked your own meals (as learned from Boy Scouting).

To realize Mama’s altruism, consider that Fred saved an equal amount, and if the money had gone to the family, she could have bought the house we lived in. Oh, weep

friends because the GI Bill provided me with the money and I never needed our bundle! All the sacrifice, saving, skimping on everything had been in vain, except for the effect it had on my character; an irrepressible feeling of confidence, of “Can do”.¹

Mama, the Master Builder: When you consider the baubles children buy in their teens, how can you put a price on character? Mama was the “Master-Builder”, she wasn’t just hoarding money. And it was a great lesson to me to discover how easily she let it go after she kept it from us for so long: she kept sending me the money whenever I requested, and it is my shame that I “blew it” at the University of Kentucky in my first two years for the very baubles that I didn’t have growing up, e.g., for coke dates, as well as decent clothes, warm coats, better shoes, books to read, *et al.*

The deprivation had to take its toll, and it took it in the “easy-come, easy-go” attitude. Money from the GI Bill covered the basics and I needed new clothes after my Navy days. But mostly, I spent it having good times. Once again mama surprised me. She never showed any resentment and she never tried to hang on to me after I served in the Navy. It was my own “puberty rite”—thereafter she considered me a man. It was a little late coming (especially when the bar mitzvah occurs at the age of thirteen) but I was happy nevertheless.

Mama: A Good Salesperson: She was absolutely candid in her opinion about the quality of the merchandise, and always had a strong following among the patrons of the best stores, e.g., Parisian, right off Madison Ave, was Covington’s best women’s apparel store. She worked long hours there as an extra to save money to buy us Christmas presents. Christmas would have found a bleak house without Mama’s, and, later, Sister’s earnings. Mama had bed-rock integrity in everything; she was a solid piece, not fragmented the way moderns are. Customers at Parisian would call for her. Later in life, after Dad died, she stood all day on the concrete floors of the old Car Barn selling a variety of merchandise. I respected Mama and Sis for their sacrifices for the family.

¹ In retrospect, this reminds me of the Tolstoy’s morality tale “How Much Land Does a Man Need?” (The answer, my friends, is 6 feet.)

CHAPTER 28

I AM SAVED

*Amazing grace! How sweet the sound! /
That saved a wretch like me! / I once was lost/
but now am found / Was blind, now I am saved*
“Amazing Grace”—Olney Hymns by John Newton, 1779

*Shall we gather at the river,
The beautiful, beautiful river?
Yes, we will gather by the river,
And listen to the words of the Lord—Hymn*

*O when the saints, O when the saints,
When the saints go marching in,
O Lord, I want to be in that number
When the saints go marching in.
“When the Saints Go Marching In”
Anonymous Spiritual*

*Call to the Salvation Army: “Do you save girls?” Voice: “We try!”
“Well, save two for me and my buddy for Saturday night”—Navy gag.*

*Don’ worry about avoiding temptation . . .
As you grow older, it will avoid you—Anonymous*

*If you forgive people enough, you belong to them, and they to you,
whether either person likes it or not—squatter’s rights—*

James Hilton, 1900-1954, in “Time and Time Again,” 1953

*There is only one religion, though there are
hundreds of versions of it—George Bernard Shaw,
Plays Pleasant and Unpleasant, 1898, quoted in Bartlett.*

Sunday School: I walked to 5th District 10 times a week, but on Sundays I rode to Sunday school, two blocks farther down the street (at 15th Street). In other words, it “paid” the church, but not the school, to bus its “sheep” to the “fold”.

It was an ordinary yellow school bus with SOUTHSIDE BAPTIST CHURCH emblazoned on the sides. I do not remember going before we moved to Herman Street, but I do remember going before the church drove us there. The few Protestants who lived on Herman Street enjoyed the prestige of having this beautiful bright bus calling for them.

I cannot remember Mama ever riding it—she may have—but Sis was the generator for religious enthusiasm from the time I can remember. Sis always dressed immaculately in white, blue or pink dresses with white cotton stockings to her knees with her long hair shining like brown gold. She put it up every night so it hung down in spirals of curls. (I learned what a “permanent” *wasn't*!)

The Fightmasters

For a long time Sunday School was just another pain that I had to endure because Mama wanted me to, but soon I began to enjoy the social aspects of our Sunday School class led first by Mrs. Fightmaster, Jack’s mother, and later by Mr. Fightmaster, who was the caretaker of the huge cemetery directly behind Southside. (I never understood what was “south” about our church—it was due north of us. Perhaps the area *once* was the south side of town, but the city had grown on past it, so it’s was an anachronism.

Gold Stars

Each Sunday we studied a chapter of the Bible, sometimes the New and sometimes the Old Testament.¹ We read the verses out loud one by one, and “explained” what they meant. I never understood where biblical language got its “Thees” and “Thous” and “Sayeths,” but I came to appreciate the cadences of that era.

The Twenty-third Psalm

The Lord is my shepherd; I shall not want.

*He maketh me lie down in green pastures: he leadeth me in the paths of
righteousness for his name’s sake.*

Yea, though I walk through the Valley of the Shadow of Death,

¹ For each day of attendance, a gold star was affixed beside our name by Mrs. Fightmaster, and I was proud of the 52 that I received one year. (I know that pride is one of the Seven Deadly Sins!)

*I shall fear no evil, thy rod and thy staff they comfort me.
 Thou preparest a table before me in the presence of mine enemies:
 thou anointest my head with oil; my cup runneth over.
 Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life:
 and I will dwell in the house of the Lord forever.*

*After this manner therefore pray Ye.
 Our Father, Who art in heaven, hallowed be Thy Name,
 Thy Kingdom come, Thy Will be done
 On earth as it is in heaven,
 Give us this day, our daily bread
 And forgive us our trespasses
 As we forgive those who trespass against us
 And lead us not into temptation
 But deliver us from evil
 For Thine is the kingdom and the power
 And the glory, forever. Amen*
 Matthew 6:9-13; "The Lord's Prayer," see Bartlett.

The Greatest Story Ever Told

We no longer memorize the Bible for our pleasure nor in lonely moments for its comforts. For while the Bible tells us unrelentingly about a long suffering humanity, the net result is paradoxically a moral uplift! We are inspired rather than depressed by man's perseverance and indomitable spirit in his struggle to survive the inhospitable world. As so many people believe that the story of the birth and life of Christ is the "greatest story ever told," I need not give evidence in favor of the historical Christ, nor point out the assimilation of much ancient mythology and pagan symbolism by the Christ legend. Everybody knows the deeply irrational aspect of religion and makes allowances for it.

Jesus and John the Baptist

Jesus reputedly wowed his elders at the tender age of 12, stumping them on theological matters. He was baptized by John the Baptist. I had always assumed that Jesus was also baptized at that age, but not so. See, *The Immerser: John the Baptist*, by Joan E. Taylor, Erdmans, Grand Rapids, MI and Cambridge, UK, 1997, where it is stated that Jesus was baptized late in life by his friend and childhood neighbor, John the Baptist.

I Followed Jesus

At the age of 12, overcome by the expectations of Sis, Brother Steger (our Pastor), and other Brothers and Sisters aiding a “revival” meeting at Southside, I literally took the plunge and accepted Jesus as my Savior. Baptism followed some weeks later.

Reverend Steger, a Baptist Elmer Gantry?

You have to go to a Baptist Church to receive the emotional impact of a first-class preacher, versed in the Bible and the wicked ways of men and women, aided by a choir of beautiful young voices and uplifted by a piano or organ crescendo or coda. It is almost as described in the Sinclair Lewis novel, “Elmer Gantry”, with Bert Lancaster playing the title role in the 1960 film, but maybe not as lecherously as Gantry.

He would shout menacingly, voice raspy; or he could whisper. With his last ebb of energy, he would weep, wipe his eyes, and go on way after you thought, “*Surely this is it!*” People clung to his voice and his image transfixed us, as the organist, frequently Mrs. Steger, would play another verse of some beautiful Christian song, words by Milton, music by Bach. Or maybe Blake or Handel.

Devout Christians in History

Throughout the centuries devout Christians poured out their best in art, in music, literature, architecture . . . to glorify the Lord, and on any Sunday your good preacher will remind you of it!

*I was sinking, deep in sin,
Far from the peaceful shore;
I was sinking, deep in sin
Sinking to rise no more.*

*Love lifted me. / Love lifted me.
When nothing else could help / Love lifted me.
And He walks with me / And He talks with me
And He tells me I am His own / What joys we share as we tarry there
No other will ever know*

*Were you there when they crucified my Lord
Were you there when they laid Him in the grave?
O, sometimes, I wonder why
Were you there when they crucified my Lord?*

Shall we sing one more verse? Who could ever deny a dying person just one more verse? And who would dare deny that we pathetic bundles of flesh, ganglia and bones are not heading for the grave?

All men are mortal, we are men, therefore we are mortal—the most famous syllogism of all. Christianity as practiced in churches is based on the imitation of Christ—up to a point. Whereas Christ died a martyr, the Church does not expect everybody to martyr himself for His sake. This may be a weakness of churches since Christ showed that corruption exists *everywhere*, and He martyred himself! I was duly baptized, another puberty ritual, and experienced the cleanliness of thought and deed that baptism bestows on the believer. I became a weekday Church-goer; prayer-meetings on Wednesday, choir on Fridays, Sunday school and services on Sunday. Since I also went to Boy Scout meetings there once a month, I became quite a regular at Southside.

Brother Steger

In the early days, the Southside Baptist Church had just one floor—the basement—because this was during the Depression and funds were not available to finish it. The baptism pool was just to the right of the pulpit, and it was the most used part of the church. Sometimes Brother Steger would baptize a dozen a night for a week. He would stand in his suit, shirt and tie, in the pool, and the newly converted would come in a white cotton dress or pants and shirt. The Reverend would explain what to do, hold onto his arm with both hands; then, saying a soft prayer, he would consign you to Christ's care. Like a good doctor who had done everything in his power for his patient, Brother Steger would cover your mouth and nose with a cloth, bend you backwards on your heels until you were fully immersed in the water, and then he quickly *raised you up, both physically and spiritually*.

Brides of Christ?

Was there anything in the world so beautifully innocent as a young man or woman or man giving his or her life to Christ, abdicating his own, so-to-speak, in order that the *rightful* King could rule? Just as at weddings people wept for the newly baptized who were considered the Brides of Christ, regardless of sex. In this, my acceptance of Jesus has helped me. If Jesus was ever corrupted by sexual desire or needs, I never knew about it, at least not then. The modern acceptance of Mary Magdalene as a love of Christ would have been considered blasphemous then, and maybe even now. (*Everything* is blasphemous to *somebody* in the sense that every object can be a subject of worship to somebody, e.g., in India, cows are, and God is thought to be *in all things* by Hindus.)

This Day Has Never Died in My Memory

Although this day has never died in my memory, I wish I could say that I remained as pure and as clean all my life as I felt myself those first moments in the arms of Brother Steger. He was such a powerful, persuasive man; his arms were as thick as a laborer's in those days before labor-saving devices; and he was an orator of considerable persuasiveness.

But I held true to Christ for a long, long time. He went with me as long as I wanted Him, and He never failed me when I needed Him. I still need Him every hour of every day.

It Is Not Christ Who Betrays

No, it is not Christ who betrays, but man: Judas before Christ, Pilate before the Jews, Peter before the cock crew—there is nothing that can be done about that. Betrayal is a human condition, and being human, we cannot attain Godly perfection in this life. We can only repent and ask God's forgiveness.

*For whosoever believeth in me / Shall not perish
But shall have everlasting life / Forever and forever. Amen.
Let he who has not sinned throw the first stone
Love thy neighbor as thyself
Love thy enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to
them who hate you, and pray for them which
despitefully use you, or persecute you—Matthew 5:44
Render unto Caesar the things that are Caesar's, and unto
God the things that are God's—Matthew 22:21
Turn the other cheek also—Matthew 4:39
My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?—Psalms 22:1, Matthew, 27:46;*

Christ Is There waiting for us to turn to Him. Some years ago I deeply repented the godless life that I had been living, and experienced a revulsion against the secular world where God is taboo. So I quietly went back to church and Bible readings and prayer determined to become a better person than anyone had perceived me to be. I do not claim that this happened overnight, but I have known greater calm and peace in the face of some of life's ordeals since I came back to Jesus.

I mention this because I had experienced the same peace as I did during those years of belief—age 12 to age 19 were years of devotion to Christ:

*Jesus loves me, this I know, because the Bible tells me so—
Anna Bartlett Warner, 1827-1915.*

Religionists Do Not Always Follow Their Precepts

Since those days I have read about the various religions of the World—Hinduism, Buddhism, Islam, Judaism, and others. I have traveled to places where the majority worship Vishnu and Lord Krishna (India) or Allah (Turkey), or Jehovah (Israel), or maybe more secular gods as Money, Power or Nationalism. The dominant aspect of all religions is, except for worshippers of Mammon, how few adherents are able to live up to the tenets of their faith.

“O Ye of Little Faith!”

No doubt I joined the Church for the same reason that I did practically everything—to *please Mama*. Surely I must have been intractable in many things, but I knew that the big things were for Mama. This, and almost everything, I did for the love of her. She gave me life, and love, so who was I to deny her? The deeply rebellious days that began with the onslaught of puberty and the natural need to model myself on Dad rather than Mama had not arrived yet.

Did Christ Do *All* the Suffering for Christians?

Earlier I stated the contention of a Jewish acquaintance claiming that Christ did all the suffering for Christians. Surely this is false, although a good debating point. *Is there any way anybody can go through life without suffering?* Christ Himself is the chief example: “*My God, why hast thou forsaken me?*” This was the first part of the psalm Christ recited on the cross. *Ecce Homo!*

My Belief in Santa Claus and the Will To Believe

I used to ask Mama how Santa could cover the globe in one night, but she was smarter: “He has helpers, you know”. “But I want Santa Claus to come, not his helper”, and I was determined to stay up to see him, but alas, here again Mama was smarter: “He won’t come until you are asleep”. And you know—she was right. But I convinced myself that I saw Santa and his reindeer up in the sky. Such is the strength of the will, even the need, to believe. Boy, did I ever believe this!

Santa Claus has the right idea . . . visit people only once a year—Victor Borge.

I stopped believing in Santa Claus when . . . he asked me for my autograph—

Shirley Temple

The need to believe, and the will to believe, is a big part of every religion, and in most walks of life, even in the lives of baseball fans. Consider the fans of the Boston

Red Sox team. In the American League Championship Series 2004, the Red Sox became the first team in baseball ever to win a seven game series after losing the first three. While losing the first three, one (the second) in which the New York Yankees set two conference series records for the most runs and hits, Cyclops, the one-eyed TV camera, kept focusing on the big “We Believe!” signs that the Boston fans held up. It was quite an experience for everybody to live through. The big guns of the Yankee that empowered them to three straight victories were mostly silent for the next four games the Red Sox won. Roger Clemens, a Yankee the year before, won two of the four, as the Yankees pitchers lost their dominance: the Red Sox won Game 7 on October 20, by a score of 10-3.

Were The Yankees Victims of Self-Hypnosis?

Earlier I read an October, 2004 Smithsonian article about how Benjamin Franklin debunked the famed hypnotist Mesmer (from which mesmerized is derived), who made extravagant claims to be able to cure practically any illness using magnetic tubs. The conclusion was that the tubs had no more effect than faked non-magnetic replacements, but that they had the same good effect on certain susceptible patients the way placebos do. This is the power of the “will to believe.”

Several Jewish friends have persisted in telling me that Christians believe in fairy tales, like they believe in Santa Claus, e.g., Jesus and the New Testament, ignoring the obvious: all religions require acts of faith. Reinhold Niebuhr, 1892-1971 (was it?) has said that faith precludes doubt, and overcomes it. Is this too self-hypnosis? (Niebuhr wrote the Serenity Prayer used by AA. See Index.)

Fate and The Idea of Karma

In India in the summer of 1968, I was traveling through Delhi in a taxi. After a bit the taxi ran out of gas. Being in a hurry, I stepped out to flag down another taxi but the driver gave me a horrified look, and said, “No Wait! Don’t you realize that it was fate² that brought us together? You will upset your Karma³ if you take another taxi!” Bowing to fate seemed the wisest thing to do. As we talked, the driver pushed his ultra-lite cab around the corner, and miraculously a gasoline station appeared that I had not seen before. Within minutes, the tank was topped off and we were on our way as fate had commanded.

² Kismet is Turkish, from the Arabic, for fate.

³ According to the American Heritage Dictionary, Karma is the sum of a person’s actions . . . determining his destiny. [Hence] fate, destiny. It is related to Kismet.

I had a similar experience in an Indian coffee shop where everybody spends hours consumed by interminable debates over practically anything under the scorching sun. (These were called “muddles.”) Out of the blue, a young Indian who sat down and told me that he had been watching me at the coffee shop several weeks. I said, “And?” He smiled, “You’re alright!” Subsequently I often have asked myself, “Suppose I hadn’t been alright? What then?”

In context of the Jihads and Fatwas that have been issued and carried out all over the world, this is not an idle speculation. Some followers of Islam have conducted these against Americans, or anybody associated with Americans in the Iraq and Afghan wars and have beheaded a number of hapless unarmed people there. And in the Middle East, suicide bombers, and the resulting retaliation, have been taking a heavy toll on the lives of innocent people, including women and children.

Karma and Christianity

Well, here’s where fate comes in. I may have been assassinated, or maybe disfigured by someone unknown judging me. Karma is a force of goodness, and that goodness can change your life for the better. Tell me, how much different is that from Christ’s idea of helping others less fortunate than you, giving away your wealth, sharing, and caring for others? Or, maybe, the Golden Rule: *Do unto others as you would have them do unto you*. Perhaps Ben Franklin would debunk this too, right? But what does it matter, as long as you believe. Think of the Red Sox of 2004 who broke Babe Ruth’s spell over them, dating back to when they sold him to the Yankees! “Faith overcomes doubt.”

*Mine eyes have seen the glory of the coming of the Lord,
He is trampling out the vintage where the grapes of wrath are stored;
He has loosed the fateful lightning of his terrible swift sword;
His truth is marching on.*

“The Battle Hymn of the Republic,” 1962, st. 1;

Julia Ward Howe, 1819-1910; Cf. Isaiah 63:3, and Revelation 19:15

*By the Old Rugged Cross / Where the Dearest and Best,
For a world of lost sinners was slain.*

*Refrain: I will cling to the old, rugged cross, / And exchange it someday for a crown.
(I will cherish the old rugged cross, where at last He laid down his sweet head.)*

—George Bennard, 1873-1858, 1813.

CHAPTER 29

LONG PANTS

I grow old . . . I grow old . . .

I shall wear the bottoms of my trousers rolled.

. . . Shall I part my hair behind? Do I dare to eat a peach?

I shall wear white flannel trousers, and walk along the beach.

T. S. Elliot, 1888-1965, from “The Love Song of J. Alfred Prufrock, 1917

Puberty Rites

I have mentioned that baptism was a puberty rite like the *bar mitzvah*. (A *mitzvah* is a fulfilling of a Jewish law.) It would be pleasant if growing up were so simple. A puberty rite signifies acceptance by society that thereafter the neophyte is an adult. Then, when people went to work, married and raised a family starting at age 12 (age 13 for the *bar mitzvah*), it was not only possible but necessary to accord them adult status; but in modern society when the “cream of the crop” is kept poor by the exorbitant yearly tuitions that more and more colleges and universities charge (up to \$8,000 in 1979-80, about \$15,000 in the 90’s in public colleges, and now much more! In 2004, Princeton University raised its tuition up to \$41,000, and \$46,00 in 2005), and when it takes half a lifetime to clear oneself of debt, then a precise demarcation of adulthood is impossible.¹

¹ Another illustration of Freud’s basic thesis in “Civilization and its Discontents” (“Kultur und das Unbehagen”) is the barbaric circumcision of male babies, done without the child’s permission, and leaving a permanent scar to remind the child of the power of society to do things like that, and even much worse. See at Circumcision.

Excessive Specialization in Medicine

In the age of specialization there has been criticism that no one sees the total person anymore—just parts, or fractions.² Similarly, medical specialists limit their responsibility to the one organ (or fraction) of his competence: a heart, a kidney, a brain, or stomach, thyroid, prostate, uterus, bladder, etc. Even when there are such clear interrelations as brain, heart, or emotions—thyroid, doctors may not venture outside their own specialty. One neurologist told me he had forgotten everything from his student-days about the heart, and a cardiologist that I consulted said the same thing about psychology. *Excessive specialization is an example of making a virtue out of a necessity!*

Society's Views About Children

But the same ambiguities apply to society's view of children as if pre-puberty, pre-adolescent, pre-teenage, adolescent, pre-adult, pre-marital, juvenile, delinquent, shook-up, grown-up, emotionally maladjusted, neurotic,³ psychotic, schizophrenic, manic, nymphomaniac, retarded, *et al*, had precise meanings. As in the old-saying, you grow up "an inch at a time"; but nobody can say exactly when you *grew* up. A good puberty rite does that for you: Long Pants, Baptism, Bar-Mitzvah, Graduation, etc.

Long Pants

In Peaselburg, the Catholic commencement began at the end of the eight grade—it was no little thing in their lives: the girls wore their white dresses with red carnations and white knee-stockings, and the boys wore long pants, that is, trousers for the first time. I was slow (and slowly) growing up—I wore long pants for the first time when I was 13. Now *that* was a puberty rite for you. Nothing could have made me happier than shedding my hated knickers for good! Under the protective length of trouser legs I could hide my despised "longies" for the first time.

"Knickers Are "Dopey Long Pants" and Despised

"I am not alone in this: in an essay "Grow Up, Why Doncha?" (The Anchor Essay Annual for 1998), Joseph Epstein refers to knickers as "dopey long pants" and asserts "Mine was the last generation . . . that had to earn long pants, or at least, wait until a certain age to

² As in Andrew Field's novel with the title "Fractions."

³ In the 1970s a majority in the American Psychiatrists' Association agreed that neurosis is a practically meaningless term to them, and removed it from their list of recognizable illnesses.

wear them.” Even now I despise knickers, and whenever I see them hackles rise on my neck—even hikers’ and golfers’ baggy knickers called plus fours (from the fact that they were four inches longer than knickers)

One’s biases have deep roots. My own analysis of the origins of racism is the family, e.g., the limiting concepts of kinship and selfishness of families. One has to use every ounce of one’s sense of fairness to combat bigotry because it is so deeply ingrained in one from birth in the strength of the kinship bond. For example, try leaving your estate to someone or something not in the family, or marrying someone not in your race, or social status. Biases like kinship, have deep roots, and they die hard.

The Origins of Racism

One has to exert every ounce of fairness that one possesses if one hopes ever to overcome the very natural ingrained biases of one birth, e.g., one’s color, economic status, geographical, geo-political, and other affiliations, polarizations, and identities. *Kinship* means recognizing family, and that means race, color, and physiognomy. Truly, as Freud said many times, “*Anatomy is destiny.*” Race has its origins in that, and so does kinship. “The apples fall close to the apple tree” is a wise Russian proverb that illustrates this obvious principle of life. But this is not to say that one cannot bridge, at least reduce, the gap between the various races. I have traveled in over 30 countries, including India, Turkey, and Mexico, as well as all of the countries of Western Europe, without encountering blatant hostility. Once one learns and follows the customs of a country, although a stranger, one will be accepted.

A Personal Experience.

Today, a pleasant day in June 2004, I took my daily 30 minute walk along Lake Drive adjacent to my home, and through the multiracial Princeton University housing complex, called the Butler Apartments, which originally were barrack-type buildings left over from World War II, redesigned to house veterans and their families at a low cost. (The streets bear the illustrious names Eisenhower, Bradley, Marshall, etc., of American World War II generals.) I was exiting onto Hartley Avenue, when I met, and towered over, a small Indian woman dressed in teal blue sari. As I approached her, I put the palms of my hands together, Indian fashion, bowed over them, and said “Namaste”, a traditional Indian greeting, which I learned from my work in India in the summer of 1968. Previously I had encountered two couples, one walking their dog, which passed by ignoring my wave of friendship, and I wondered how this woman would respond. I need not have worried. She broke into such a beaming smile, and she “Namaste-ed” too! There is no substitute for showing respect.

CHAPTER 30

I READ BOOKS, CEREAL BOXES, COMICS . . .

*A novel must be the axe for the
frozen sea inside us.*

Franz Kafka (1893-1924),

Letter to Oskar Pollack, Jan. 27, 1904

*From the moment I picked up your book, I was convulsed with laughter,
Someday I intend to read it.*

Groucho Marx quoted in *Groucho*

Quoted by Hector Arce, 1979,

(regarding a book by S. J. Perelman)

I don't like to read books. They muss up my mind.

Henry Ford, quoted by Philip Roth on p.378 of

"The Plot Against America"

Adventure! Mystery! Excitement!

Like all boys, I worshiped adventure and excitement. You might have thought that I would have gotten enough of that playing games on Herman Street, climbing trees, jumping freight trains, or any of the myriad adventures that constitute a boy's day.

But, oh no, you had to have adventure at home, and under Mama's watchful eye, that was not easy to do, so my reading was predictable: Tom Swift books, Arthur Canon Doyle's "The Adventures of Sherlock Holmes," Robert Louis Stevenson's *Kidnapped*, *Treasure Island*, *Doctor Jekyll and Mister Hyde*, Jules Verne's *Twenty Leagues Under the Sea*, Edgar Allen Poe's "*The Pit and the Pendulum*, *The Gold Bug*, *The Cask of Amontillado*," and "*The Murders in the Rue Morgue*, Alexandre Dumas' "*The Three Musketeers*, Daniel Defoe's "*Robinson Crusoe* (about which, see the Index), Jonathan Swift' *Gulliver's Travels*, etc. I was so addicted to reading that anything with print, including cereal boxes, tin can labels, Sears Catalogue, newspapers, leaflets, shopping

news, or *anything*, would serve to break the monotony of everyday life (and maybe stimulate the brain?)

Tom Swifties, Rover Boys, Bobbsey Twins and Nancy Drew

I do remember some of what were called “(Tom) Swifties.” For example: “That hotdog tastes bad,” Tom said frankly; “I’m sure it’s chicken pox,” Tom said rashly; “Stop right there, Buddy,” Tom said haltingly. One that was beyond my comprehension until I took French in high school was: “Thanks for the quiche,” Tom said mercifully; *merci* being the French word for “thank you.” As I was puzzling over Swifties, these appeared wonderfully in a crossword puzzle in January 2004. And then again in another for June 2 found in the annual collection of the New York Times Cross Word Puzzles 2004 for Addicts Who Can’t Get Enough. I found “I’m not going to pay,” Tom said unremittingly; “Shorten the pants,” Tom said fittingly. And may I add one of my own? “You can make up your own,” Carl said craftily.

The Rover Boys, started in 1899, The Motor Boys, the Outdoor Girls (the first girls’ series introduced in 1908); Tom Swift, in 1910; and the Bobbsey Twins were products of a literary syndicated started by Edward Stratemeyer. Tom Swift dashed around in six-cylinder racing cars or jets or balloons (“Swift by name, and swift by nature” was Tom’s Swift’s motto.) The series “Nancy Drew The Girl Detective,” began in May 1930; Mildred Wirt wrote twenty-three of the first thirty Nancy Drews.

Stratemeyer was neither a feminist nor a brilliant writer; but in his own unassuming way he was, like Nancy Drew, a phenomenon. By 1926, in a poll published by the American Library Association, 98% of boys and girls listed a Stratemeyer book as their favorite, and another showed that Tom Swift books were at the top of the list. Thirty-one series were in full swing, yet Stratemeyer was still not content. (This, and some of the above, was paraphrased from “Nancy Drew’s Father: The Fiction of Edward Stratemeyer” in the November 8, 2004 New Yorker Magazine.) In 1975, Bobbie Ann Mason wrote a history of Nancy Drew entitled, “The Girl Sleuth.” I suppose back then, these novels were what were called “penny-dreadfuls,” that is, popular, but not considered good taste and not fit for children. Years later, libraries were embarrassed that they did not have copies of them and had to rely on avid collectors to fill their shelves with them in order to serve the public demand.

Dogs, Horses, and Sea Stories

My favorite stories were about dogs, then horses, and finally sea stories such as London’s “Call of the Wild”, and “White Fang,” which were perennial favorites to be re-read countless times. Every boy knew “Rin Tin-Tin (Rinny),” the German shepherd dog

(see Bibliography); and “Lassie,” the collie; and “Black Beauty” the horse saved from a glue factory by an admirer who identified the once beloved but now broken-down horse in the nick of time.

One habit that advanced my reading but retarded my learning was the fact that I never bothered to look up words. Consequently I often had very strange ideas about the meanings of words. Some meanings cannot be guessed at. In Horse Operas, or Oaters, I never bothered to learn the differences between a “bay,” a “pinto,” a “paint,” a “sorrel,” a “roan,” or a “chestnut,” nor even what a gelding was! Here goes: A Bay is reddish-brown, especially with a black mane and tail; a Chestnut is moderate to deep reddish-brown; a Sorrel has a brownish-orange to a light brown color (not related to the salad green of the same name); a Roan has a chestnut, bay, or sorrel coat thickly sprinkled with white or gray; and a Pinto has patchy markings of white and another color, and is also called a Paint, after the Latin *pinctus* past participle of the Latin word for paint (Spanish, *pintar*).¹

“Camptown Races,” written in 1850 by Stephen Foster, came to mind:

Camptown races sing this song, doodah! Doodah!
Camptown races five miles long, Ol' doodahday!
Gwine to run all night! / Gwine to run all day!
I bet my money on de bobtail nag, / Somebody bet on the bay.

Truckers are the modern cowboys and truck stories detailing the trucker's life and rig were popular when I was a boy: a “Learn-How-To Book” on beating the regulations with dummy wheels and back roads to escape weighing stations.

Of the sea stories, the Captain Horatio Hornblower series by C. S. Forrester I remember best; Richard Dana's “Two Years Before the Mast;” and Jack London's contributions but vaguely. “Moby Dick” was a late-comer, although I don't know why. I loved long books, and would shed a tear when a loved story came to an end. Therefore I would read slower and slower, but alas, most books went out with a bang, because, in a book as in love, I *could not* slow down!

I carried Robert Louis Stevenson's “A Child's Garden of Verses,” around with me until I wore it out the same way I did my dolls, which I carried around home until I was ten or eleven. My favorite was a Raggedy Ann doll Mama made for me. That, and my Teddy Bear.

¹ From the American Heritage Dictionary, except “*pintar*.” I learned a lot about horses at UK, which is in Lexington, Kentucky, where the thoroughbred racehorses are bred. Then, too, my girlfriend there, and later wife, Betty Compton, AKA, “Mickey,” worked for “The Blood Horse,” a magazine devoted to the breeding of racehorses.

Mama Reads Aesop's Fables

"Aesop's Fables" was the family's favorite book, and one of the very few the family owned. Mama kept it in the dresser drawer that was filled with receipts—it was the family repository for licenses, receipts, certificates and what-not. She read us, e.g., Black Beauty, Cinderella, The Frog and the Princess, Sleeping Beauty, that is, stories with happy endings.

Upon reflection I wonder if the book wasn't "Grimm's Fairy Tales"—my favorite Aesop fable is "The Lion and The Mouse" and its moral: *No kindness, no matter how small, is ever wasted.*

Thurber's Modern Fables

Later in life I enjoyed "Fables of Our Time" by James Thurber; my favorite is the hilarious "The Little Girl and The Wolf" whose un-Aesopian moral is: "It is not so easy to fool little girls nowadays as it used to be." Another by Thurber "The Secret Life of Walter Mitty," was made into a 1968 movie starring Danny Kaye, with a fine supporting cast of Virginia Mayo, Boris Karloff, Ann Rutherford, and Faye Bainter. It consists of a sequence of vignettes of daydreams experiences by Walter Mitty, e.g., when a piston from an oxygen pump breaks, he calmly replaces it with his fountain pen and saves the patient's life. He's also an airplane "ace" in Word War II with an incredible number of kills, which he reluctantly owns up to. This phenomenon, since called the "Mitty Complex," is a harmless form of the self-aggrandizement everyone indulges in.

Mama's readings were truly loved, and we listened with reverence. She held our attention with her dramatic cadences, the rise and fall of her voice, and her ominous silences. *Oh, there must be marvelous story-tellers in heaven!* She also read us Nursery Rhymes:

*Little Jack Horner / sat in a corner / Eating his Christmas pie, / Put in his thumb,
And pulled out a plum, / And said, My, what a good boy am I!
Jack Sprat could eat no fat, / His wife could eat no lean,
And so, between the both, you see, / They licked the platter clean.*

Dad Read "Riders of the Purple Sage" and Smoked

Although I loved Zane Grey and his "Riders of the Purple Sage," mostly I steered away from cowboy stories, probably because Dad had a corner on the market with his "yellow," i.e., pulp, magazines. Once, buoyed up by highbrow literature surveys in high school, I questioned Dad's taste in literature—the "trashy" Western. Although he claimed that he already had read the books on my list, I never discovered any evidence of it. This made

me feel smaller than I really was because it showed that Dad would never admit that we could outstrip him *in anything*, not even reading! Subsequent events bore this out: his main ambitions for us were our getting good jobs and getting out of the house. I never received financial support from him after I graduated from high school and only my share of the subsistence for the family before then. But, like a dog loves his master, no matter what, I had a deep, undying love for Dad. Morality aside, I wanted to be like him. *That* saved me!

His attitude became all the more puzzling when he once lectured me for having put down “laborer” on an application blank under the heading of father’s occupation. He informed me that he was “baker” and belonged to a baker’s union. (The only job I ever saw him do was the laying in pans of machine-mixed dough and no doubt even this is automated now.)

Dad certainly had his pride, but not nearly enough in his children, at least not at a time when we needed him. I don’t think there was anything malicious or malevolent in Dad’s obtuseness. Rather he was a traditional, hard-working, pragmatic family man, and there was not enough energy left, it seemed, for him to worry about anyone who could not watch out for himself. But one good effect Dad’s compulsive reading had on us—it kept us quiet, and I think that helped our minds to grow a bit, as we enjoyed reading alongside him.² I don’t know how much of Sister’s problem with asthma, and Fred’s and my later problems with heart disease were instigated by secondhand smoke from Dad’s chain-smoking, or whether his addiction was inherited by us, at least by the availability of his Chesterfield cigarettes. Counting his fags, Dad would say, “I’m smoking too much, and have to cut down.” Then, when he suffered from emphysema and coronary problems, *Fred and I justified our stealing them from his pack by the fact that it lessened the number he smoked*. Children will rationalize anything if it lessens their guilt. “The child is father to the man!”

Cereal Boxes and Comic Heroes and Villains

Like most children, we loved reading anything we could get our hands on, including cereal boxes, which used to have comics on them, newspaper comics, and comic books. The latter often came in the form of what were called Big Little Books, about 4" by 6" by 1" in size. What were our favorites? Alley Oop, often riding Dinny, the dinosaur, and his sweet heart, Ooola;³ Og, Son of Fire; Li'l Abner (and Daisy Mae), Blondie (and Dagwood,

² The enforced quiet reading nurtured my physical passivity, but it didn’t have the same effect on Fred.

³ Allez, pronounced Alley, is the French imperative of *Aller*, to go, and Oop is the French slang for up, so Alley Oop is a pun of sorts. So is Ooola, as in Oo-la-la. Ha-ha!

and his eponymous enormous sandwiches, their children Alexander and Cookie), Popeye, The Sailor. and his lady, Olive Oyl, his kid, Swee' Pea and hamburger-loving friend, Wimpy (1919, Popeye appeared in 1929); Dick Tracy (and Tess Trueheart, the Brow, Flattop and other grotesqueries); Wonder Man, Wonder Woman, Superman, The Batman, Spider Man, The Katzenjammer Kids (1897-), featuring "Der Kaptain" and Hans and Fritz (another epithet that Charley tagged us with); Barney Google and Snuffy Smith (1919); Little Orphan Annie (1924), with her dog "Sandy, and "Daddy Warbucks), inspired the musical and movie—see the Index; I also was fond of a comic strip that featured a slinky character called "The Dragon Lady;" and another featuring "Downwind," whose face was never revealed, only a part of one side displaying a cheekbone. Little did we dream back then that many of these would be made into movies in the 60's and later. I found Superman (1990), starring Christopher Reeve as the muscle man from Planet Krypton; Batman (1989), starring Michael Keaton as Batman and Jack Nicholson as the Joker; and Dick Tracy (1990), starring Warren Beatty diverting cinema. (Duh! "There is no accounting for taste.") In 1945, Danny Kaye starred in a film entitled "Wonderman", but, since I never saw it, I do not know if Kaye adhered to the comics' hero stereotype, or even if he could.

In different ways, these paper characters left their marks on the world. In 1934, Al Capp's Lil' Abner, debuted, and his village, Dogpatch, parents Mammy and Pappy Yokum; his mini-skirted girl-friend, Daisy Mae, Sadie Hawkin's Day when the girl can ask the boy out; the miserable Joe Splft! (sp?), accompanied by an eternal dark cloud over his head spouting lightning or rain; a man named Mudd "I always have been associated with mud," Moonbeam McSwine, with a halo of flies, and Hogg, both at home in the pig-sty; and countless other lampoons of Americans, especially Kentuckians! Al Capp is merciless in his withering caricatures, which were the subject of two films, a stage production, and animated cartoons. Of course, Walt Disney led in animated cartoons. See the Index at Disney' also at Comic Strip Heroes and Villains, and at Brenda Starr.

Popeye's existential statement, "I yam what I yam, and that is all I yam," could be compared with Descartes, "I think therefore I am." There's no end to this. It has been said that life imitates art. And, one might add, comics, e.g., the line, "I eat my spinach out of a tin can," haunted my boyhood: "Carl, eat your spinach, Popeye does." Crystal City, Texas has a statue of Popeye, in honor of their status as the spinach-producing capital of the world.

CHAPTER 31

SIBLINGS

Genes are a poor man's will.

I once read a clever short story by V. S. Pritchett about a boy who wanted to be somebody else's son. I never thought until that moment how widespread that feeling was, and the sickness it represented: wanting to be everybody or anybody except yourself.¹ Rev. Jesse Jackson's antidote: "I may be poor but I am somebody!"²

The Human Chameleon: Zelig

Another clever take off on being other-than-who-you-are is Woodie Allen's 1983 movie, "Zelig," a spoof-documentary starring Allen as Leonard Zelig, the famous "Chameleon Man" of the 1920's whose personality was so vague that he would assume the persona of anyone he came in contact with, notably celebrities. Zelig developed a habit of showing up in newsreels standing conspicuously next to celebrities, e.g., Lindbergh and Hitler. His costar, Mia Farrow is a psychologist who tries to heal him with limited success. The treatment is documented in newsreels; finally he becomes most famous, and this cures him. (The killer of John Lennon confessed he had the desire to have Lennon's fame, and later in prison realized that he didn't want the kind of fame that he got! He's still in prison.)

Mama's Boy

I am happy that this is one childhood desire that I escaped. I knew whose boy I was: Mama's. Nevertheless, I had entrées into the homes of many friends, and I spent a fair

¹ In Philip Roth's "Ghost Story," the 23-year-old writer Zuckerman tries to be the son of the famous writer Lonoff after another famous writer drops him.

² Also see Nuala O'Faolain's autobiography, "Are You Somebody?"

amount of time in them, especially, during high school. But soon I learned of the invisible barriers to a fuller relationship with anyone outside your family: “Blood is thicker than water.” (John Ray, *English Proverbs*, 1670.)

Family as Status Quo and Training Ground

A family may not have a high status, but it has a *status quo* with which the members may quarrel but will never overturn. An outsider does not have a chance—*everybody* turns against him. Or maybe everybody befriends him and his sponsor thereby loses him. So both the sponsor and the family have reasons to keep outsiders out.

The family provides training ground for the succeeding rigors of life and relationships. Sibling rivalry and bonding becomes the archetype for business, political and amatory rivalries. Jealousy is one of the dominant vices of all creation, or perhaps one should say greed, since jealousy is a form of it (wanting more than your share). Politeness consists of not allowing this to become active in social intercourse, that is, “share and share alike.”

Sibling Rivalry? No short chapter will ever adequately describe how Fred and I struggled for an advantage over each other. The fighting got fiercer and only ceased after I got drafted into the Navy, that is, only when it was impossible to fight anymore. The next year Fred got drafted into the paratroopers and the following year got married, so we ended up mostly in separate domiciles.

How I Came to Look Like Homer

I was able to “handle” Fred, being quicker and more agile, but aside from this, Fred’s emotional rages did him in better than I ever could have. He flew off the handle so completely that despite his bull-like charges it was ridiculously easy to evade him, until he grew strong enough to become dangerous. This happened after a summer of his working in a cooperage firm tossing up 100 lb. barrels like they were basketballs. The next winter we had a fight in bed over who was to hold our nephew, darling Billy, and Fred threw a punch that traveled only maybe 6 inches but it was enough to break my nose. I saw stars! No wonder he won the light-heavyweight boxing championship in the 82nd Airborne Division the following year! I had to have a nose job in the Navy in 1946 for a deviated nasal septum on account of it. (The humidity of the Gulf of Mexico in Corpus Christi made it difficult for me to breath during frequent attacks of sinusitis.)

Lawrencian Combat

But for all our fighting, there was an element of fairness to it—we never threw sticks or stones—it was mostly hand-to-hand combat. In a Lawrencian note, I should add that I

believe these trials annealed our strength and purified our relationship because there was no bad blood left between us, whereas in our relations with Eldridge, the hurts rankled for many, too many, years.

Fred and I would fight over an ounce of meat; so intoxicating was the flavor—just like dogs. Of meat, there was never enough to go around. Ironically, Dad got the biggest share at a time of life when the protein requirements of the children were two to three times his. But we never resented this at the time, since his authority over us was complete and undisputed. Mama and Louise were the family “saints”, often giving their share to others, but Eldridge lost his wings in his reaction our appetite for food. Being eleven years older than I, and thirteen years older than Fred, he was in greater control of his appetite, and by the time Fred was five, Eldridge needed less than half the calories that we did.

Eldridge Could Not Abide Us

For whatever reasons, Eldridge could not abide our eating, or what he called gorging. Perhaps we reminded him of his own thin meals when he was our age, or maybe he just couldn’t stand other people’s happiness, but it was a long-lived battle extending over decades: we never really felt free to feast in his presence even on such days as Thanksgiving, or Christmas, and not even when we were the hosts. (I weighed only 155 pounds spread over a six foot two inch frame when I was eighteen, so one can’t say that I was obese, and Fred was just as lean.)

If (as the saying goes) the way to a man’s heart is his stomach, think how broad the path is to a child’s heart. Napoleon said that an army marches on its stomach. The sharing of food is one of the most universal requirements of social intercourse, and the abundance of food is the sign of friendliness, generosity and kindness. Such symbols will never die out since food is a necessity for life, and the deep meaning of sharing food, breaking bread, as it is called, is universally understood.

Understanding this much later in life enabled me understand Eldridge’s hostility to us—we were the usurpers of his position in the family. True, he was mother’s favorite child—extremely intelligent and as handsome as Henry Fonda (or Ronald Reagan, whom he resembled), but the circumstances of the depression forced him out when he left home to go live with our own “rich ncle”, Uncle Ira, who was a dentist in Evansville, Indiana, and Aunt Kathryn, and cousins Sonny, Bobby, and Richard. (Uncle Ira had gone to Dentistry School on money borrowed from the family farm that Uncle Rob tilled.)

Eldridge Opts Out

Forced out may not be exactly the right expression. Maybe opted out would be better, or maybe he thought that it would be best for everybody, leaving more for the rest and at the

same time living the way he preferred: on Uncle Ira's farm, driving the tractor, earning his keep, and storing away some money for college.

Uncle Ira *was* a role model for Eldridge—a successful dentist who paid his own way through college through loans secured by his share of the family farm. Dad was in contrast the black sheep of the Faith fold, experiencing difficulty, surprising for a Faith, in supporting a family.

In 1930, when I was just three years old, and Fred only a year old, Eldridge left home for good—one summer he just stayed on in Evansville, attended high school there, and came home only for brief summer visits thereafter. And it was during these that Fred and I fell under his scrutiny, and he persecuted us for our lack of table manners, a euphemism for eating too much.

Why Are Families So Unforgiving? Are We Pagans?

It is shameful that neither of us have ever quite forgiven him for this. He gave too much expression to his hostility while his size and status as Mama's favorite prevented us from expressing ours. Besides, since he *was* Mama's favorite, she found excuses for all his faults, the main one being that he "studied too hard." Later, far from excusing my faults, this phrase became a euphemism for why I was different, or a complaint to persuade me to go to bed early. "You study too hard, Carl, go to bed." And "too much studying will drive you crazy." Only much later did I find the perfect answer to her admonishment: "It was a short drive, Mama."

It has been said of Christians and other religious groups, that our beliefs are just a veneer that covers our animal natures and our pagan core. Judging by the terrible, horrible things that man does to man, it is hard to escape the essential truth of this, no matter how much it hurts.

We Ought to Forgive, But We Don't

But if we never forgave Eldridge, it may be because he never quite forgave us for our close, warm ties with Mama and Sister. Mama tried to get us to call Eldridge "Brother," but it didn't take. Sister and Eldridge were very close, a vestige of another family, one might say.

No doubt a psychologist would not find our behavior so unusual and could fit it into common dominant-submissive patterns. With Eldridge gone, I was in effect the elder son—the big little man about the house. But I didn't feel like one, ever: *Eldridge cast a big shadow even from far away.*

My Best Weapon: Laughter

For all our fighting, Fred was never able to complete a palace coup—I had too many advantages over him, a bit like Eldridge's sway over us without ever having to hit us:

mind over matter. Also it was easy to get Fred laughing and then he became helpless! There never was a boy with a better nature. He was so partial to certain foods, soup especially, that he would do practically anything for a bowl. (His army marched the way Napoleon's did—on its stomach!)

Louise's Unique Family Position

Louise was fortunate in her place in the family as the only sister, and Fred and I vied for her affection, but even here, without trying, Eldridge won, hands down: Louise idolized him. He was so gifted and, at the same time, good, and handsome; it was hard to believe he was real, although of course, he was as real to us as Christ and maybe a little bit like the young Christ. He commanded the prettiest girl friends you can imagine, and what I found incredible was that they never got him visibly worked up. I wonder what "Doctor Ruth" (Westheimer, the radio maven) would have said.

Zella Mae and Mary Metler: I got worked up just looking at them, especially the beautiful Zella Mae, but Eldridge maintained a regal aloofness. Jimmy Carter's lusting was not for him. But his aloofness probably was his defense against early marriage; just like my studiously ignoring Ruth Marshall's charms permitted me to devote myself to my studies in junior high school. For at Bloomington, Eldridge met his wife, Mary Metler, who—like cousin Gertrude, and my Paducah cousins Bo, Carrie Mae, Pauline, Marie, and Eva—was a warmhearted, generous, and folksy person. In this choice, form held the day. In many ways, she was like Mama, a warmhearted, generous, and folksy person. She revered Eldridge, also like Mama. That is a hard combination to hold out against, and it proved to be Eldridge's great blessing that he did not.

Eldridge and Mary Are Married on Christmas 1938

Eldridge and Mary married in Harrison, right on the border of Ohio and Indiana, on Christmas Day, 1938. Eldridge was twenty-three on December 4, and Mary nineteen on the preceding May 9. It was a joyous occasion that Fred and I treasure, since we were allowed to ride one of the Metler's ponies. The Metlers had performed in circuses, and Mary's brother, Larry, was a stunt rider and lariat artist, even though only about Fred's age. He must have thought we were "city slickers." Well, he was right about that, since we didn't know anything about horses, farming, or circuses. Later, Larry and I both attended the University of Kentucky, and I persuaded him to perform his tricks for some of the parades that my fraternity, Lambda Chi Alpha, participated in, by making floats for our "Sweetheart."

Kathryn Jean, Mark Eliot, William Herbert, and Karen Louise

Another blessing came to Eldridge and Mary in a little bundle of curls and blue eyes named Kathryn, after our Aunt, Ira's wife. She was born in Stamford, CT, where Eldridge was working for Pittman-Moore Pharmaceuticals, on February 19, 1940; or about 14 months after the wedding. This raised all of our statuses: Mama, Grandma; Dad, Grandpa; Fred and I, Uncles; and, of course, Mary and Eldridge were now Ma and Pa. William Herbert ("Billy") was born in St. Elizabeth Hospital in Covington, on June 29, 1941; and came to live with us together with Sis for three years on Herman Street while Charley was in the service.³ Mark Elliot was born to Eldridge and Mary on May 11, 1944, and Karen Louise was born to Charlie and Louise on June 15, 1947, further raising the status of all.

Sulfa Drugs: Eldridge's Patents

Eldridge accomplished a lot in his work on sulfa drugs, for which he held about 40 patents, according to his son, Mark. In World War II, dusting wounds with sulfa drugs was credited with holding down the death toll among the wounded. Especially since penicillin was hardly in general use until later in the war, although the British used it, and later so did Americans.

Sir Arthur Fleming

A Scottish biologist, Alexander Fleming, 1881-1955, was the first to recognize the therapeutic potential of penicillin through a chance discover at St. Mary's Hospital in London in 1928. Largely forgotten, it came into its own when researchers at Oxford University rediscovered its value in a clinical test on February 12, 1941. Subsequently, it saved untold numbers of wounded servicemen and civilians. The value of sulfa was that it was easier to manufacture, and easier for battlefield medics to carry, so it was readily available. However, Fleming did not contribute to the technology needed to manufacture and promote penicillin for the panacea in the fight against bacterial infection, a "miracle drug," as it became to be known as. I will come back to this in Chapter 61 on Michigan City, Indiana, where I was treated with penicillin for scarlet fever.

³ Charley served as a mechanic for the Army in Europe during some of the toughest fighting the world has ever seen. Like my father-in-law, Denny Sullivan, he could not bear to talk about his experiences there, but here, Charley's shyness and modesty would have prevented him from doing so in any case.

Undoubtedly one of the greatest boons of mankind is penicillin and other antibiotics. Streptomycin, discovered by two researchers at Rutgers University in the 1950s, was effective in treating tuberculosis, or TB. (See Streptomycin in the Index.) TB patients died a slow suffocating death not unlike many hapless victims of AIDS today. Many of the world's great artists, musicians, and writers succumbed to TB; notably, the two Bronte sisters, Anne, 1820-1849, and Emily, 1818-1848; Anton Chekhov, 1860-1904; Franz Kafka, 1883-1924; D. H. Lawrence, 1885-1930; Katherine Mansfield, 1888-1923; Almodeo Modigliani, 1954-1920; Robert Louis Stevenson, 1850-1894; Frédéric Chopin, 1810-1849; and Lytton Strachey, 1880-1932. In 1924, over 200,000 Americans died of TB along with Kafka.

The beautifully filmed 1995 movie “Carrington” is about the artistic Bloomsbury group, and the artist's Dora Carrington's (Emma Thompson) doomed love for the homosexual Lytton Strachey, the celebrated author of “The Imminent Victorians,” with “a bravura performance” by Jonathan Pryce as Strachey. Of these, none came close to being able to benefit from general availability of penicillin and streptomycin—see below.

First American Penicillin Patient

The first American patient whose life was saved by penicillin was Anne Sheafe Miller, who made medical history in March 1942 at New Haven Hospital. She had been hospitalized for a month with a streptococcal infection, slipping in and out of consciousness, with temperatures spiking to 107 degrees! She was treated with everything then in general use; including sulfa drugs, blood transfusions, and surgery; but all failed. In desperation, the doctors obtained a small amount of the then obscure drug, and her temperature dropped overnight. By the next day, she was no longer delirious and soon was eating full meals. Penicillin proved effective against a broad range of bacterial infections, including VD. However streptomycin proved effective against the dreaded tuberculosis, which had wreaked a heavy toll on mankind.

My Scarlet Fever and Molly's Pneumonia in 1945

The above story of Anne Sheafe Miller's recovery was taken from her obituary in the New York Times on June 9, 1999. (She had died on May 27 of that year.) I clipped it not only because of my interest in history, but also because in September 1945, just three years after penicillin was first administered to a patient in the USA, an injection of penicillin cured me of scarlet fever: a type of streptococcus disease, with very high temperature, scarlet skin eruptions, high fever, and permanent impairments in severe cases. Unknown to me, in the same year, my wife, Molly Sullivan, had double pneumonia, and she too was cured by penicillin. Many of us alive today owe our lives to this “miracle drug.”

Dad's Handsome Nose

Meanwhile, back to the family. One aspect of the “absentee father” syndrome was the lack of a really convincing Oedipal complex: we mostly had Mama to ourselves. I truly believe that I benefited from not having to face the hostility of a jealous father. (Eldridge’s was benign, since remote.) In fact, I became attached to my father in the puberty years, and tried to look just like him, without succeeding of course. My Foster’s nose with Fred’s sculptural bending would have made it impossible to match his admirable, straight nose anyway. (Fred had sucker-punched me as we struggled over who was to hold our nephew, little Billy.)

Louise, “The Forgotten Daughter”?

On the other foot, Sister suffered all the harder because of Dad’s defection, and thought of herself as a “forgotten daughter” as she signed one letter to him. Not that she let Dad’s deficiencies ruin her life—she was the most fun-loving, witty, ever-jolly person in our lives. Her generally sunny disposition was clouded over only by the gloomy thoughts, and perhaps the certainty, that Dad, Fred, and I would burn in hell.

The Third Child Syndrome

It took a lot out of a person hoping to pray two or three people out of purgatory, and she should be forgiven her stern lectures on the almost certain eternal punishment she thought was in store for us. On the other hand, being a “middle child” I had to struggle to maintain my self-esteem inasmuch as *everyone pointed out my childish mistakes all the time!* (It did teach me how to fit into the middle of things.) I learned a lot about people by having to cope with the superior forces of my older siblings. So many things in life fit into the framework of the family; e.g., the head (the parents), the top echelon (the older siblings), and the tributaries (the younger children). I have said before and often that I knew my place—the third child—and that it was futile to rail about it. But it did give me goals to shoot for. The perfection of Eldridge and Louise inspired me: I drew a bead on Eldridge especially, and mightily strove to outdo him. Of course, I never did, but he was my guiding light.

Fred had it worse than I did, since he was the baby of the family, and in addition to Sister and Eldridge, he had me to contend with. Poor Fred!

There Were Times That Had Hell Offered Itself . . .

Frankly, there were times that had Hell offered itself, I would have accepted in order to escape Sister’s Christian evangelism, and the opprobrium of Mama and Eldridge. Fred

was a solid sinner along with me, and as time passed by, it became apparent that Dad was going to Hell a lot faster than even Sister had predicted. Now if there is any consolation in Hell, it is the demonstrable certainty that you are going to have a lot of company, and judging by G.B. Shaw's "Don Juan in Hell," much of it of excellent quality!

Schaddenfreude: I hope that I may be pardoned for saying this; it is the reason why disasters, tragedies and misfortunes elsewhere cheer us up. It lightens our burdens to hear how others have been flattened under the loads they carry: *Misery loves company*. There's even a German loan word for it: *Schaddenfreude*, which means pleasure derived from the misfortune of others (from *Schade*, damage, and *Freude*, joy or happiness.

The Redeeming Flaw: Humans are doomed to aspire to, but never achieve perfection. Nobody and nothing ever quite comes up to our idealized conception of them. It is a truism that the eye searches for the redeeming (and satisfying) flaw in a masterpiece: the arms of Venus de Milo are missing, as are the walls of the Parthenon on the Acropolis, the flaking paint of da Vinci's "Last Supper", Achilles' Heel, and countless other examples, e.g., Homer's pugilistic nose! (No one knows if Homer existed, yet the Greeks portrayed him as blind and with a broken nose.)

Fred and Mary: They married on August 5, 1950 in Millington, Tennessee, while Mary was a Seaman at the Navy base there near Nashville in 1950, serving almost two years during the Korean War. Fred had served in the 82nd Airborne Division of the Paratroopers from 1946-1947. They have three children: Wayne Thomas, born March 17, 1952,; Richard ("Dick") Thomas, born, February 14, 1955; and Barbara Josephine, born October 12, 1957. Wayne was born on a St. Patrick's Day, and Dick on a Valentines Day, but Barbara wouldn't wait until Halloween!

CHAPTER 32

SISTER

I'm Chiquita Banana, and I'm here to say, / Bananas like to ripen in a special way.

When they're flecked with brown / And have a golden hue /

Bananas are the best, are the best for you!

*You can put them in a salad, you can put them in a pie-eye / Anyway you want to eat them, /
it's impossible to beat them / But never put bananas, in the refrigerator!*

Oh no, no, no!

Radio commercial, circa 1940's. Rinso white! Rinso white! Happy little washday soap!

Radio commercial about the soap introduced in 1920.

My earliest recollections of Sister were intimate ones—of her washing the backs of Fred and me Saturday nights, as we sat in the galvanized steel washtub in the kitchen on Herman Street. However, she was not only the Washing Angel, she also was the Avenging Angel, one who chastised us as if she were our mother. When Mama shopped, or worked away from home, Sis was in command, and Fred and I would begin jeering “Ya, ya, you ain’t my boss!” “Am so” “Are not!” “Whack!” “Boo Hoo!, we sniffled and the issue was decided: she *was* the boss.

Bigger, Smarter, Stronger: It was not just that Sis was bigger (about 5' 7", 2" taller than Mama) that allowed her to dominate us, but also her moral authority as a female: all our teachers in Grade School were women, as were most in Junior High school. Yielding to women was knee-jerk reaction to overpowering force (female logic?)¹ Even in the school playgrounds girls got off light when the rough stuff was handed

¹ In July 1998, in an interview related to her candidacy for the Democratic nomination for the U. S. Senate for New York, Hillary Clinton defended her husband's, President William Jefferson Clinton's, dalliances with women by saying he was raised by two domineering women, his mother and grandmother, “It's the Mother, stupid.”. She didn't exactly *say* that, but it is a catch phrase that covers what she did say, explaining

about. We especially deferred to their (budding or developed) breasts because of fear that any injury might lead to cancer. (Like Mama said.)

But unlucky Louise found out the danger in the worse way—she injured her rectal area from a fall on roller skates, and it developed into a big tumor, which had to be removed. This kept her out of school a whole year and subsequently she never went back, even though she had been a straight-A student up to then. She was embarrassed to be the oldest student in the class. Of all the family “druthers,” this was one of the saddest: Louise, a highly intelligent woman, was a leader in the community and church. She would have made the most of an education, and the world is poorer for her not going on to get it. This was way before the Women’s Liberation Movement and the National Organization of Women (NOW) of the 1960’s. (NOW was founded by Betty Friedan on October 22, 1966, three years after she wrote “The Feminine Mystique.”) After being strong supporters of the Civil Rights Movement, women turned to their own movement for equal opportunity.

Her apprenticeship in leadership, of course, was crafted on our “bods”. Once, when I taunted her with “You aren’t my boss!” she said, “Oh, yeah!” Carried away with her alleged authority in the face of a mutiny she seized and wielded the “butcher” knife (Mama’s “whip”) and slashed at me with the inevitable result: I still carry the scar on the left side of my face. If I had not ducked in time, I may have lost my ear, or, worse, an eye, although she claimed that I ducked into the knife! Can you imagine such violence from a saint? But, then Joan of Arc was violent, was she not? (The resemblance is made closer with the knowledge that Sister had been a “maiden” too at the time!)

Sister’s Misfortune: Like those of so many girls and women, Sister was a boon to the family’s finances. She not only brought money in, but also bought many household implements; a washer (no more washboard scrubbing for Mama), a refrigerator (alas, the iceman cometh no more!), vacuum sweeper (a Hoover naturally); and in so many ways lightened Mama’s burdens. She also made delicious, mouth-watering pies, especially chocolate and lemon meringues.² And what did I ever do for Mama? Well, . . . er . . . I made her very happy with my studies.

his inordinate desire to please women, in general, and Monica Lewinsky, in particular! He had some original excuses: “I did not have sex with that woman!” i.e., Ms. Lewinsky. And, “It depends on what the meaning of *is* is.” I took a puff, but did not inhale,”—i.e., smoking pot. *Now why didn’t I think of that? I had two domineering mothers—Mama and Sis!* According to Hillary, and to many men, women were dominating—dominatrices).

² I thought of her when I came across a book in Moe’s (Moskowitz’s) Bookstore in Berkeley, California, entitled “Pi in the Sky”, on mathematics and science, by John D. Barrow. PS. I bought the book. Meringue: A topping of egg whites and sugar beaten until stiff, and often baked until brown; also a small pastry shell or cake made the same way using baked egg whites instead. (From French meringue.) A similar word is **merengue**: s ballroom dance of Dominican and Haiti origin characterized by a sliding step; also, the music for this dance, in rapid 2/4 time—*fom* Spanish *merengue*, French *méringue*.)—from American Heritage Dictionary.

Sister's Pure Soul: Mama and Sister were as close as a daughter and mother could be, and I am sure that Louise's leaving school so early (9th grade) had much to do in bringing them together; or vice versa, her leaving school was a result of her desire to pitch in and ease Mama's anxieties. If she ever regretted her aborted high school education, she never showed any signs of it. She was blessed with countless friends, of both sexes: I have never known anyone who had more friends. Aside from this, she simply knew *everybody* and offered so much of herself: a glow of happiness that radiated from a pure soul. Sis was a virtuous woman: "*her price is above rubies*"—Proverbs 31:10.

Sis's Beaus: She had many suitors, but all in Christian fellowship. Even Charley (spelled Charlie in her letters), and especially Charley, her idol, had to submit to Christ's bridle before he could hope to win her. Already a non-smoking teetotaler, she made a regular church-goer out of him, regular that is until sometime after they were married. One charming boyfriend, Johnny Summers was slick-haired, a common hair-style for men then, related to a pompadour.³ He lived a half-block away two doors north down the street from Kelly's. He was a bit snaggle-toothed, for which Ipana (of the "Ipana Smile") never forgave him, but his hair behaved admirably. In all weather it never mussed up! I suspected he used *Stayback*.

Unruly Hair was condemned by Mama, but I couldn't stand the stiffness resulting from *Stayback*. Another of Sis' boyfriends was David Townsend. I cannot recall whether he was actually a suitor, but he invariably wore a suit (and tie) to call on Louise. Certainly he more than matched her in biblical quotations—he had the unmistakable, which is to say, unctuous air of a minister. This made him ideal material for the (pur-) suit, but luckily for all, Charley won out.

What we (*all*) wanted, however, was what Sis got. *I never doubted Sis would get what she wanted on the outside, since she always got what she wanted at home!* Sibling jealousy? I am sure that I suffered from "little brother-itis". How could I not have, with two such dominating older siblings? Recently (*circa 2003*) I heard this verse of a song on the radio: *I'm Daddy's Girl! I know I'm number one because he treats me like a son. Daddy's girl.* Here's another narcissistic song: *Look What They Done To My Song, Ma! / Look what they've done to my song!*

It was the only thing I could do half-right, / Now it's come out wrong, Ma!

Look what they done to my song!

—In a Ray Charles Album, circa 1972. See Da Capo, p. 162,

³ "When Madame Pompadour was on the ballroom floor/ For all the gentlemen, it was obvious to see./ She had a well-developed, person-al-it-ee!"—Song from the 40's.

CHAPTER 33

CHARLEY

Charley Menefee: He was born September 8, 1910, a well-brought-up son of farmers in Williamstown, about 40 miles south of Covington off the Dixie Highway (US 25),¹ now paralleled by Interstate Highway 75. He learned how to repair automobiles by the simple expediency of taking apart a Model-T Ford and putting it back together again piece-by-piece! Come to think of it, the way Henry Ford learned: he built his own.

Everybody Loved Charley

In addition to the obvious, a mate for Louise, Charley had what our family needed—a trade. An automobile mechanic was as well paid then as it is now. What would life be without mechanics, plumbers, electricians, carpenters, and other tradesmen? In addition, today we have the computer—generated trades as well, such as, well, computer-programmers, graphic-designers, Internet-marketing; e.g., new and used books on Amazon.com and Biblifind.com, selling and buying used items on E-Bay.

Dazzling Good Looks

But, of course, that was not what Sis saw in him: Charley had dazzling good looks. With his white, even teeth and healthy gums, he was your perfect Ipana Smile model! (And he smiled a lot too.) Another great virtue of Charley's was that he avoided the family vice of chattering too much. He spoke in monosyllables, and literally, was tall, dark and silent. It took us years to adjust to this, although in every way he was congenial, pleasant and unfailingly polite, and in all things, a paragon of virtue and industry. But of course, what pleased us was the big store he set by Sister: he loved her as much as we did, and it

¹ So many people met their end on its S-curves, that it was dubbed "The Dixie Dieway."

showed. Well, he married her didn't he? That was the standard by which all true love was measured back in "them thar" days. And she filled a cedar hope chest full of items in preparation for her marriage: linens, doilies, mementoes, and household goods.

Sister and Charley Are Married

The old saw "we did not lose a daughter (sister) but gained a son (brother)" held true. With Eldridge away in Evansville, or in college; and Dad, being Dad; Charlie, as Sis wrote his name, became the most dependable member of the family. They were married at Southside Baptist Church (where else?) on April 30, 1938. Louise was two months and ten days shy of being 20, Charley 28 in September of that year, while I was 11 years old two days before.

The Menefee Farm

The Menefee farm in Williamstown was plowed and sowed, after his father died, by Charley for vegetables. Everybody profited from the surplus. The Menefee's also let Dad hunt there, and I accompanied him once, even though I hated killing rabbits, or anything, although I ate the things they killed. What a paradox. This was way before the example of Gandhi and his vegetarianism came into my consciousness, not that I ever emulated him.

The Greatest Summer of My Life

The greatest summer of my life was our journey to Paducah² to meet our relations. I doubt whether Dad would have undergone the ordeal with the family on the train, but Charley's (Plymouth(?), Chevy? Dodge? See Photographs) coupe was a pretty toy that made Dad happy. Unfortunately for everybody I continually got carsick and messed up the car. The rumble-seat was well named, and also spared the car's interior as I leaned out and puked.

Charley's background was more productive than Dad's. You might say Charley then was what we call the "now" generation, back then. He could make *anything* go, run, and work. Thus, while he didn't get rich working for say, the Bavarian Beer Company, his employment was steady, and Charley could have cars for a few dollars that nobody wanted until suddenly he had them going. Ditto for lawn-mowers, refrigerators, washers, dryers, trucks, vacuum sweepers, *et cetera*.

² Previously reported on in Chapter 24.

You Want Appliances?

The list of appliances he gave Sis is staggering—she had *everything*. Don't ask me how devout Christians are able to justify our gross materialism in opposition to Christ's strictures against the accumulation of wealth. I suppose all these appliances were a form of wealth. And he kept them going when other people's appliances had to be replaced!

The biggest influence in Charley's life was his mother whom he worshiped. She lived to be a ripe old age (as did his father) and it broke his heart when she died.

Menefee is a Dutch name and, moreover, Charley's industry had a bit of the Dutch in it in its steadiness. Besides his good looks, his biggest charm—his modesty and quiet—was also a drawback in a social context. I believe few people really got to know him, and a lot thought he was backward. His shyness prevented him from going into business for himself, since he could not bring himself to collect money owed him!

Once when the figure was over \$100, or some such sum, he let Sis do it for him, something he always had refused to allow. One can say with truth that he was an unassuming man.

Splitsville

Eventually he broke with Mama for reasons he would never reveal but no matter what they were it is easy to see why he did it: Mama simply was too overbearing—always getting Sis and Charley to do things for her. (Especially Sis was under her spell.)

Sister's Daughter-itis

Sis had the worst case of *daughter-itis* I ever saw, and it was only after Charley broke with Mama that she saw (in her own words) that she “had to choose between a marriage and Mama.” It was as simple as that, and she made the right choice—the only reasonable one. We missed Charley at reunions, but I recognize the truth of the slogan (or quote) “eternal vigilance is the price of liberty”.

The split came sometime after Dad left when so much man's work was being piled on Charley, so surely most people found his action excusable. (Certainly nobody in the family boycotted Sis's home on account of it.)

Charlie's Achilles' Heel

Nevertheless, it was Charley's *Achilles heel*: it emphasized his immaturity, how frightened he was, how much he hid his feelings, how afraid he was to deal openly with tough issues.

Moreover, it was the cruelest act I had ever witnessed, and it hurt Mama terribly. She had no reason to suppose that the charming, smiling young man was chaffing at the bit. But to her great sorrow, she learned too late.

Unquestionably, Sis was “made” for Charley because she supplied so much of those qualities that Charley lacked, and vice versa.

Charley always hung back, would never take the lead, and seemed to resent those that did. But, of course, many shy people are like that. *Blessed are the meek for they shall inherit the earth.*

Charley Tries To Make a Mechanic of Me

I started out to emulate Charley, to learn the trade, and he did everything to encourage me—paying me real money (a dime, or maybe a quarter!) to tighten bolts to the prescribed number of pounds pressure, or to replace worn gaskets.

But it was a case of sheer incompatibility—my mind was too active for nuts and bolts, and I found the drudgery of mechanics work frankly boring, no matter how fascinating the machine was. It was the same way in all my jobs that I held, so I am not blaming manual or clerical labor, it is just a constitutional inadequacy that I had. On the other hand, this no doubt augured well for my going into mathematics instead. Besides my love for mental activity, I felt that I had a lot to prove in life, and what I learned about mathematics in high school, college, and the navy seemed to fit into my “destiny,” if that is not too grandiose a word for it.

The Generation Gap or Anti-Intellectualism?

That Charley was 8 years older than Sister, who was born on June 10, 1918, so 17 years older than I, created a gulf that divided us, called the generation-gap, but I think that the main distrust was that of the manual laborer versus the intellectual: he could not see the benefits of my labors.³ I earlier praised his mechanical ability with conviction, but it was impossible for him to reciprocate. Maybe it was the same with his grudge against Mama: in mental acuity she was *nonpareil*. I like to think she was my intellectual mentor, and that she is looking over my shoulder approvingly as I write these lines. (I make out my income taxes with the same awareness.)

³ “A Man is not idle because he is lost in thought. There is visible labor and invisible labor,”—Victor Hugo in “Les Miserable;” see Bartlett.

The Clever and The Good

If all the good people were clever; / And all clever people were good,

The world would be nicer than ever / We thought it could.

*But somehow, 'tis seldom or never; / The two hit it off, as they should; / The good are so harsh to
the clever; / The clever so rude to the good!"*

Elizabeth Wordsworth, 1890

Charlie's Great Sense of Humor

Charley had a great sense of humor, and kidded Fred and me mercilessly, mostly about our smoking which he regularly caught us at. But he tolerated Sis' kid brothers as well as anybody could, and added to our merriment by dubbing Eldridge "Elderberry." Ironically, much later, Eldridge became an Elder in his church in Indianapolis. He also dubbed Fred, "Freddy Doodle", a title, together with its short form, "Doodle" that stuck. Poor Doodle! A good friend of Charley and Sister was "Hoss", or "Horse", Everman. I never knew where "Hoss" came from, although he was tall, while his wife, Nietta, was tiny—side-by-side, they looked a bit like "Mutt and Jeff."

Charles is the French Word for Carl

Charles is the French version of Carl; and so, Charlemagne (742?-814) translates as "Carl the Great" in English, and "Karl der Grosse", in German history. For many years, I did not realize that Charlemagne and Karl der Grosse were the same person. Charlemagne was King of the Franks 768-814, a Germanic tribe in the Rhine region, which conquered Gaul about 500AD and established an extensive empire that reached its zenith in the 9th century. France was settled by the Franks after the retreat of the Romans who had captured Celtic Gaul in 58-51 BC. Charlemagne made it the center of his Empire of the West after 800AD. (Excerpted from the Heritage American Dictionary.)

What's in a Name?

What's in a name? That which we call a rose / By any other name would smell as sweet—
That immortal line is from Shakespeare's "Romeo and Juliet." And while we're at it, how often must I remind those named Carol, Carole, Carly, Charlotte, Charles, Charlene, or Carleen that our names are as sweet? (As stated, Charles is the French version of Carl, and Karoly is the Hungarian.)

CHAPTER 34

EVERY—GIRL—YOUR—SISTER

“I didn’t know the full facts of life until I was seventeen. My father never talked about his work [on sexuality.]” Martin Freud, son of Sigmund Freud,
In “The Quotable Dad” by Nock and Tony Lyons

Mama’s strictures on the subject of girls probably had more influence on me (for good or bad I cannot say) than practically on any other subject, and certainly more on me than on Fred. For this was the subject with which she spoke with utmost authority and conviction. Girls were to be honored and respected (period). They were not to be touched, or even played games with. I know this is ambiguous, but I am referring to games in the real sense, not the psychoanalytic sense. *Of course*, she was fighting human nature.

Mama made us aware of the tenderness of girls, both physical and emotional, and this I have never forgotten. (Women’s “Lib” has changed this. Women have taken control of their bodies through exercise, diet, and athleticism, and some even wrestle or box!) “Treat every girl as if she were your sister”, was Mama’s dictum. And I did. I did it all the way through elementary, middle and high schools, and further I never wavered in my adherence to Mama’s wishes in all that time.

I profoundly respected Mama, and most of my growing pains arose from trying to reconcile this with reality. I was not allowed out at nights, except to go to Wednesday evening prayer meeting, Friday choir-practice, Sunday evening church, or Saturday basketball games in the “Y” church league. I was allowed to go to high school football games, but could not join classmates for a soft drink afterwards.

And Mama was punctilious in these strictures, so much so that 90 percent of my punishments as were as a result of being late getting home for some reason. As a “good” girl from a “good” family on the farm, Mama hardly had any freedom, so I can well imagine that the blasé kids of Covington, Kentucky set her teeth on edge.

I found that I like musicians a lot, e.g., Cecil “Benny” Craig, Frank Duff and Walter Waymeyer in high school, and other musicians that I listened to at dances, the church and high school choir, where I sang, concerts in Devou Park, and, later, at Cincinnati Clubs, e.g., the Barn and the Loft. Music gave me some of the happiest times I ever had. Frank took me to hear some world-famous musicians, but that is a story for another chapter, e.g., Chapter 44; also see Robert Lissauer on songs, **R**.

Girls Were On Another Planet: The upshot of my Mama’s tutelage was that as far as sex was concerned, girls were another planet. Far from helping me, the knowledge that my friends were “making out” just increased my anguish, for sexual feelings I had plenty of—what I lacked was courage or stupidity, whichever applies. Ours was a rough street. From the age of twelve on, I knew dozens of children who engaged regularly in (heterosexual) sex. Although teenage motherhood was not an actuality on Herman Street, it was a miracle or a “rubber” that prevented it. I do not want to blame Mama for the neglect of my sexual education—traditionally fathers instructed their sons. On this subject the kindest thing that I can say about Dad is that he let on that I knew enough, very much the way Sigmund Freud treated his son—“benign neglect.” (See the quote at the head of this chapter.) This probably was the greatest over-estimation of knowledge since Socrates, but I appreciated being thought of as “one of the boys” even though I knew I was not. For instance, I remember that scratching a girl’s palm with you middle finger as you shook her hand was an invitation to fuck and something I never ever could do. I also remember “Stingo,” the narrator in “Sophie’s Choice,” telling of a flirtatious girl: “she could talk about sex, but couldn’t do it.” I felt sympathy for this girl because at that age I could do neither.

On the subject of sex, Fred did not suffer from the same inhibitions that I did: He surrendered his virginity very early in life, and without trauma to himself or this first girlfriend, I might add. (The girlfriend’s father, naturally enough, imposed a good deal of trauma when he found out about it.) Aside from this, there were significant other ways that appear to indicate that Fred and I came from contrasting home environments. Of course, no two people can have exactly the same environment, but we were only 20 months apart in age, yet Fred was very much more aware of the physical universe than my day-dreaming allowed me to be: he had an exceptional grasp of practical matters: he could make or build anything, and exulted in being able to do so, e.g., he built a 15 foot sailboat shortly after his marriage in 1950 when he was 21 years old. Although he did become a “Captain of Industry,” an electrical engineer who rose to the top ranks of his company, Continental Electric in Ludlow, KY; I think he might have become an outstanding athlete if Mama had not hamstrung his athletic development. In view of the intense Olympic fever that rages throughout the world every four years, Fred’s aspirations for football glory at Holmes High School do

not appear excessive, especially since he did not stand for scholastic honors. While a paratrooper in 1946, age 18, he won the light-heavyweight championship of his division in a fight in which he won by a KO.

Although, Fred and I were quite different, we also were much alike in many ways, e.g., both sentimental slobs, blubbery kissers, and given to hysterical laughter brought on by the antics of the other. Fred was a generous boy, not stingy like many, and able to share what he had with others. (Er . . . maybe, not the meat on the table!) I was flabbergasted when on my sixteenth birthday he gave me my first watch, a gold-plated stylish-looking expansion bracelet timer. Then, too, we saw eye-to-eye about the often harsh, gratuitous punishments we suffered in childhood. True, Fred internalized this to a much greater degree than I, who looked at the past it like a bad dream one tries to forget, but we have remained lifelong friends. There are no bonds stronger than siblings, or people who shared poverty or adversity, as many who lived through the Great Depression and World War II know.

Castration Fears of Boys: Where does one draw the line between reasonable restraint on a boy's drive and a kind of castration? According to Freud, all phobias are a consequence of the justifiable fear of death. One incident that occurred at a frat party on the Kentucky River when I was a sophomore relates to the poor education we got back then. We heard a blood-curdling scream, and ran over to find a girl in hysterics because her date had kissed her. It seems that her mother in order to guarantee her chastity made her promise not to let anyone kiss her! Well, that's one way to keep them from apart, right? It an extreme example of my mother's philosophy: "look but don't touch!"—She thought all girls were out to get married and she knew how they did it. Naturally, I assumed that was based on her own tactic in getting Dad to marry her! *It takes one to know one.*

Dorothy Sullivan's Quip: I have a witty mother-in-law, Dorothy Sullivan, age 93 in 2005, whom I have quoted elsewhere in this book, and now I offer you another one of her gems. I brazenly asked her how far she let her husband, Denny, Molly's father, get before they were married. She quipped, "Well, do you mean first base, or second base?" (I had completely forgotten that baseball cliché.) So, I quipped back, "How about a homerun?" I wonder what Dorothy would think of the following anonymous limerick? A double? *There once was a man from Kent, / Whose blip was so long it was bent. To save himself trouble / He stuck it in double; / Instead of coming, he went.*

CHAPTER 35

THE GOOD HUMOR MAN AND “PORK CHOP” JACK

*A musician must make music, an artist must paint,
a poet must write, if he is to be ultimately at peace
with himself. What a man can be, he must be.*

From “Motivation and Personality,” 1954,

By Abraham Maslow, 1908-1970.

Ice Cream Vender, Hutsa-Putsa

In 1940 when I was thirteen I began to get restless with run-of-the-mill jobs, and begged Mama to let me try out for a job of an ice-cream vender. A friend of mine (Freddy Weeks? “Beans” Pressler?) was clearing \$2.00 a day profit—on a hot day. The rub was you had to pick up your cart and ice cream at 13th and Walnut Streets in Cincinnati. This was about 5 miles from home, with a hike across the Suspension Bridge thrown in.

For some reason that I will never understand, Mama let me do it! Although the experience was an unprecedented opportunity, maybe Mama knew all along how much the responsibility would help me grow up. After all, she had sent off two of her darlings, Eldridge and Louise, before me.

Out of Eyesight, Earshot, and Away From the Gang

For the first time in my life I was on my own—not only out of eyesight, and earshot—but away from the Gang, and, significantly, away from Peaselburg. Mornings, I took the trolley—the Green Line—at 21st Street all the way across the Suspension Bridge to the Terminal in Cincinnati, just the way Dad did! That left me just 8 blocks up Walnut to the plant. Nobody, but nobody had a job like mine. Why even most grownups worked closer

to home! Dad, of course, had to go all the way out Vine to Colerain, but I was taking the same route. With war breaking out in Europe I might later regret this, but I was determined to be a man.

The Best Job Ever

The job was a lark. Despite the long push, I always managed to go to 2439 to give Mama a proud look at my white jacket and cap *and* a fudgesicle. Some days I managed to eat or give away all my profits. The worse part was the long push back to the plant, especially if you had had a bad day and the cart was heavy with unsold Popsicles; and then it was pure drudgery.

The thermometer, humidistat, and barometer measure more than temperature, humidity, and atmospheric pressure! A day in the 80's meant a sell-out, while one in the 60's guaranteed a heavy cart returning. Similarly, dry weather meant parched throats and the cooling balm of a Popsicle! The same principle applies to the swimming pool—you can judge the temperature, and weather by how many people are in the pool.

Oh, The Power of It All¹

Did anyone ever have such a feeling of power as the Good-Humor Man had pushing his cart and ringing the tingling bells, while kids screamed, “There’s the ice-cream man, Mama, There’s the Ice Cream Man!” in terror lest I pass before they could inveigle a nickel from their moms?

“Sweets as Treats”

They need not have worried. I stayed put until every kid on a block had enough time to buy dozens of pops. Sweets are an opiate to growing kids—a life-or-death matter. A 90 year-old man I met on Long Beach Island on the Jersey shore, told me that sweets after every meal accounted for his health and age, and he confided to me that it would be impossible to rear children without “sweets as treats.”

I Was Somebody

I think that I can pinpoint the exact moment that *I Was Somebody* was when I switched over from being a poor child without a nickel to giving a poor child a Popsicle if he would wipe away the tears and give me a smile. At such times I knew people poorer and

¹ Power is an aphrodisiac, according to Henry Kissinger, but the Baptist in me still repelled Eros.

weaker than I. I fully subscribe to Reverend Jesse Jackson's prescription: *I may be poor, but I am somebody*. Or to Sophie Tucker's observation: *I've been poor and I've been rich, and rich is better!* Here I was newly a Christian (less than a year after baptism) and already I was helping people! I remember the joke about *doing well by doing good*.

Adults feel so superior when children get upset when they cannot have what they want. They say to themselves, "Well they just have to learn the way I did." And sure enough they do, with the result that there are so many unhappy adults, not to mention the long list of "verts" "per-" "re-" and "con-" I left out "pre-". (A "prevert" is someone who is going to be one of the other "verts" but isn't there yet!)

Children die hard. A popular novelist for teenage readers remarked how an *afternoon in the life of a child is as packed as a year in an adult's—so intensely does he or she live*.

You are beginning to grow up when you begin to feel sorry for other children.

"Porkchop" Jack

"Porkchop" Jack was my boss or rather his wife was. Jack was his first name but I have long forgotten his last name, and even his wife's first name, but I wish I could erect a monument to their kindness. For generosity, gentleness, and affection, they surpassed practically anybody I ever knew up to then. Not that they were paragons otherwise. As W. C. Fields might have put it, "I don't want to give you the impression that I am a teetotaler. I have been known to take a drink or two". I saw him in that condition frequently since the bar was right across the street from the plant. His wife, whom I shall name Lola (after a friend who reminds me of her) was sociable and drank with him. She was not one of those whiskey-raw voiced women who liked to drink men under the table. On the contrary, she was very conscious of what constituted "the line" and stayed well on the feminine side of it in everything, except perhaps smoking.

Lola Smoked in Public

She was the first woman I ever knew to smoke in public—on the streets, in bars, anywhere. If Mama had known about this, not to mention the drinking, she would have ended my first and, the best job of my life. If you can imagine these two people working out of a grubby room, handing out frozen pops packed with dry ice (dangerous, potentially fatal, to inhale) you could also imagine the people they had to work with. Despite the frequently good paydays, it was not steady enough to attract responsible elements of society! So Jack and Lola were left with mostly schoolboys and rummies.

Yet they cheerfully greeted you; carefully packed for you, payed close attention to your orders, teased you back into humanity when you came back half-full, and in all ways took delight in people and life.

I only wish my genes had been transplanted with some of their chromosomes! Not that I wanted to be their son, but rather something more like them! (I am again reminded of the V. S. Pritchett short story about the boy who wanted to be somebody else's son!)

“Porkchop” Jack

Jack very solidly built, much shorter than Dad and stockier. He was a Minotaur (about the build of Picasso) and a little hunched, as if his big head was a bit too heavy for him. His heavy eyebrows punctuated his jokes which he told with his ever-ready smile.

I gave him the nickname “Porkchop” for his penchant for that food. His favorite meal was doubly thick ones cooked with butter; he made a “Dagwood” out of them with crisp crusty bread from the nearby bakery, thick sliced sweet onions, and freshly ground black pepper.

Proust and Me

It makes my mouth water to write about this. For Marcel Proust a cup of linden tea was evocative of his mother and childhood (the linden tree is also called *basswood*, *lime*, and has yellow, often fragrant flowers are used to produce the tea), but for me tea never does the trick (I didn't drink tea as a child, but I did eat pork chops!)

“Once I had recognized the taste of a crumb of a madeleine soaked in her decoction of lime flowers which my aunt had given me . . . immediately the old gray house upon the street, where her room was, rose up like the scenery of a theater”—from “Remembrance of Things Past,” or “In Search of Lost Time” by Marcel Proust (see Bartlett's.) Proust devoted himself in six volumes to recovering the past, or lost time, through such associations. He also said that ‘les vrai paradis sont les paradis qu'on a perdus, which has been translated many ways by many people; e.g., literally, (the) true paradises are (the) paradises that one has lost,” i.e., both with or without the definite article; or “the only true paradise is a paradise that we have lost,” or “all paradises are lost paradises” are all translations by authors of different volumes of Penguin's six volume edition of “In Search of Lost Time,” edited by Christopher Prendergast. (See, e.g., the review by Michael Wood in the January 6, 2005, of the London Review of Books of the six new translations of the six volumes. See Bibliography.) Prendergast remarks on the contrast between ‘the Shakespearian title,’ “Remembrance of Things Past,” vis-à-vis the more literal, and less literary, “In Search of Lost Time.”

The Suspension Bridge and the Lights Reflected on the Ohio River

Amazingly enough, not tired out after walking all day, I frequently walked home across the Suspension Bridge at night, bedazzled by the lights reflected in the dark Ohio far

below. By now I could purchase my own Chesterfields, and throw a lit cigarette into the swirling waters, tickling my acrophobia no little. I could not have known about Hart Crane's love for the Brooklyn Bridge² (another suspension bridge designed by Roebling), but had I been a poet I would have written about this bridge that I passed over about two times each weekday most of my life from that summer until I left home for the Navy in 1945.

I Work

For, from then on, I held one job or another in Cincinnati: The United Cigar Store at 5th and Walnut (about which—more in Chapter 44), Flagg Brothers Shoe Store at 5th and Vine, and post-Navy: at Shillito's at 10th and Race, Western Electric at 11th and Race, the Amateur Softball Association at 13th and Walnut, and eventually I attended the University of Cincinnati for two quarters, fall and winter, 1947-1948.

Do Condoms Make Good Balloons?

Once when Mama found a condom³ in my pocket, I lied outrageously telling her that we blew them up at work and floated them out the window of the 11th floor of Western Electric. This was literally the truth because, while I was prepared to use the condom otherwise, *alas I never had the opportunity—that was my salvation!* So we let the condoms have their fun another way! *I think Mama accepted this rather than believe that I would commit a carnal sin.*

The Summer of 1946: Singing On My Back

Another bit of fun: in an overhead rack a crooning coworker and I used to sing our hearts out while lying flat on our backs running the cables. Such are the joys of youth. Consequently I now know hundreds of songs that predate the summer of 1946. My crooner friend had somehow lost his front teeth in an accident, but that neither deterred his singing, nor detracted from his sunny disposition. Alas, today, we have lost the joys of singing together, and the wisdom that comes with it.

Here are two refrains that we harmonized to:

² See his poem "Brooklyn Bridge."

³ While condoms have been in use possibly by Romans and Egyptians using sheep bladder sheaths, the name itself is obscure; however, a Dr. Condom perfected a penile shaft in the mid-1600s to protect King Charles II. (See "Sexy Origins.")

All The Things You Are

You are the promised kiss of springtime, / That makes the lonely winter seem long.

You are the breathless hush of evening / That trembles on the brink of lovely song.

You are the angel's glow / That lights a star,

The dearest things I know / Are what you are.

Some day my happy arms will find you / And some day I'll know that moment divine,

When all the things you are, / Are mine!

Jerome Kern, 1939

Harmony

Harmony, harmony,

Can't you see,

We've got harmony?

Yeah!

CHAPTER 36

BOY SCOUTS, HIKES, AND MOTHER NATURE

*Nature has much to teach us how to live, and how to love.
Nature never deceives us; it is always we who deceive ourselves—.*

Jean Jacques Rousseau

*Unless man has a natural bent in accordance with nature's,
he has no understanding of nature at all—*Charles Sanders Pierce

The best thing about animals is that they

*don't talk much—*Thornton Wilder (But, oh, they do! N.B.)

*A Boy Scout salutes the flag with three fingers of his right hand extended
with his thumb holding down the little finger.*

Scout Motto: Be Prepared.

The goal of life is living in agreement with nature—

Zeno, 325-263 BC, from Diogenes Laertius, *Lives of the Imminent Philosophers*

Civilization and Its Discontents

The life of a youngster has aspects of flotsam and jetsam, drifting first in one direction, and then flying off in another. Youth has the possibility and actuality of mercurial change that adults are glad to forego, but are not always able to. At their peril, the frenetic searching-for-but—never-arriving-at goals lead to much of what Freud called “Civilization and Its Discontents.” The amount of energy that a person expends in youth probably equals all of that expended after the age of, say, eighteen. Just look at the way a puppy throws itself in every direction at once, turning at each distraction, then suddenly falling asleep out of sheer exhaustion.

Hiking For Books

As a child I used to walk the two miles to the public library, loaded with books, and then retrace my steps reading them en route.¹ And I did this after school, after going to the store for Mama, after cutting the grass or some other chore. No wonder at the age of eighteen I still had not filled out, weighing just 155 pounds, thinly spread over a six-foot-two inch frame.

In Junior High School, I was able to use the High School library, obviating the long trek to Covington Public, but I never knew what it was like not to be loaded down with books, not even when I was a professor of mathematics. One of my favorite tricks was to ask one of the secretaries to pick up the loaded backpack that I carried everywhere, between classes and after classes, to the math library to research. (In my bag, I had everything I needed, including a thermos of coffee, and lunch.) No one could lift it.

Baker Hunt Foundation

In the Seventh Grade, under the aegis of our art teacher, Mr. Thomas Oertel, I won a scholarship to the Baker Hunt Foundation located downtown, right off Madison Avenue, not far from the Covington Public Library. So I also made that trek several afternoons a week anyway.

I had a bicycle only briefly—it was a fender-less relic that frequently broke down or had flat tires, and I came to depend on my legs rather than wheels. But even when I had it, I used it to carry my books while I pushed it, still reading.

Undoubtedly, I preferred walking as an aid to thinking, and still do. I did not know it then, but the contraction of the muscles in the leg increases circulation of the blood to the brain. You actually get more thinking done walking than sitting! In recognition of this pragmatic discovery, Heidelberg, Germany has its *Philosophenweg*, “Philosopher’s Walk”, overlooking the Neckar River, in honor of the many “philosophers” who strolled there. The Institute for Advanced Study in Princeton has about 100 acres, much of it a forest. Oswald Veblen, one of the Institute’s founding professors, selected the site for the serenity of the surroundings, but more importantly, because of his belief that walking stimulates thinking. So walk we must.

The Scout Pace

From the Boy Scout training, I learned to be able to cover a mile in 15 minutes. The trick is to walk 50 paces and then “glide” 50 paces. (But you have to keep to the schedule, or else you lose your guarantee!) In this way I knew that I could be at church in 30 minutes

¹ I never saw anyone else do this, but according to the NY Times, polymath Clifton Fadiman did the same thing, except he read Homer, Sophocles, Dante and Milton! (See his New York Times Obituary, June 23, 1999.)

and the library in 45. In actuality, I usually dawdled, and consequently was habitually late for everything. In view of my fear of being late, my dawdling was one of those irrational puzzles that psychologists like to explain. Mama said, “*Carl, you will be late for your own funeral!*” As I said before, I once got fired from a dish-washing job for dawdling, manifestly because no matter how fast I started out, my speed would dwindle down, and before long I was just staring out into space. (However, the cook at that joint in Lexington, Kentucky, said *the real reason that I was fired was that I ate too much.*)

Fourteen Mile Hike

Another thing Boy Scouts taught me was the long hike. In order to advance from Tenderfoot to Scout, there were a number of requirements that had to be met. One of these was the 14-mile hike. I remember starting out on this early in the morning, properly equipped with the scout knife, and scout water-flask, the scout hat with the scout tenderfoot badge pin on in front, the scout neckerchief, *etc. ad nauseam*. The scout business is a big one, and there was not anything that could be worn, or carried, that the organization did not sell.

Star Scout

I also received a merit badge for learning the Morse code², and making a dot-dash device to send it. In addition, somewhere along the way, I had to learn to semaphore, but I can’t recall if it was a scout merit badge, or if I learned it at Great Lakes US Navy Training Center. In any case, I advanced from Tenderfoot to Star Scout with the required merit badges sewn onto my sash.

“The Last Detail”

I recalled the semaphore code while watching “The Last Detail,”³ a 1973 film starring Jack Nicholson and Otis Young, two hard-boiled members of the Shore Patrol (the Navy police) who have the “Detail” to transfer a prisoner (Randy Quaid), from one brig to

² Samuel F(inley) B(reese) Morse, 1791-1872, was an accomplished American portrait artist, as well as the inventor of the telegraph and Morse code. He conceived of the magnetic telegraph, which he exhibited in the US Congress in 1837, but had to wait until 1843, when Congress voted him \$30,000 in order for an experimental telegraph line between Washington, D.C., and Baltimore. The first message sent was Numbers 23:23: “What hath God wrought?” sent on May 24, 1844.

³ The movie was based on the 1970 book by Daryl Ponicsan, who served in the US Navy, and knew first-hand what he was writing about. Detail in this sense is the selection of one or more sailors for a specific duty.

another. Despite his petty offense, an *attempt* to steal forty dollars for which he was arrested *before* he took the money, he got a heavy sentence—eight years—an extreme example that goes way beyond “chicken shit” and that smacks of sadism. En route, when the Nicholson character finds out how strictly the prisoner had been reared by his parents, he tried to show him a “good time” (how to drink, fight “grunts,” find prostitutes, etc) for the first of his lifetime, and what would be the last for eight years. It’s a bit bawdy and R-rated (for profanity, and mild nudity) but cathartic for ex-sailors who hated the Navy. (I will return to this subject in Chapters 53 and 59.) In the movie, semaphore was one of the things that Nicholson taught Quaid, and it was fun for me to watch him semaphore his plan to escape the detail. Nicholson was nominated for 1974 Academy Award for Best Actor in this movie, won a British Academy Award, Best Actor at Cannes, and the N.Y. Film Critics Award, all in 1974. (I will also come back to the movie in Chapter 53.)

There Are “Duffer” Scouts Too

In this respect, a scout is a little bit like a golfer. It is the duffer who stands there in his golfing (Bobby Jones) knickers and with his (Bobby Jones or Jack Nicklaus) matched irons and woods, his leather glove giving him a better grip on his leather handled-clubs, his caddy or golfcart relieving him of the strain of carrying his own clubs. But nothing helps the duffer. A caddy in tennis shoes and Levis will out-drive a duffer anytime on every fairway using rusty irons, and chipped woods.

Some of the scouts had all the equipment that a good scout needs nothing of, yet they still could not even start a fire without using matches. In their servitude to their equipment, one is reminded of the man in Jonathan Swift’s “Gulliver’s Travels” who carried all the implements needed for ordinary discourse. Thus, instead of saying a word, he *pointed to it!* This is a delicious satire on literal-minded people, and on those unable to deal with such abstractions as words or numbers. (Swift also made fun of absent-minded or distracted people: their servants would flap them on the ears to remind them to listen, on their mouths when they were supposed to talk, and on their eyes while walking lest they fall down a ravine, etc. See at Gulliver’s Travels in the Index.

Overnight Camp

Getting back from a 14-mile hike, I suffered from nothing more than blisters (from my clod hoppers) and dehydration (the canteen leaked), and enormous hunger. Mama could see how proud I was that I did not cave in like some of the Tenderfoots who stopped short of 14 miles. There are innumerable mileposts, like this and the Overnight Camp, that make up the stages of life that a child must pass through in order to become a passable adult. Actually, the Overnight Camp was in every way more exciting. First there was the

making of the fire using leather-tongs in the bow to spin the pointed stake, which created the friction that caused the heat to ignite the fire.

I have two faded photographs of the Troop 13 Camping Trip *circa* 1942, showing George Edmondson (Patrol Leader), Freddie Weeks, Charles Kelly (Patrol Leader), all in the back row; with Gene Mischke, Vernon Kidwell, and three others in Row Two; and Russell Eldridge, and Jimmy Townes in the First Row; with me sandwiched in between. All of us have on uniforms except one unidentified scout in the front row at the far left. Another treasured photograph shows Mr. Kelly, and Charles, standing in front of their house on Herman Street in full uniform. (See Photographs.)

Did you ever consider that most fun in life comes from doing things the “hard” way instead of the “easy” or modern way? Consider this chart:

ACTIVITY	EASY	HARD BUT FUN
fire	match	rubbing 2 sticks together
cooking	TV dinners frozen dinners canned food	fresh game fresh vegetables, cooked outdoors, using old recipes
traveling locomotive	car gliding airplane steamship	walking or running swimming sailing
drinking	canned drinks bottled drinks artificial flavor	real beer (in England) freshly made, fruit drinks pull-your-own well-water
food	supermarket	fishing
shopping		hunting, gardening
thinking	TV Media solutions	reading, problem-solving on your own
Living With Someone	sex pornography prostitution	loving, caring, nurturing (fancy f_ing)

(I must admit that his chart is far-fetched in some places.)

After building the fire, you had to cook your own supper—potatoes baked in the earth under the fire, ditto for corn, and meat barbecued on a skewer placed on wooden “forks” straddling the fire. Who cared if we forgot the condiments? Isn’t hunger the best spice? And isn’t the aroma of smoke still as savory as anything that can be done with meat?

*There’s a long, long trail a-winding
Into the land of my dreams
Where the cotton-tails are pining
And the streams run clean.*

And

*Tell me why
The skies are blue
And I will tell you
Just why I love you.*

Is there any greater magic than ordinary human voices raised in unison to inquire about or affirm one’s existence? Or any greater puzzles, like the E-I-E-I-O in “Old MacDonald’s Farm?”

*Old MacDonald had a farm
E-I-E-I-O
And on the farm he had a chick
E-I-E-I-O
And a chick-chick there
Here chick, there, chick, everywhere, chick-chick
Old MacDonald had a farm
E-I-E-I-O*

And that old unison favorite:

*Row, row, row your boat,
Gently down the stream,
Merrily, merrily, merrily,
Life is but a dream.*

And when you look back after a long life doesn’t it seem like a dream? Or, maybe, even a nightmare?

Aside from group singing, there were the usual hi-jinks after the campfire had been extinguished, and taps had been blown: *Ta-Ta-Ta-a-a-a*, *Ta-Ta-Ta-a-a-a*, *Ta-Ta-Ta-a-a-a*, *Ta-Ta-Ta-a-a*, *etc.*

Somebody Would Hee-haw Or Guffaw

And I don't know what-all. Surely some mythical rooster would crow signifying an early dawn. After the scout leaders hushed everybody up, the snickers would break out again. (Oddly enough this infantile behavior was to repeat itself whenever large groups of males were confined. "Nightie-night Sarge" was the battle cry of the recalcitrants when I was serving in the Navy in Boot Camp at Great Lakes Training Center four years later!)

Snipe Hunts and Sky-Hooks

I got fooled into going on a "snipe" hunt because I eruditely looked up the word, but failed to note its range. I became suspicious of "snipe" because I had never seen nor heard one, which "everybody" else had. Furthermore, there were the weird "vibes" given off whenever the subject was introduced—an unreal expectation you might say.

As in the old gag, "the operation was a success even though the patient died." I got taken on a snipe hunt on the Overnight Camp. What was involved is this: the "hunt" takes place only at night the darker, the better. The "snipe" (a long-billed shore bird not found anywhere near us) is supposed to be captured by a "hunter" by the simple expedient of holding a bag when the "beaters" fan out and drive the "snipe" into it. The phrase "left holding the bag" undoubtedly originated from this ancient trick.

Left-Handed Screwdriver?

I think Charley Menefee may have been the first to send me for a "left-handed" screw-driver. The fact that I fell for it shows a lack of good geometric sense, but the going for a left-handed lug-wrench soon after branded me as a sap forever. I also fell for "sky-hooks" when I got in the Navy! Rousseau's comment at the head of this chapter certainly applied to me! "It is we who deceive ourselves."

"Experience Is a Dear School"

These jokes illustrate the strong will-to-believe that is the ingredient in all kinds of "confidence" games and political demagoguery. It is very painful to realize that others are consciously having fun at your own expense, but undoubtedly the art of survival is

learned in no other way! Chalk it up to experience. As Benjamin Franklin wrote: *Experience is a dear school but fools will learn in no other.*

Yet I often have doubts about the value of experience, even enriching as many have been. In childhood the human body is developed through play into a beautiful and efficient machine: in sports, dance, theatre, and the arts it is manifest, but no less so are the lovely young people you meet on the street or in the supermarket. Then, after a couple of years, you do not recognize them anymore: dumpy, obese, false teeth, elastic hosiery, and other signs of aging or poor health.

My question is: *why all the effort that Nature takes to build this efficient machine, only to trash it a few years later?*

The problem with this question of course lies in the expectation of a rational universe. We might ask why do all those flowers bloom if only a tiny fraction of their seeds live to germinate the following spring? And the answer has to be: in order that that tiny percentage does germinate!

The Human Condition

And then we see the answer for the human condition: the body is perfected in all so that some of us will be strong enough to nourish the fetus, the embryo, the unborn child through a nine-month gestation to birth. Just last week I read an article detailing the incredible drain on the reserves and resources of the body of the mother, and the stress on the heart and other organs.

“So Careless of the Single Life”

But this answer does not answer the question for everybody. As a part of nature, we are just as expendable as the proliferation of un-germinated seeds that fall along the wayside. Tennyson once commented on this in a poem, *In Memoriam*, “so careful of the type she seems, so careless of the single life.” A kindly teacher of mine at the University of Kentucky, Mr. Kuiper, once took the trouble to quote this on an essay I wrote as a freshman in 1946, on the subject of human beings.

Chief Seattle Speaks About His People

“We are two distinct races, and must ever remain so, with separate origins and separate destinies. There is little in common between us.

“To us the ashes of our ancestors are sacred and their final resting place is hallowed ground, while you wander far from the graves of your ancestors, and seemingly, without regret . . .

“Our dead never forget this beautiful world that gave them being. They still love its winding rivers, its great mountains, and its sequestered vales . . .

“Every part of this country is sacred to my people, every hillside, every valley, every plain and grove has been hallowed by some fond memory or some sad experience of my tribe. Even the rocks, which seem to lie dumb as they swelter in the sun along the silent seashore in solemn grandeur, thrill with memories of past events connected with the lives of my people.

“The very dust under your feet responds more lovingly to our footsteps than to yours, because it is the ashes of our ancestors, and our bare feet are conscious of the sympathetic touch, for the soil is rich with the life of our kindred”—From Renée Dubos’ “So Human an Animal,” p. 138, originally in John M. Rich’s “Chief Seattle’s Unanswered Challenge. Dubos added the italics.

Lewis Mumford on Man

“If man had originally inhabited a world as blankly uniform as a ‘high rise’ housing development, as featureless as a parking lot, as destitute as an automotive factory, it is doubtful that he would have a sufficiently varied experience to retain images, mold languages, or acquire ideals.”—From *The Myth of the Machine* by Lewis Mumford.

CHAPTER 37

LADIES AND GENTLEMEN: OUR NATIONAL HYSTERIA!

*Take me out to the ball game / Take me out with the crowd.
Buy me some peanuts and crackerjack—/ I don't care if I never get back!
For it's root-root-root / For the home team! / If they don't win it's a shame!
For its 1-2-3 strikes y're out / At the old ball game!*

Lyrics by Jack Norworth (1879-1959); Music by Albert von Tilzer

“Take Me Out To the Ball Game”, 1908¹

Streaks are funny. If you lose at the beginning, you are off to a bad start.

If you lose in the middle of the season, you are in a slump.

If you lose at the end, you are choking.

Gene Mauch, 1973, Former Phillies Manager

Quoted in NY Times Mag., p.13, Aug.26, 2001

Who's on first? What's on second, I don't know is on third

Bud (William) Abbott, 1895-1974 & Lou Costello (Louis Francis Cristillo), 1906-1959

The game isn't over till it's over. Baseball is 90% mental—the other half is physical.

If people don't want to come out to the ballpark, nobody's going to stop them.

Yogi (Lawrence Peter) Berra, b. 1925; three time American League MVP ('51, '53, '55)

Elected to the Hall of Fame in 1975

¹ A two-page article on the song appears in the April 2004 Smithsonian Magazine, pp. 47-48, together with a photograph of Norworth's original manuscript, including a (well?) forgotten verse, and takes note of the double negative in line 4. The song has been recorded 100 times by artists such as Frank Sinatra and today's “Dr. John” (Elton?)

WORLD CHAMPIONS CINCINNATI REDS 1939

Linus Frey 2B (Eddie Yoost, INF)

Billy Werber (Lew Riggs) 3B

Ival Goodman RF

Frank McCormick (Lou Scarcella) 1B

Ernie (Schnozz) Lombardi C

Wally Berger LF (Al Simmons OF)

Harry Craft CF

Billy Myers SS

Bucky Walters P

Paul Derringer P

Johnnie Vandemeer P (Lee Grissom P)

(John Niggeling, Milt Shoffner, Gene Thompson, Relief P)

Bill McKechnie, Manager

I had forgotten who the other starting pitcher for the 1939 Cincinnati Reds was, and who their relief pitchers were, until my Dick Macke,² Assistant Managing Editor of the Cincinnati Enquirer, kindly filled in the parentheses for me, and pointed out the usefulness of the “Baseball Encyclopedia.” Otherwise, I quoted the lineup from my memory of 65 years ago, a statement that reminds me of the sadness of memory loss. “The Man Who Mistook His Wife For a Hat,” is a book on Alzheimer’s disease, and other disasters of life, by Dr. Oliver Sacks—who also wrote “Awakenings” about his patients with uncontrollable twitches who sadly were only temporarily helped by the drug L-Dopa. A 1990 eponymous film starred Robin Williams as Dr. Sacks, and Robert De Niro as a patient.

Leo (the Lip) Durocher’s famous quote, “Nice guys finish last,” ignores the 1939 World Championship team. Who ever heard of any dirty tricks by anyone on that team? This was way before Pete Rose besmirched himself by betting on the game and breaking the cardinal rule of professional baseball. Not only that, according to his autobiography published in 2003, his more than 400 bets included over 50 bets on games of teams that he managed. For that he got banned not only from the major leagues, but also lost his chance to be voted into the Baseball Hall of Fame. Tsk! Tsk! Maybe a “Hall of Shame?” (Dick Macke suggested that Baseball admit Pete to the Hall, “maybe with an asterisk.”)

I still root for the Reds every year, unable to contract an addiction for any of the then hated teams in the East, the New York (now San Francisco) Giants, The Brooklyn Dodgers (now Los Angeles), the Philadelphia Phillies, the New York Yankees, the Boston Braves (now Atlanta) and the Boston Red Sox. What this means for the future of “Old Boy”

² I have to thank Dick for numerous corrections, and additions.

school ties is clear: *so often irrationality seems to win out over intelligence or logic in the real world*. A movie, “The Ruling Class”, starring Peter O’Toole, is a satire on this fact: the “hero” is cured of his delusions that he is Jesus Christ and reverts to being “Jack the Ripper,” yet gets elected to Parliament. Moral: *it’s better to endure your addictions*.

I was just 12 years old for the 1939 baseball season but had been reading box-scores in the Cincinnati Post since I was 9 or 10 while I was playing in the Knothole League. It was my initiation into serious newspaper reading, which I only recently have been able to reduce to the status of “avid” from “mania.” (I used to read the *New York Times* daily, the *London Times*, *Die Zeit*, and *Le Monde* weekly, with occasional forays into the *Washington Post*, *Christian Science Monitor*, *St. Louis Post Dispatch*, all available in the college library.) I still “follow” the Reds with interest, naturally, but since moving East in 1960 I have been a New York Yankees, which is in another league (American.)

The Teletype: The interrelations between spoken and written language is complex, the simplest aspect of which is that they are separate languages, in theory and in practice. But the relationship is fascinating to non-scholars as well, since no baseball fan can wait to get the official box scores and his favorite sports writer’s commentary on the exciting events just heard on the radio. And when the team is out of town, you waited interminably for the Teletype to print out their skeleton descriptions, which the announcer had to flesh out from his intimate knowledge of the players. Bucky touches the peak of his hat, Billy Myers spits in the dirt behind 2nd base, “Schnozz” crouches behind the batter, who suddenly steps out of the box, the runner goes back to first base, the batter returns to the box, Bucky toes the rubber, looks over his shoulder, holding the runner on first, goes into his motion, fires the ball toward the plate: “Ball 2!” Of course, all the Teletype printed was “Ball 2”. The announcer could have gotten a Nobel Prize for Fiction if he could have cured his love for baseball.³

For all the peccadilloes in the character of ball players, the game is nevertheless a molder of character in boys and girls. Once a New York woman (one-half of a popular wife-husband radio team) commented on the popularity of baseball by pointing out how “everything about it is out in the *open*—there is no place to hide”. I accepted that *at first*, but when I got to thinking about the nuances of the game—the 10 to 15 pitches that constitute the collective repertory of pitchers, plus the modifications wrought by wind, spit, friction, scuffs, cuts, dirt, rain, fingers and the bat—I changed my mind! When these are further modified by the various methods of delivery: full and three quarters over-arm, under-arm, right-handed, southpaw (the latter so named because in order to keep the sun out of the faces of the hitter, the parks were situated so that in the afternoon games the batter faced east, hence the pitcher faced west, and left-handed pitchers whipped their arms towards south) and the varying

³ Dick Macke points out that Ronald Reagan, who died the same day this was written, June 5, 2004, recounted this in a book about his early days as a sports announcer.

speeds the pitcher imparts to the ball. The batter has bewildering assortments—curve, fast ball, slider, sinker, (“Rip” Sewell’s) blooper, screwball, knuckleball, multiplied by the method of delivery of “junk”—to look at and sort out in an instant.

Strike Zones and the Greatest Hitters: Then, too, there is a variety of strike zones depending on who is the plate umpire. Some allow a larger strike zone than others, higher or lower, or wider, or any combination of these. The “instant camera” shows exactly how far off-plate are some pitches that nevertheless are called strikes. Hitters have their own ideas of what is a strike. It’s really comical to see how badly the pitchers fool the batters, having them swing at balls that don’t even reach the plate, or are so far outside or high that the batters just wave as they pass by! The greatest hitters are Lap Lajoie, who batted .426 in 1901; Roger Hornsby who batted .424 in the 1924 season, the highest in the modern era; and Ted Williams, who batted over .400 twice, namely .401, and in 1941 batted .406, the last time anybody ever batted over .400. Ty Cobb also batted over .400, and several others came close: Tony Gwyn batted .394 in 1994, George Brett .390 in 1980, and Rod Carew .388 in 1977. Cobb’s career average of .366 tops everyone, with Hornsby’s .358 second, and “Shoeless Joe” Jackson, third at 3.56, Tris Speaker 5th at .345, Ted Williams tied for 6th at .344, and Babe Ruth at .342 tied for 8th.

Fast Pitchers and Bad-Ball Hitters: Bob Feller of the Cleveland Indians was clocked at 90 miles an hour or about 270,000 ft/sec. (Feller struck out 17 at age 17. See at Feller.) The plate being just 90 feet away, it took the ball just about 1/3000th of a second to get there! Nolan Ryan has been clocked at 110 mph. Finally, the batter is not sure where to look for the ball, since the pitcher strives to keep it away from his “power”, and otherwise “clip” the corners of the plate. However, Mel Ott of the New York Giants used to defeat pitchers by reaching out and hitting “bad-balls” out of the park, and was voted into the Hall of Fame for doing so! There are many good “bad-ball” hitters. But one who is a “bad bad-ball hitter” is Albert Soriano of the N. Y. Yankees. In the 2003 World Series, the Boston Red Sox pitchers made him look silly swinging at and missing balls that were way wide or short of the plate. For this dismal showing, the Yankees traded him in winter of 2004, in a multi-player-and-cash for the hard-hitting and two-time Golden Glove shortstop Alex Rodriguez, making him the highest paid player in the major leagues. But get this: since the Yanks team captain, Jeeter, is their regular shortstop, Rodriguez gallantly agreed to switch to third base! This is not an easy thing to do. And what happens to the open slot at second base? And what happens if Jeeter is injured and Rodriguez subs for him while he recovers? (Ironically, Soriano turned into a power-hitter in 2005! Stay tuned.)

The Game of Inches: That old description “Baseball is a game of inches” gives a better insight into the nature of the game. The bat misses one ball by inches, the throw to first misses the runner, or the runner beats the throw, by inches, the line drive clears the fence, or the fielder misses the ball, by inches. It is truly a game of precision and statistics.

My First Pro Game was at Crosley Field, then home of the Cincinnati Reds, under the auspices of the Knothole League. Whole schools came in buses. Raucous but knowledgeable, the Knotholers, are undoubtedly the game's most vociferous fans and idolaters. I never saw a prettier sight in my life than the green and white pattern on the ball field created by the white lines and grassy field. Besides the "diamond", there are the stripes down first and third marking the path runners may not stray out of; the rectangles behind 1st and 3rd that the coaches may not stray outside of; the batter's box on either side of home-plate; and the batter's circle, where a batter stations himself when he is "on deck," that is, hitting next.

The Home Run Derby: Some were bigger than others—"Schnozz" Lombardi and "Mac" McCormick were of satisfactory size, but how could a "runt" like Ival Goodman bash 30 homers a year? And Mel Ott of the Giants even more so. Detroit Tiger's Hank Greenberg hit 58 home runs in 1937, two short of the Yankee's Babe Ruth's record 60 HRs set in 1927. Greenberg became the first of two Jewish players ever elected to baseball's Hall of Fame. (The Dodger's Sanford "Sandy" Koufax, a southpaw Dodger's pitcher in the sixties, was the second. He also held the strikeout record for a while, at 19 KO's.) Ted "Stringbean" Williams, a left-handed hitter with the Red Sox, bashed 58 homers one season, and had 521 career HRs. The Yankees' Roger Maris hit 61 homers in 1961, after the baseball season extended by 8 games from 154 to 162. (Note: Maris hit one HR for each year in the century.) Mark McGwire of the St. Louis Cardinals hit 70 HRs in 1998, while Sammy Sosa of the Chicago Cubs hit 66. This was topped three years later in 2001 by Barry Bonds' 73 HRs, while Sosa hit 68. In spring 2004 a number of players tested positive on random tests for steroids, and the question has been raised, inasmuch as his trainer allegedly purchased steroids: did Bonds or Sosa ever ingest muscle building drugs? In 2003 Sosa was caught using a "weighted" bat, i.e., with a metal rod in its center, an act that got him suspended for 8 games, a fine, and loud boos the rest of the season, and the next. This raised the reasonable suspicion that he may have swung the weighted bat in other seasons. In 2005, when more random drug tests were required, HR production dropped off markedly!

Reggie ("Mr. October") Jackson was quoted in the New York Times on March 12, "Somebody definitely is guilty of using steroids. You can't be breaking records hitting 200 home runs in three or four seasons. The greatest hitters in the history of the game didn't do that." He was referring to "Hank" Aaron, the career home run leader at 755, who beat Babe Ruth's record of 714 career HRs. Reggie went on to say, "Henry Aaron never hit 50 home runs in a season, so you're going to tell me that you're a greater hitter than Henry Aaron?" Aaron led the league in walks, as well as HRs, and so did Bonds. Reggie went on, "Bonds hit 73 and he would have hit 100 if they would have pitched to him . . . Now all of a sudden, you're hitting 50 home runs when you're 40." Bonds, who was (age) 40 in July 2004, hit 45 HRs in 2003, and was (age) 37 when he hit 73, wrote Charlie Nobles, the writer of the NY Times article from which I lifted Reggie's quotes. On April 4, 1974, "Hank"

Aaron broke Babe Ruth’s home-run record of 714, and went on to hit 755 career HRs. Bonds had hit 658 by the end of 2003, so at that time, he had just 2 more to go to tie Willie May’s career record of 660, and 97 more before tying Hank Aaron’s. On April 13, 2004, Bonds hit his 661st HR to beat May’s record. He then proceeded to hit HRs in 7 straight games, just one shy of tying the record for HRs on consecutive days. By Sept. he had hit over 700 HRs. In Nov. he won his 7th MVP award with 24 out of 32 1st place votes—no one else has won more than three—and broke his record career walks by walking a record 232 times. (In 2005 season, Jason Giambi of the NY Yankees admitted taking steroids.)

Babe Ruth, The Sultan of Swat: Ruthian Dominance

From the Sport Page of US Today, April 13, 2004

Player	Seasons	Career HRs	HRs per 100 At-Bats	League HRs per 100 At Bats
Hank Aaron	23	755	6.11	2.4
Babe Ruth	22	714	8.5	1.1
Willie Mays	22	755	6.07	2.4
Barry Bonds	19	660	7.55	2.9

These stats show the unbelievable dominance of Ruth over all other HR hitters. Note the league HR inflation in the later years, growing from 1.1 per 100 At-Bats in Ruth’s day to 2.9 in Bonds’ era. (Also see at Home Run Leaders in the Index.) Who was the “strikeout king”, i.e., struck out the most? Well, Barry Bonds did in his record-breaking season, 2001, striking out 190 times, but on September 30, 2004, Alan Dunn of the Reds struck out for the 190th and 191st times for the season, and thus went into the history books. Bonds also had the highest on-base average. Nolan Ryan is the “Babe Ruth of Strikeout Pitchers” with 5,714 KOs, and Steve Carlton second at 4,136. Roger Clemens, age 41 when he went 7-0 and 20-1 at the start of the 2004 season, is now second in strikeouts with 4,502, just edging out Randy Johnson at 4,404, and Steve Carleton at 4,136 as of May 12, 2006. Cy Young was 41 in 1908 when he was 21-11 with a 1.26 ERA, and Warren Spahn, a “southpaw,” was 42 in 1963 when he was 23-7 with a 2.60 ERA. In 1920, the end of the “dead ball era,” George Sisler had 257 hits, a record that stood until October 1, 2004 when Seattle’s Ichiro Suzuki hit his 258th, but this was in 162 game seasons, not 154 games when Sisler set his record. The most games won by a pitcher were 41, a venerable record set by Jack Chesboro in 1912.

In November 2004, Clemens, age 42, won his seventh Cy Young Award for Best Pitcher by a vote of 23 out of 32 first place votes, or 140 points, beating Randy Johnson’s 97 points. N.B. He also holds a number of other records including most strikeouts in a game: 20 in 1986, a feat that he repeated exactly ten years later. Then Kerry Wood (Randy Johnson) had 20 in 1998 (resp. 2001.)

Steroids and Short Fences Changed The Game: Besides steroids as a possible reason, and the extended season, the shortening of the distances to the outfield fences by the owners of almost all ballparks is a decisive factor. When Willie Mays made “the catch” of Vic Wertz’ blast in the 1954 World Series, he was more than 450 feet—a football field and a half—away from home plate. Stuart Miller, who, in an Op-Ed column of the New York Times, March 29, 2003, pointed this out, and attributed the shortened distances to the decrease in the number of triples, and the concomitant decrease in excitement. Greater distances gives the hitter more time to round the bases, and requires greater skill and speed of the fielders, who have to set up relays for the throws at third base. Very few triples end with the hitter going into third base standing up, as almost all home-run hitters do at home plate. He calls a home run a “cheap thrill.” Nevertheless, since home-run leaders are better known, and better paid, there is little likelihood that owners will ever go back to larger parks. The smaller parks also increased the seating capacity of the parks, another bottom line feature of baseball. The most triples, 36, were set in 1912 by Chief Wilson.

Everybody has their favorite player—usually he is the best this or that on the team or in the league Hero-worship I think it is called! However, the 1939 Reds were so well balanced, and won so many games by just one run, that it would be hard to take anyone out of the lineup and still have a championship team. Billy Myers, Lonnie Frey, Bill Werber, Harry Craft excelled on defense whereas Ival Goodman, Ernie Lombardi, Frank McCormick and Werber were the offensive stars, with Wally Berger’s slugging a notch below. Werber led the league in runs scored and McCormick led in runs-batted-in, Werber also led in triples! Bucky Walters won 27 games and Paul Derringer 25 in just 154 games!⁴ This was before the season was lengthened by eight games.

Johnnie Vandemeer of Double No-Hit Fame: A Reds’ southpaw side-arm thrower is the only pitcher in history (as I write this in 2004) to throw consecutive no-hitters. His second was thrown at Ebbets Field against the Brooklyn Dodgers on June 15, 1938, at the first night game ever played under the arcs. Another player of stature, Willy Hersherberger, the Reds’ second-string catcher, could have been first-string on almost any other team, and in fact, played unusually many games, spelling the ponderous Lombardi. His suicide in 1940 was a nationwide sensation and cast Cincinnati players and fans into gloom.

Joe DiMaggio: “The Streak” In 1941, Joe DiMaggio⁵ had a hit in 56 straight games, a record so great that it is called *The Streak*. The next longest hitting streak was 44 games, and that was *before* DiMaggio’s. The improbability of anyone *ever breaking*

⁴ According to Dick Macke, “Derringer lost 27 games in 1933, a sign that even a great pitcher needs hitting to win.”

⁵ *Di Maggio* is Italian for “of May”, but *Maggiore*, Italian for bigger or larger, is a better description for Joe.

DiMaggio's record is so great, since the margin of 12 games so large, e.g., more than 25% more than the next longest streak. It's a record of an amazing kind. I wonder what he ate for breakfast, "The breakfast of Champions", that is, "Wheaties"? Barry Bonds eats six-count-'em-six especially prepared meals a day!

Randy Johnson's Feat: On May 18, 2004, Randy Johnson, of the Arizona "Diamondbacks," at age 40 became the oldest pitcher to hurl a perfect game: 27 batters up, 27 batters down. In this feat, he surpassed Cy Young who did it at age 37 a century ago. This makes 17 perfect games to-date. Dennis Martinez pitched the last perfect game in the National League for Montreal against Los Angeles in 1991. Since then, the American League has had three perfect games, thrown by Kenny Rodgers for Texas in 1994, David Wells of the Yankees in 1998, and David Cone for the Yankees in 1999. As stated above, Randy lost the Cy Young 2004 Award to Roger Clemens by a vote of 147-97.

Baseball's Origins: The popular belief that baseball was invented in 1839 in Cooperstown, NY, Abner Doubleday was later refined, with the date shifting to 1846, in Hoboken, NJ. A claim that Pittsfield, Massachusetts was the cradle of the game is based on a document from 1791 that suggests that baseball had already become a nuisance there when the nation was in its infancy. In part it read, "for the Preservation of the Windows of the New Meeting House . . . no Person or Inhabitant of said Town, shall be permitted to play any Game called *Wicket, Cricket, Baseball, Batball, Football, Cat, Fives or any other Game or Games with Ball*, within the Distance of Eighty Yards from said Meeting House." From a May 12, 2004 sports page article in the New York Times by Frank Litksy, based on the discovery of the document by John Thorn, a baseball historian: "I was looking at the University of Michigan site, 'Making Of America.' There was a reference to a 1734 history of Pittsfield, and there it was. It was not just a reference to a game of ball, but the real thing: baseball."

Oh! Somewhere in this favored land the sun is shining bright;/ The band is playing somewhere and somewhere hearts are light; / And somewhere men are weeping and somewhere children shout, / But there is no joy in Mudville—mighty Casey has struck out.—Earnest L. Thayer, "Mighty Casey at the Bat", 1888, st. 13

"LADIES AND GENTLEMEN: OUR NATIONAL ANTHEM"

And why not? At least seventeen US Presidents have opened the baseball season by throwing out the first ball in various parks, including: 1. William Howard Taft, 1910; 2. Warren G. Harding 1921; 3. Calvin Coolidge, 1925; 4. Woodrow Wilson, 1916; 5. Franklin Delano Roosevelt, 1933; 6. Herbert Hoover, 1932; 7. Harry S. Truman, 1952; 8. Dwight David Eisenhower, 1957; 9. Richard Milhous Nixon (as Vice President), 1959; 10. John Fitzgerald Kennedy, 1961; 11. Lyndon Baines Johnson, 1964; 12. Jimmy Carter, 1983

(post-White House); 13. Gerald Ford, 1976; 14. Ronald Reagan, 1988; 15. George H. W. Bush (as Vice President, 1988; 16. William Jefferson Clinton, 1996; 17. George W. Bush, 2001.

Where did I dig this up? In the April 2004 Issue of the Smithsonian Magazine together with photographs of them making the pitches. All but Reagan of the latter six are still with us. Ronald Reagan suffered for 12 years, from 1992 to 2004, when he died from Alzheimer's disease that an increasingly large and alarming portion of the population faces. (Dick Macke points out that the "S" in Truman's name is not an abbreviation.)⁶

⁶ Reagan's death on June 5, 2004, the day before the 60th anniversary of D-Day, sparked a weeklong national mourning, a Lying-in-State in the Rotunda in the Capital, and a private burial and viewing at the Ronald Reagan Presidential Library in California, with over a hundred thousand mourners at each location. (The counterpoint to the joke hat "FDR could be elected as often as he wanted" is: *Truman showed that anyone could be President!*)

CHAPTER 38

PROFESSOR MAMA

Mammy! Mammy!
The sun shines east, the sun shines west,
I know where, the sun shines best,
Mammy, My Little Mammy,
My heartstrings are tangled around Alabammy.
I'm coming,
Sorry that I made you wait.
I'm coming
Hope and trust I'm not too late, Oh, oh, oh
Mammy, my little Mammy,
I'd walk a million miles
For one of your smiles,
My Mammy! Oh, oh, oh!
Al Jolson, 1895-1950,
“My Mammy”, from Al Jolson’s
Hit Parade, and the movie, “The
Al Jolson Story,” 1946, which Jolson dubbed.

Overly Protective Parents

As a plant can be injured or stunted by too much pruning or too much touching, so can a child be harmed by too much attention, by too many restrictions on his or her thoughts or activities, and certainly by too much help. The possessive instinct in parents can be destructive or creative depending on how sparingly it is applied.

A student of mine at Penn State University had a painfully cramped, almost illegible handwriting. I asked him why he couldn’t write, and while he didn’t quote the age-old joke of psychiatry, *It’s the mother, stupid*, he did the next thing. He blamed his father for

not allowing him to do anything for himself. Consequently he never developed the motor ability of the average child. As he, at the age of 25, put it, his father could not bear the anxiety that his son might fail in his efforts to do something, even if it was playing with toys. Unfortunately, intervention prevents not only failure, but also success. I still do not understand how this affected his writing, except psychologically. A colleague of mine, also a mathematician, used to eat his meals in the order reverse to what one normally does; e.g., he would eat his desert first, and proceed to eat his salad, then vegetable, and finally the main course. He explained he did it because he wasn't allowed to do that as a child! Or as Mark Twain said in the quote to the Title Page to Part I:

You are what your parents made you, but it is your fault if you stay that way.

In view of the inevitable conflicts that people come into, how is a child to handle the ones that involve him? The traditional answer is "The best he or she can". *Childhood is what everyone has to overcome*. Think of Proust and his "Remembrance of Things Past", or "The Past Recaptured" (Bartlett's), also called "In Search for Lost Time", which is closer to the French, *A la Recherche du Temps Perdu*.

Success-Driven Parents

I knew many success-driven children of parents who wanted them to be top scholars, or athletes, or lovers but who never ever showed that they themselves had the talent for such successes. As a youth I gloomily concluded that children were a form of wish-fulfillment for parents, who considered unfulfilled *themselves*.

I was extremely fortunate in this respect. Mama praised my scholarship, and was dazzled by Eldridge's and Sister's achievements, but she never scolded us if we occasionally fell down. If there was one subject that Mama was moderate about, it was the subject of grades. As I recall, Mama never went past the norm for her day and age: eighth-grade. Moreover, she never pretended to be an unusually apt or accomplished student; indeed, she never put on airs about anything, except her clean house and beautiful garden, or, *maybe*, about her bright children.

*Ad Astra per Aspera*¹

On the other hand, she valued what education could do for people, and did everything to encourage us *Onward and Upward in the Arts*, or to borrow a proverb from the Latin: *Ad*

¹ *Astrum* is Latin for star or constellation, *astra* is the plural, and *aspera* is Latin for rough, harsh, wild, difficult, severe, hence "to the stars through effort."

astra per aspera—to the stars through effort. Thus, Eldridge went to college, and even graduate school, which placed him in the upper echelon of his time, educationally speaking. (This reminds me of a New Yorker cartoon (1979) with the caption: two fat cats in their club are talking, and one says to the other: “There is no echelon like the upper echelon, right Harry?”)

Consequently I found just the right amount of encouragement, praise and reward for being a good student: I could be compared with the incomparable Eldridge, I could be compared with the incomparable Louise (both mostly A-students), I could get out of drudgery by pleading homework, and I did not have to fall flat on my face in the event of a disastrous report card since Mama had unusual reserves of sympathy for educational difficulties.

In short, I was encouraged by Mama, but not pushed. I do not think I (or anyone) have ever responded well to coercion, but the miracle is that Mama, while coercive in many goal-directions, was not so in education. She coddled me.

Virginia Settle’s Example

In the fourth grade, Ms. Virginia Settle showed me that one aspect of learning was knowledge-as-fun, but in junior. High school and beyond I learned that another side of knowledge was knowledge-as-power.

Anything that could compete with Mama on anything like equal terms was really worth knowing about. While she did not abdicate to education she nodded to it, and that impressed me greatly and sent me on my way: *Professor Mama was my best teacher.*

CHAPTER 39

HOLMES JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL

*Our team will shine tonight, / Our team will shine,
All down the line, / When the sun goes down,
And the moon goes up, / Our team will shine.*

School Pep Song.

*To learn is a natural pleasure, not confined to philosophers,
but common to all men—Aristotle*

On the way to high school, I had to pass through what was then called Junior High School, or JHS, comprising grades 7 and 8. Whatever memories I might have had about JHS have long proved mortal! The trouble with JHS is that it is a transitional period: *neither here nor there*. On the way to junior high school, I passed through what is now called Middle School. So much schooling is rote, repetitious at best and deadening at worst. And there is a planned overlapping that allows new ideas for the year to be introduced only late in the spring so that children might recover from the shock over the summer (if then). Theories in education are about as successful as theories about children and childhood; to wit the joke: before marriage a person (ideally) has *no* children and *many* theories about children, whereas afterwards the situation is reversed.

Rote learning is for the theoretically dull child who can remember only by having it “drilled” into him. Unfortunately what is learned that way is regurgitated the same way as the proverbial reading of “Mary Had a Little Lamb” in a singsong voice shows. True learning hits the mind forcibly if not with a “thunderbolt” then with a “bang” of some sort. Rote learning removes the element of chance but unfortunately also removes the “bang” out of it. A dull teacher begets a dull child. Any teacher will be dull if her or his mind is not excited by the subject. Einstein was inspired by the magic powers of a magnet given to him by an uncle when he was ten,

and his fascination with magnetism never left him. At his death he was still searching for a “unified field theory”, that is, a law that would explain both (electro-) magnetism and gravity

Thomas Oertel and The Baker-Hunt Foundation

In JHS this never occurred in my presence, except in Mr. Oertel’s art class; he was inspirational and always talked about art in its most elemental form, namely *your* drawing or painting. I have always regretted that I lost contact with him when I moved on to high school, but I ran into many other excellent art teachers as I dabbled in the arts in my adulthood.

But in a way, I didn’t. Mr. Oertel nominated me for a scholarship at the Baker-Hunt Foundation, and when I won it, I became a local celebrity. More than that, I have retained my ability to draw and paint in pencil, oil or pastels to this very day. In 1965-6, I audited art courses at the University of California at Berkeley, in which my work won praise (e.g., by Fred Bullock and Ibrahim Lassaw, about whom I wrote on p.359 in Part II of the 2nd edition of my “Rings and Things”: two of these were accepted in a juried show in Princeton at McCarter Theatre in 1971.

Hollis Summers. He was my teacher for just one day, and at the end of the class I was sentenced to “after-school” for flipping paper wads with a rubber-band. He gave me time-off for my first memorable quote: he asked me if I planned to continue my life of crime I said, “No”, and he asked “Why not”, and I replied, *There’s no future in it*. Whereupon he roared with laughter, genuinely pleased. He never let me forget it for the rest of my high school days, because whenever he saw me, he would smile and ask me the inevitable question about “my future”. Since then I have read some of his works, and I keenly regret that I did not take a course under him. I was reminded of this incident recently reading the book by Susan Sontag entitled “Where the Stress Falls, Essays” published in 2001 by Farrar Strauss and Giroux, when she quoted Duke Ellington’s answer to the question why he played mornings at the Apollo, the famed theater in Harlem: *There’s no future in that question*. Ellington’s riposte made me proud of mine to Mr. Summers. Sontag’s punning title reminds me of Philip Roth’s “Reading Myself and Others.”

Mr. Summers is probably the most famous of our teachers at Holmes. He was Distinguished Professor of English at Ohio University in Athens, and has written six novels and five volumes of poetry. *City Limit* and *The Color of February* are two of his excellent novels, both of which I have read with pleasure, and which were praised by no less of a critic than Eudora Welty. (See her *A Writer’s Eye: Collected*

Book Reviews.) *City Limit* is about adolescent sex in a city not unlike Covington, and one memorable phrase that struck me was: “The smell of puberty in the halls.”

Skipping Grade 8B Made Up For Taking 1B Twice!

I graduated from Junior to High in an odd way. In order to consolidate some classes, we skipped a half a grade going from 8A to 9A without having to take 8B! I thereby finally got back in step after my debacle in 1B (which I had to repeat.). Skipping a grade is about as close to grace or amnesty as school ever gets short of graduation. I have never forgotten the thrill of finding out I did not have to repeat 8A in 8B!

Can The Various Races Live Together Peaceably?

When I was in the seventh, or eighth grade, I was asked to participate in a “Town Hall Meeting of the Air” in a panel discussion on WCKY (or WKRC?) on the topic, “Can the various races of mankind live together?” I was given the affirmative option, despite my utter ignorance about any of the races except the so-called whites. Still, armed with the information from the kindly teacher who nominated me, I managed to cover the basic premise that underneath the skin and the veneer of cultural differences, the races are more alike than not, e.g., melanin in the skin makes it dark, and the “slanty” eyes of the Chinese is an extra fold in the eye. This was way before the Civil Rights movement and the “Black is Beautiful” slogan of the sixties. This was followed by the introduction of blacks into the major professional sports in which they excelled, and with it the understanding that the blacks had genetic advantages, e.g., high hips and long legs that enabled them to cover ground faster, not to mention other attributes, such as peripheral vision, power, and agility.

Bill Cosby’s Harsh Words To Struggling Black Men

The Times of Trenton published data in 2005 about the discrepancy in the percentage of black men in state prisons (64%) versus the general population (14%), while the corresponding figures for “whites” were reversed (14% vs. 73%.) Bill Cosby made headlines in May 2004 for upbraiding some poor blacks for their grammar, and accused them of squandering opportunities the civil rights movement had given them. He lamented the use of “ain’t” for “am not”, and “you is” for “you are”, and blamed their parents for talking like that at home. He also deplored the fact that blacks use the n-word, as in “n—this, and “n—that” when talking to each other. (Trenton Times, July 2, 2004.) A 2005 book, “Is Bill Cosby Right?” refutes Cosby on his criticism of black dialect. (See Biblio.)

Racism at Covington Kentucky

The sad fact of racism permeated my boyhood, so much so that I was unaware of the segregated schools, whites had theirs, and black's had theirs, and never the twain would meet in the swimming pools, on the playfields, in the churches or movies, nor anywhere else. These, and the Ku Klux Klan burning their crosses on the hill with impunity, are shames that we all must bear.

CHAPTER 40

GIRL CRAZY

Men are saps!

Molly Kathleen Sullivan, an expert on these things; in 1980, two years after I first met her!

You men! You filthy dirty pigs!

You are all the same, all of you. Pigs! Pigs!

Sadie Thompson in “Rain,”

Somerset Maugham, 1934

*I walked up to Irene Dunne on a train, and said, “Honey,
Remember me, Bob Hope . . . She looked at me, and said,*

‘I don’t remember the name,

but I remember the drool’—NY Times, Aug. 3, 2003

Nothing could be finer than to / Be in Carolina in the morning!

Walter Donaldson, “Carolina in the Morning”, 1922

I knew her before she was a virgin—Oscar Levant (about Doris Day).

Night and Day, You are the One./ Only you beneath the moon and under the sun.

Whether near you or far, / it matters not dear / Where you are, / I think of you. / Night and Day!

—Cole Porter, for the 1932 musical “Gay Divorcee.”

A Pretty Girl Is Like a Melody”—Irving Berlin song for Ziegfield Follies, 1919

O, To Be in Carolina in the Morning!

About the time I reached junior high school, I had succumbed to the general madness that attacks boys at the age of puberty, e.g., the song “Carolina in the Morning”, became “Carolina in the Morning, Noon, and Night!” Every boy has his “Portnoy’s Complaint”

and lives in dread of having his embarrassments noticed by girls.¹ At that time I had never heard of girls' "crotch watching," but I would not have been surprised that they did since boys would turn around when a girl passed to watch (see next paragraph!). On the distaff side, in a candid moment, Mrs. Dorothy Sullivan, Molly's mother, confided to me that her intellectual development ceased when she was in college and "discovered boys." Molly herself had interesting experiences as a seventeen year-old college student at Angelo State College in San Angelo, Texas.

Tits and Ass: There was the immortal triad: *tits, ass, and legs*. Only a triple-threat man could carry out his assignment in all three categories simultaneously. This fact probably gave birth to the age of specialization. "Tits and Ass" is the show-stopper of "A Chorus Line", a Broadway musical in 1978-79: *Tits and ass can change your life—they sure changed mine . . .*

In order to appreciate the extent of my discomfort, it must be known that I never touched a girl anywhere except her hands until I was nineteen years old. I lived in mortal fear of the loss of my soul for possessing the wicked thoughts that came into my head whenever a girl passed. "Look, but don't touch," was Mama's admonishment.

Walking Upright is Sexy

I have read somewhere the theory that humans walking upright lead directly to increased sexual contact between men and women, since it excites the sense of sight by bringing much more into view than is possible by walking on all fours. I also learned that the slangy expression "knock up" was the term applied to mating in Britain in World War II when the American GI's and the British lasses did it late at night in doorways standing up. The theory goes on to give this happy fact the credit for stable, long-range mating pairs (marriages) since "the couple that blips together stays together." (My "blip".)

Another unsubstantiated theory gives cities credit for increased sexual activities because the anonymity of cities undercuts tribal authority, customs, and taboos. As substitutes, there are the "do-it-yourself" approaches to sex, which proliferate in modern cities.

No theory has ever given me more pleasure or pain. Of course, that was before I knew what a woman or sex was, or could be. The idea that sight wins out over smell is probably a "modern" one, and probably owes much to the twin developments of literacy and

¹ This however is not Portnoy's "complaint" *Girl Crazy* might be described as one of his two main complaints. See a review in Reader's Introduction, **R**. The novel by Philip Roth was misunderstood, and condemned, most of all by Manhattan Jews who felt that the Jewishness of the eponymous Portnoy reflected on them. Philip Roth discusses it in "Reading Myself and Others." "*Girl Crazy*," was a George and Ira Gershwin 1930 musical.

plumbing. At least in literature, the visual predominates, and modern cities do smell better (i.e., less) than, say Calcutta, or anyplace where there isn't universal indoor plumbing.

Pleasure, because I became addicted to sightings of the female figure (form) and pain, because as a consequence I dared not stand up. This fact of male pubescence leads to actual deformity of what euphemistically is called "a you-know" in Texas (there's a cherub with "A You-Know" in San Angelo, Texas), another casualty of the demise of the cod-piece. You would think that women, even mothers, would demonstrate against tight pants, etc.—but no!—nary a peep was heard. In fact women joined the army of males by wearing denims so tight that they had to be poured into them. Ha-ha! There's a rhyme that goes: *Though his little was small, of his little, she had it all*. On p.52 of the Annotated Mother Goose, there is a longish rhyme that has this line in it: *She took his little All*, referring to the lack of wealth of her suitor.

This brings into focus the most hated aspect of male pubescence and female guilt. The girls do not want all that attention, not at least from everybody, whereas the boys do not want to feel so frustrated by the sight of girls, especially not everybody. "Society" increased the age for legal sex (i.e., marriage) from age 12 to 16 or 18 over the centuries. Once there was no such thing as childhood or adolescence or "the teens" when people often married at puberty, or even pre-puberty. And in Asia, many still do. "If she's big enough, she's old enough," is old saying, but that doesn't explain sexual predators of children. Here's a song Molly taught me:

Darling You Can't Love One

Darling, you can't love one / Darling, you can't love one

You can't love one, / And still have fun,

Darling you can't love one.

.

You can't love two, / And still be true,

Darling, you can't love two.

.

You can't love three, / And still have me,

Darling, you can't have me.

Besides the twin fears of pregnancy and disease, there are those of social ostracism, weakness (lack of protection) and poverty of young people that keeps pushing the acceptable age ever higher. And part of the weakness in a technological society comes from falling behind in school in order to procreate. (See James T. Farrell's trilogy "Studs Lonigan.")

Testosterone Poisoning?

However, not all is woe on the mating battlefield. A professor at CCNY, a college in New York, credits the male hormone testosterone with the important job of pushing boys ahead of girls in such subjects as mathematics, physical sciences, and logic or other exercises in abstract reasoning. However, recent research has a far different take on the male sex determining Y-chromosome. See at Women and Chromosome in the Index.

Hypatia, Curie, Kowaleski et al.

But what a theory! What does this make Hypatia (of Greek antiquity who suffered a cruel death in 415 A.D.), Sonia Kowaleski (1853-1891), Marie Slodowska Curie (1867-1934), and other great female mathematicians and scientists? Chopped liver? In 1999, a woman physicist at Harvard of Danish descent, Lena Vestergaard Hau, slowed down the speed of light to 38 miles per hour (a pace slower than her bicycle according to the New York Times article on March 28, 1999). By contrast, light travels 186,000 miles per second in a vacuum. But who knows, maybe they *did* have higher testosterone levels, even though they didn't have the Y-Chromosome. See at Chromosome in the Index.

The Maidens Came

*When I was in my mother's bower / I had all that I would
The bailey beareth the bell away / The lily, the rose, the rose I lay.
The silver is white, red is the gold / The robes they lay in fold
The bailey beareth the bell away / The lily, the rose, the rose I lay
And through the glass window shineth the sun
How should I love and I so young? / The bailey beareth the bell away
The lily, the rose, the rose I lay, / The bailey beareth the bell away.*

“The Maidens Came”, or “Song of the Maidens”

Elizabethan Song, c. 1450, Norton's Anthology of Poetry, 1998,

Text reconstructed, printed in TLS, December 14, 2004, p.13.

The beauty of this poem, and of course, all poems, lies in the language, in the sense that the sounds convey. Does it matter what the line “The lily, the rose, the rose I lay” means except that it is indescribably beautiful? Of course, we *think* we know what it means! “Prose is = words in their best order; poetry = the best words in their best order,” Coleridge, Table Talk, July 12, 1837. Contrast this with “Poetry is the spontaneous

overflow of powerful feeling. It takes its origins from emotions recollected in tranquility,” Wordsworth, *Lyrical Ballads*, 2nd Ed., 1800

*So passeth, in the passing of a day, / Of mortall life the leafe, the bud, the flowre,
Ne more doth flourish after first decay, / That earst was sought to decke both bed and bowre,
Of man a Ladie, and many a Parmowre: / Gather therefore the Rose, whilst yet is prime,
For soone comes ages that will her pride deflowre: / Gather the Rose of loue,
whilst yet is time
Whiles louing thou mayst loued be with equall crime.*

From the *Fairie Queen*, II, 12, st. 75, by Edmund Spenser 1552-1599

Here's an old riddle-in-a-song:

I Gave My Love a Cherry

*I gave my love a cherry with no stone. / I gave my love a chicken with no bone.
I told my love a story with no end.
How can there be a cherry with no stone? / How can there be a chicken with no bone?
How can there be a story with no end?
A cherry when it's green has no stone. / A chicken when it's pippin has no bone.
And the story of my love, it has no end.*

And another:

The Girl from Ipanema

Tall and tan and young and lovely
The girl from Ipanema goes walking
And when she passes, each one she passes goes—ah

When she walks, she's like a samba
That swings so cool and sways so gentle
That when she passes, each one she passes goes—ooh
(Ooh) No I watch her so sadly
How can I tell her I love her
Yes I would give my heart gladly
But each day, when she walks to the sea
She looks straight ahead, not at me

.

She just doesn't see me . . .

Stan Getz and Astrud Gilberto, 1964

Two lovers' laments, the first a limerick:

*A gay young man named Bloom
Took a woman up to his room.
But they argued all night
About who had the right
To do what and with which and to whom.*

Anonymous (In Clarence Brown's column
"Ink Soup," The (Trenton) Times, July 12, 2004.)

Shine, Shine, save me!
I'll give you all the pussy a Shine can see.
*Shine says, "Now pussy's good, but pussy don't last—
Shine's going to save his own black ass."*
And Shine swam on.
"Shine and The Titanic," Anonymous
See Bartlett's 17th Ed., 850: 17

Finally, "Ode to a Grecian Urn Summarized," a lark from Desmond Skirrow.(1924-1976):

Gods Chase / Round vase.
What say? / What play.
Don't know. / Nice Though
I could say / The same, you know,
About the Goddesses that throw/
Their bodies round my place:
Gods Chase

CHAPTER 41

THE GREAT HARVARD RAT EXPERIMENT

Rats!

*They fought the dogs and killed the cats,
And bit the babies in the cradles,
And ate the cheeses out of the vats,
And licked the soup from the cooks' own ladles.*

. . . .

*And out of the houses the rats came tumbling,
Great rats, small rats, lean rats, brawny rats,
Brown rats, black rats, gray rats, tawny rats,
Grave old plodders, gay young friskers,
Fathers, mothers, uncles, cousins,
Families by tens and dozens,
Brothers, sister, husbands, wives—
Followed the Piper for their lives.*

Robert Browning, 1812-1889,
The Pied Piper of Hamelin, 1845

Sts. 2 and 7.

“My Family and Other Animals”

It is possible to write about one's childhood as if you know nothing more than one did at that age, and Gerald Durrell's "My Family and Other Animals" is a classic of that genre. If you believe him, then he has total recall not only of what he did generally, but specifically *when* (on what day, what time of day) *what* was said, who said it and *where*. He also supplies minute observations on the slightest movement of each of the animals in his "circus": how the gecko catches insects, loses his tail, blinks his eyes, and similarly for praying mantis, snakes, beetles, owls, gulls and a whole menagerie of animals.

On this evidence, his diaries will rival, even surpass, the diaries of Evelyn Waugh for their intrinsic interest, spontaneity, and style. (It will also be the most animal-loving book since Noah!) Both of these writers are exceptional and were early sent on their life's vocations.

The Law of the Jungle

Even Proust's minutiae cannot compare with Durrell's, for in place of Proust's linden tea, practically anything that wiggles, walks, flies, or swims (etc.) serves for Durrell. He was a forerunner of the older Disney nature films showing animals in the wild, mostly eating each other, and the recent National Geographic (NGEO) that does about the same thing, although not exclusively regarding predation. I saw one NGEO eye-opener with various fish grooming a hippo in every part of the body, including his teeth, and lips, but he injured nary a one, while another displayed an alligator with its mouth wide open which clamped shut whenever an unwary fish swam through it.

Another factor in the Durrell-Waugh phenomenon is that both had older brothers who were authors (Lawrence and Alec, respectively) and even Waugh's father was a writer.

Testosterone and The Great Harvard Rat Experiment

I present these comments in the way of apology for the Great Harvard Rat Experiment, coming as it did in my adult life, which bears on the predicament of boys at puberty and after.

Simply put, the (male) rats with the higher testosterone levels dominated the other rats in their cages. Furthermore, when the top rats were picked out of their cages and all placed in one cage, then only the dominant rat maintained his testosterone level—the others dropped. Which reminds me of a cartoon by William Steig showing two bums (or jail-birds?), and one is saying to the other, "There's no echelon like the top echelon, eh, Harry?"

Scientists are pained when rat experiments are cited to explain human behavior because humans are ever so much more complex. The "unscientific" way such data is applied naturally pains the sensitive and careful scientist.

Yet I believe that the same kind of principle operates in human society, and "explains" why men (and women) work or struggle so hard to prevent domination of their lives by others, why successful people in their professions are successful in their mating drives (attracting desirable sexual partners), why people fight rather than submit, and numerous other facts of existence and coexistence.

For example, about the same time I read that even dominant women have higher levels of testosterone than their underlings. Presumably testosterone readings fluctuate like blood pressure.

These references emphasize the tremendous pressures young people are subjected to in their struggles for recognition and self-esteem. Beyond that, they indicate that these pressures are never entirely absent at any time in life.

During the ages 12 to 18, I had practically no secure knowledge of these factors in my development: indeed never heard of testosterone. My first introduction to pictures of sexual organs and the reproductive system came when I entered the navy, and these were for the prevention of VD.

“I Was a Complete Ignoramus On What Makes Men and Women Tick”

Or why Daddy chased Mama out the door across the porch, around the house, and back again, why my friends were lying in the bushes with my girlfriends, why I was not copying them, why my good friend talked incessantly of sex and tried to put his hands on, i.e., paw, every girl he knew (and succeeded with more than you would imagine), why the girlfriend of my friend let him fuck her in church (you know, “the organ-in-the-choir loft,”) while the services were being conducted, why I never revealed my sudden passion for her to anyone after he told me, why there were so many dirty books and comics freely circulating in the school corridors and why people read them, why people never admitted they were pregnant but just “fat” even though everybody knew it, why Mama told me babies came from heaven and the stork brought them, why I believed her the way I believed in Santa Claus and Jesus even though no one else did, why Dad could not be satisfied with staying home with Mama, why Mama was so “bitchy” and nagged so much, and why I was unable to cope with my sex drives, male aggression, or lack of it, and the prospects of becoming a man.

I wanted to but did not know how, but when Charles Kelly told me how men and women made babies, I didn’t believe him. It simply didn’t make sense, because, I suppose I thought it was too “dirty” a thing for Mama, or Sis, to do. How’s that for “squeaky clean.” Sad, isn’t it?

Get Out Your Handkerchiefs

The 1978 French film, “Get Out Your Handkerchiefs” (in French: *Preparez Vous Les Mouchoirs*) delicately deals with just this problem. The beautiful “Solange” has become bored with her husband, and his Mozart-loving acquaintance, and to cheer her up, they sleep with her on alternative days. But without success. They cannot even remember who slept with her last, so they organized a summer camp for boys as a diversion, and this brings them “Christian”, an aristocratic young genius with an I.Q. of 158.

However, the other youngsters did not cotton to Christian whose favorite games are mathematics, physics, and other intellectual pursuits, so they persecute him (naturally). In one instance they all throw their triple cream dessert at him, completely covering his face. Solange is touched by the boy, and when his conversation goes over the heads of her incompetent lovers, she giggles for the very first time in the film.

After a “depantsing” episode Christian hides in the forest in a tree house, and comes down only to the entreaties of Solange. She even lets him sleep with her in the way of “protection”.

However, when Solange falls asleep, Christian abuses his privilege, and takes the opportunity to inspect Solange’s body. This is near the climax of the film, for when Solange awakens to denounce his perfidy as monstrous, Christian tells her that it is a good thing she cannot have a child, and leaves, but Solange runs after him, demanding an explanation. Then, Christian explains that there would be times when her son would want to be close to her, to touch her, and then she would reject the son, the way she is rejecting Christian.

Stunned by this bit of self-knowledge, Solange takes him back to bed where they embrace.

However, Christian is now excited. He explains to her that when she asks him to behave there are times when his chest does not seem big enough to contain his heart. He propositions her by saying it will be seven or eight years before he gets another chance “like this” to learn about love from a friend who will play games with him.

Somehow this puerile argument persuades her, and she pulls up her nightgown revealing that lovely body that has been tantalizing her two would-be lovers (and the audience!). They make love.

Christian thus became her friend, son, lover, husband, and the father of her child.

The film is a delightful comedy and a spoof on the French way of love, but it also illustrates the male phantasy of an attractive woman initiating a boy into the mysteries of sex.¹ It is a good illustration of the efficacy of the Great Harvard Rat Experiment. Boy, Christian had *cojones*, i.e., balls! For a different take on the Y-chromosome, see the Index at Women, and also Chromosome.

¹ Several American women have gone to prison in the period 2000-2005 for doing exactly what Solange did. Both women were either teachers or counselors who abused their positions of authority, but when one teacher finished her prison sentence, she married the boy who had come of age in the interim. She had one child by him while in prison, and another afterward. (The name of this teacher was Mary Kay (?))

CHAPTER 42

WORLD WAR II: PEARL HARBOR TO D-DAY

“Remember Pearl Harbor;” written by Don Reid & Sammy Kaye, and published ten days after Pearl Harbor,

“Praise the Lord and Pass the Ammunition,” 1942 patriotic song written by Frank Loesser.

*Ah, love, let us be true / To one another! for the world, which seems,
To lie before us like a land of dreams, / So various, so beautiful, so new;
Hath really neither joy, nor love, nor light, / Nor certitude, nor peace, nor help for pains;
And we are here as on a darkling plain / Swept with confused alarms of struggle and flight,
Where ignorant armies clash at night—*From *Dover Beach* by Matthew Arnold, 1867.¹

There will be bluebirds over the White Cliffs of Dover;

First Line of “White Cliffs of Dover,” circa 1944;

Vera Lynn popularized it; “White Cliffs” is a 1940 poem by Alice Duer Miller.

*In Flanders fields the poppies blow / Between crosses, row on row,
That mark our place; and in the sky / The larks, still bravely singing, fly
Scarce heard amid the guns below. / To you from falling hands we throw
The torch; be yours to hold on high.*

From “In Flanders Fields” by John McCrae, 1892-1918, written after the second battle of Ypres, published anonymously in *Punch*, December 8, 1915

Our country . . . may she always be in the right, but our country right or wrong—

Stephen Decatur, 1779-1820

Security Reminders in WW II: often a graphic showing people whispering to each other and caricature of Hitler listening with an oversized ear.

“Loose lips sink ships.” “The walls have ears.”

The real war will never get in the books, Walt Whitman, 1865

Pearl Harbor: I do not remember the diplomatic maneuvers that preceded the December 7, 1941 bombing of Pearl Harbor by Japan, but every American alive on what President Roosevelt called “A Day of Infamy” felt the shock waves that passed through the nation.

¹ How did Matthew Arnold know so much about the 20th Century?

(I was 14 years old the preceding April.) The horror of the 9/11/01 destruction of the Twin Towers at the World Trade Center has been compared to Pearl Harbor Day, but while the number of casualties were comparable, almost 2500 dead at Pearl Harbor vs. almost 3000 dead on 9/11, or “nine-eleven” as the latter day is referred to, and the incredible fact that it happened in USA’s greatest city, the fact that much of the USA’s Pacific Fleet and Air Force was destroyed at *Pearl Harbor not only rendered USA impotent in the Pacific for a long time, but destroyed the Myth of America’s Invincibility*. However in both cases, there was a deep feeling of shame, then revulsion for the perpetrators of the sneak attacks, then recrimination of the Nation, especially its Intelligence (an oxymoron? Think of the mythical “Weapons of Mass Destruction,” that misnomer that was bandied about preparatory to the War in Iraq, March 2003) Services, and the Armed Forces, above all the Coast Guard, for not being prepared, then bravado, and all this was followed by realism: most of the Pacific Fleet was at the bottom of the Pearl Harbor, *and* the Twin Towers were gone forever.

Judging from the optimism that was expressed on Pearl Harbor Day by my parents and their generation vs. the fact that it took four and a half years of horrendous killing plus the atom-bombing of two of its cities, and the firebombing of Tokyo, Japan was a sadly underestimated foe, and American might proved to be mostly potential, that is, a myth. (Take note of George M. Cohan’s jingoistic song, “Over There” dating back to World War I.) No one could believe that the world’s leading supplier of junk toys could manufacture first-class war material, but that they did, and ever so much more: they used it with precision and devastating accuracy. Who knew “back then” that Japan would “conquer” us with its precision instruments, camera, and cars, in the last quarter of the 20th Century? ² Since Japan and Germany were allies by a treaty, the U.S. Congress proceeded to declare war on both countries, and involved the nation in its most deadly war since the “War-Between-The-States”. People had a more realistic appraisal of Germany’s war capacity, and I heard estimates on the length of the war in Europe up to ten years!

Nothing retained its innocence and simplicity after this, for on the horizon was compulsory military conscription, military training, and service overseas. I pictured the blood and gore of Verdun, and death in a muddy trench with my entrails exposed. To blot this out I promised myself a “clean” death at sea: I was going to *join* the Navy (I do not know why one “joins” anything) when the time arrived four years later, I found out that many other 18-year-olds had the very same idea, and in order to join the Navy, you *had* to have some skill the Navy was needing at the time. Compare this with Paul Fussell’s account of WW I in his “The Great War and Modern Memory” (Oxford U. Press, 1986). Fussell³ has

² Made in Japan”, imprinted on so many items in the stores, most of them badly made, was an epithet in my youth for inferior goods.

³ Fussell was a colleague of mine at Rutgers University in the 60’s, before he moved to U. of Penn in Philly

written that this is a cleverly disguised autobiography based on his experiences as Second Lieutenant in World War II, about which he also has written books. His division came up southern France from the Riviera invasion, and he records the massive carnage and stench that it encountered. My father-in-law, the late Denny Sullivan, a much decorated Veteran of World War II, came up the same route, and crossed the Rhine and ended up in Hitler's hide-out at Bertchesgaden in the German Alps, south of Salzburg near the Austrian Border.

A victory of any magnitude was not achieved until the victory of the Allies over Rommel's tanks at El Alamein in November 1942. Who ever could forget Churchill's chiasmus in London on November 10, 1942: "Now this is not the end. It is not even the beginning of the end. But it is, perhaps, the end of the beginning."

"Before El Alamein, we never had a victory, after El Alamein, we never had a defeat." (From Churchill's "Second World War", vol. 4, Ch. 33; also in "Oxford Dictionary of Modern Quotations," p.76.) *In other words, El Alamein was the turning point of World War II.* Churchill ordered church bells to ring on that date for *the first time since 1940* when they were ordered silenced only to be rung as a warning of the invasion of Britain by the Nazis.

El Alamein

It has been written that "in wartime truth is the first casualty" (This is an epigram attributed to Senator Hiram Johnson (1917) by Phillip Knightley in his book "The First Casualty"), but I can think of the second, third and fourth: *Lies that were written in the textbooks about American invincibility, American imperialism as altruism, and the War to End All Wars (WWI).* It did not take a genius to notice that Americans and the Allies were losing the war on all fronts in 1941-42.

Rationing: The war was palpable and it seriously affected every person in the United States before it was over; something no other war had ever done. Rationing would have done this even if nothing else had. *Everything* and *everybody* were needed for the war effort—people salvaged enormous quantities of metals, iron, steel, copper wiring, tin cans, tin foil, zinc, anything made of rubber, etc. Gasoline and tires was rationed. Even clothing, e.g., silk stockings, shoes, and food, especially meat, was rationed. Still butter, cheese, and meat were not rationed until Mar. 29, '43, and not until May 3, '44 was rationing on certain cuts of meat lifted. Prices were regulated by the Office of Price Administration (OPA), which did not allow hoarding, or price gouging. Still, people made money if they sold their rationing cards for items they did not need to others who did. Black market profiteering, while illegal, flourished. Not only that, but practically everybody had a close relative in service, for at the end of the war over 13,000,000 citizens were in the armed forces, and over 16,000,000 at one time or another, so naturally there were acute man—and woman-power shortages which were handled by yet another

government agency. The people needed doctors and nurses as well as the armed services. OPA did not end rationing until Dec. 18, 1945.

Churchill knew what he was talking about after El Alamein when he signaled the “end of the beginning.” Just about three months later, February 2, 1943, the remaining Nazi forces from the battle of Stalingrad surrendered to the Soviets in a major victory in which 300,000 Germans were killed, and 180, 000 were taken prisoner. Of these, only 5000 ever saw the *Vaterland* again, the rest died from the exigencies of poor prison conditions. USSR had lost 750,000 people, including many civilians. (Extract from the Reader’s Digest Illustrated History of World War II.)

Stalingrad was originally named Volgograd, or city on the Volga, and renamed after the ascendancy of Stalin to Premier (read Dictatorship) of USSR (1923-53), and then just eight years after his death, returned to its original name. *O look upon my works, ye mighty and despair*—line from Shelley’s *Ozymandias*.)

The cataclysms of WW II were everywhere evident in world politics: the “Iron Curtain”(another Churchill coinage) between East and West Europe, the rise of the USSR, “Red China” and the USA as “super” powers (and the decline of England and France), the “Third World” counter-weight (formerly the “non-aligned” nations!), the Holocaust, the intellectual migration of German intellectuals (mostly Jewish, although the “rocketeer”, Richard von Braun, was not) to the US, the A-bomb, the H-bomb, Hiroshima, Nagasaki, the Gulag Archipelago created by Stalinist terrorism, the Nisei concentration camps in the US for citizens of Japanese descent, the migration of the rural and Southern Blacks to the industrial North to serve in munitions and armaments industries.

These tragic events are just a few of the cataclysms wrought by WWII. The “economic miracle”⁴ wrought by West Germany and Japan are direct consequences of the US occupation policies of not punishing the civilian populations for their actions in times of war. No other nation ever acted so generously towards a conquered foe. (A long way from Caesar’s scorched earth policy towards Germany and Germans after the German campaign.)⁵

Naturally I hoped the war would be over *before* I reached eighteen, and found myself on the front-lines. Was this cowardice, or just an instinct to save one’s own skin? I did not view the choice as decisively as Patrick Henry’s “Give me liberty; or give me death!” Youth had grown ever so much more hedonistic in the 150 intervening years. Andy Rooney expressed the same hope in his excellent book, “My War.” To wit, on p. 17, he states: “I did not want to go to Europe to fight and die for what seemed to me to be someone else’s cause.” But, of course, Pearl Harbor changed all that. He not only served as a service correspondent for the Stars and Stripes, but received a bronze star for courage in reporting the battle at St. Lô.

⁴ Literally, Wirtschaftwunder.

⁵ Read Caesar’s “The German Wars”.

Gandhi: Is Patrick Henry's rousing cry. "Give me Liberty or Give Me Death," compatible with Gandhi's advocacy of non-violence, which worked for him to gain Indian Independence?

"I want to avoid violence. Nonviolence is the first article of my faith. It is also the last article of my creed"—Mahatma Gandhi, "Defense against charge of sedition, March 23, 1922; also in "Non-Violence in Peace and War", 1942, Vol. 1.

"What difference does it make to the dead, the orphans, and the homeless whether the mad destruction is wrought under the name of totalitarianism or the holy name of liberty or democracy?"—Speech by Gandhi at Shahi Bag, 18 Mar. 1922, in *Young India*. 23 Mar. 1922.

"Nonviolence and truth (Satya) are inseparable and presuppose each other. There is no god higher than truth"—True patriotism: Some sayings of Mahatma Gandhi, 1939.

Neville Chamberlain's Policy: "Appeasement"

While he was Prime Minister, 1937-1940, Chamberlain did little or nothing to deter Germany's rearmament. Even when Germany rearmed in the 1930's and annexed Czechoslovakia's Sudetenland on September 30, 1938 (and Austria surrendered to the Nazi's on March 13), England and France, but also the USA, offered no deterrent. "For the second time in our history, a British Prime Minister has returned from Germany bringing peace with honor. I believe it is peace for our time"—Address from 10 Downing Street, London, September 30, 1938, after returning from the Munich Conference.⁶ (Note: "Give peace in our time, O lord" is A Morning Prayer in "The Book of Common Prayer.") However, after Hitler invaded Poland on September 1, 1939, Britain gave Germany three days to withdraw, and a state of war was declared on Germany on September 3, jointly with France but the USA under Roosevelt declared its neutrality two days later! Then, on June 10, 1940, Italy declared war on Britain and France, and Canada declared war on Germany. No one had the luxury of waiting for the tyrant to fall from his corruption. On May 10, 1940, Chamberlain resigned, and Winston Churchill formed a new government, saying on May 13, "I have nothing to offer except blood, toil, tears and sweat." The appeasement policy was costly in that Hitler gained strength by the procrastination of the West in facing him down. It took America until the Pearl Harbor holocaust on December 7, 1941, to declare War on *both* Japan and Germany; also Italy, who was a member of the "Axis," or "The Empires of Evil."

⁶ Lord Huffingshire charged that Chamberlain had been duped, and that "we must not appease Hitler. Furthermore, my source for this comment, "A Dictionary of Latin and Greek Origins", p. 227, puts the date October 1, instead of September 30. I think the treaty with Germany was signed on the 30th, and the speech given on the next day.

Sicily was invaded on July 9-10, 1943. On July 25, 1943, Mussolini was deposed and arrested. (In April 1945, Mussolini and twelve cabinet members were shot by partisans.) The Allies entered Naples on September 1. On September 3, Italy signed a secret capitulation in Sicily, and the new Prime minister of Italy, Badoglio, surrendered to the Allies on a British battleship at Malta on September 29. General Eisenhower signed for the Allies, but Germany continued the fight on all fronts, and Rome was not entered by the Allies until June 4, 1944, two days before D-Day.

The Beginning of the End: D-Day, June 6, 1944

To add onto Churchill's clever speech (see above), the D-Day invasion of Normandy under the supreme command of Gen. Dwight D. Eisenhower was the greatest armada in history, and "the beginning of the end" of WW II. Most of the following paragraphs are excerpts or paraphrasing from the Reader Digest's Illustrated History of World War II. "As we moved in toward the land in the gray early light," wrote Ernest Hemingway, who accompanied the more than 150,000 men launched across the English Channel on some 5000 ships, supported by 11,000 aircraft (These figures were reiterated in a June 2004 Smithsonian Magazine article, pp. 57-58, about one of the founders of the D-Day Museum, Frank Walk. Cf. Stephen Ambrose's figures below), for the invasion of France on the Normandy beaches, with the code names: Utah, Pointe du Hoc, Omaha, Gold, Juno, and Sword beaches. To catch the Germans by surprise and create the utmost confusion were essential to success. As the men and ships steamed for Normandy, naval launches headed across the Channel towards Calais and Boulogne, each towing balloons with special reflectors to produce echoes similar to those of large troop ships.

It was an appalling day, starting at 12:16 am, British time. Gusts of winds blew heavy clouds across the sky, and there were constant rain showers, but the Germans were caught totally off guard. The landings on the beaches were preceded by an invasion of 150,000 paratroopers, many of whom landed in fields that either had been flooded, or filled with pointed poles, by the Nazis to render them inoperable. (So the German's *had* anticipated them!) Then, too, the heavy seas had made many of the troops in the landing crafts seasick. Nevertheless, by nightfall, the Allies had linked up with pockets of airborne troops inland, and had 150,000 infantrymen on shore. Although the costs had not been excessively high, the death toll was put at 2500, or about 1.7%. Some estimates range up to 5,000 dead, or 3.4% of the total. A New York Times article covering the 60th Anniversary of D-Day states that bodies are still being uncovered even now.

For all that, the Allies didn't reach Paris until Lt. Gen. George S. Patton announced at dawn August 20, that he was about 30 miles northwest of Paris. Hitler kept up his delusional question "Is Paris Burning?" At 2:30 pm on August 24, 1944, the Germans formally surrendered Paris. The French Forces of the Resistance, and French forces under

Eisenhower aided the conquest. But there was much more fighting to be done before the Allies bridged the Rhine at Trier on September 12, e.g., the “Battle of the Bulge,” where the Germans made one last supreme effort to break through the Allied lines, nearly succeeded, and might have. Hence, the “bulge.” It was to be Hitler’s last offensive on their Western front. US troops breached Germany’s vaunted Siegfried Line at Aachen on October 3, 1944, and entered Aachen on October 13.

For more on “D-Day, June 6, 1944”, consult the book by this title by Stephen Ambrose, who largely eschews the “numbers game”, preferring to record much oral history of the combatants. But he does dish this out on p. 251: “The Allies put 3,567 heavy bombers, 1,645 medium bombers, and 5,409 fighters into the air on D-Day. Not one plane was shot down by the Luftwaffe (literally, in German, Air Force) . . . (but) the flak batteries managed to shoot down 113 aircraft.” A National D-day Museum in New Orleans, authorized by Congress in 1992, loc. cit., paperback ed., end page. A well-written account of D-Day, and other aspects of the war is Andy Rooney’s “My War,” based on 800 dispatches he wrote as a service correspondent for the service newspaper, “Stars and Stripes.”

The Internment of Japanese-Americans (Issei and Nisei): Immediately after Pearl Harbor, FBI Chief J. Edgar Hoover ordered the rounding up all Japanese nationals in the USA. Then, in February 1942, the US Government, under that eloquent “apostle of democracy,” namely, President Roosevelt, created a legal controversy when it incarcerated 110,000 West Coast residents of Japanese origin, Issei, including 75,000 Nisei, that is, American Citizens born in the USA of Japanese parents, despite the fact that not a shred of evidence was ever found to impugn the loyalty of these hard working people. Besides that, 33,000 other Nisei served in the US armed forces, including the much-decorated 100th battalion and the 442nd Regimental Combat team, which fought in Europe. To add injury to insult, the property that the Nisei left was looted, and expropriated, while they languished in what can only be called “Concentration Camps”, since they were living in barracks, surrounded by barbed wired, and guarded by watchtowers. My Nisei neighbor said that she lived in one on the Gila River in Arizona, which was “altogether nicer than some of the other camps.” She mentioned three or four others, including one in Jerome, Idaho, and her husband was at one at “Tula Lake in Idaho (or Utah?)” I was unable to find that, and another that was mentioned in Life Magazine’s “World War II, p. 158, in the “bleakness of Heart Mountain.” (The mountain in the background of the accompanying photograph looked familiar, like a monument.) The neighbor, who did not wish to be identified, said that many years later, legal action taken by Nisei lawyers, who were children of detainees, led to a ‘redress by the US Government, but “the amount of money never approached the value of what was taken from us.” Later she amended that by saying that in some cases the settlement (\$20,000?) was equitable, but in other cases the value of the property outstripped that amount. (Another Nisei friend is named Yamamoto, the same as the admiral who was adjudged a

war criminal and hanged from the yardarm of a battleship commanded by Admiral Nimitz)

Was Tokyo Rose the GI's Friend? Homesick GI's in the Pacific during 1943 and 1944 could tune in to *Zero Hour*, a radio broadcast from Tokyo that featured news, music, and sweet voices. The dreamiest, silkiest voice belonged to Iva Tagori d'Aquino, known as "Tokyo Rose," with a flirtatious style. "Hello, you fighting orphans in the Pacific. How's tricks?" And she would insidiously suggest to the 'poor forgotten soldiers' that her music was not nearly as sweet as the music their wives were making with the factory workers back home. Her American accent was authentic—she was Nisei. Stranded while visiting Japan at the outbreak of the war, she first got a secretarial job, then, as an alternative to being sent to a munitions factor to work, she took the DJ job. She was arrested in Yokohama September 5, 1945, released in August 1946, then tracked down by a reporter for the GI magazine, "The Stars and Stripes", and charged with treason. Tokyo Rose was convicted, fined \$10,000, and sentenced to ten years in prison. During her prison years, she became an enthusiastic gardener, and a fervent patriot. She always stood rigidly at attention for the National Anthem, and was released after 6 years. President Gerald Ford pardoned her in 1977 (*three years after his pardon of President Nixon.*) (Excerpts on Japanese-Americans and Tokyo Rose were taken or paraphrased from The Reader's Digest Illustrated History of World War II, except for the reference to Ford's pardon of Nixon. Also see Rick DeMarini's take on Tokyo Rose in "The Year of the Zinc Penny," R.)

The allies had bombed out the Bridge over the River Kwai, north of Bangkok, and the Japanese occupiers set upon rebuilding it by slave labor. "Hardly a day went by that we didn't have to bury one of our men," a Dutch POW wrote. It took 16 months. Over 18,000 Allied POW's, and 78,000 Asian POW's died needlessly through neglect, starvation, disease and beatings. A 1952 novel "The Bridge on the River Kwai" by Pierre Boulle was made into a dramatic movie starring Alec Guinness as the British officer-in-charge who at the end thought that nobody had the right to destroy the strategic bridge that he considered a monument. His own men blew it up, having to kill him to do so. Also see "Bridges That Changed the World" by Bernhardt Grab.

Over there, over there, / Send the word over there

That the Yanks are coming, / The drums rum-tumming everywhere,

So prepare, say a prayer / Send the word to beware, / We'll be over, we're coming over,

And we won't come back till it's over over there.

"Over There," chorus of George M. Cohan's jingoist 1917 song,

See "The Faber Book of America," p.416

CHAPTER 43

STEPHANS, ROBERTS, EVANS, RASCH, MITCHELL, COKER, AND OTHER FAVORITE TEACHERS

*True blue as the blue of Kentucky skies,
And strong with the strength of her ancient hills,
We are bound to old Holmes in loyal ties,
And deep in our hearts her dear name thrills.*

Holmes High School Song, st. 1.

Holmes High School

High School was a period of intellectual awakening for me. Although more English and language teachers appear on my list of favorites, I made greater strides in the sciences, especially mathematics. As a rule, I learned more in classes where the teachers were poorer,¹ a phenomenon which was repeated in college and in graduate school, and which changed my idea of what constituted good teachers: “less is more” in teaching as in other pursuits.

My English Teachers: As personalities, Dorothy Stephans and Dr. Roberts were magnificent presences. Ms. Stephans was buxom and vivacious, whereas Dr. Roberts was a gaunt and gentle elderly man who had already “retired” from college teaching. Both, taller than average, were commanding presences in class, and given to dramatic readings of poetry and plays in class in their entirety. That, more than anything else, stirred in me a lifelong passion for words the spoken by professionals. It is a pleasure to hear words spoken as they ought to be, and raised to the highest dramatic heights possible. (*Nothing is more beautiful than a word fitly spoken*—Marcus Aurelius, quoted in Harold Arlen’s diary. *A word spoken in due season, how good is it!*—Proverbs 15:23/)

¹ For a discussion of this paradox of learning “more” from “poorer” teachers (i.e., teachers who refused to “spoonfeed” or make learning meaningless), see the article by Fritz Machlup in October 1979 issue of *Academe*, the AAUP magazine. See at Spoonfeed in the Index.

Although in my adult life I have heard readings and plays acted by Judith Anderson, Cedric Hardwick, Alec Guinness, Lynn Fontaine and Alfred Lunt, John Gielgud, Sioban McKenna, Irene Worth, Jason Robards, Jr., Kathleen Dewhurst, and other professionals, nevertheless I have never been more thrilled than I was when Ms. Stephans or Dr. Roberts read to us from Robert Burns, Byron, Coleridge, Keats, Poe, Shakespeare, Shelley, Whitman. Even today, I can hear Ms. Stephans declaiming Coleridge's "The Ancient Mariner:"

... Water, water, everywhere / And all the boards did shrink
Water, water, everywhere / Nor any drop to drink.

And there followed a discussion on the use of "nor" in the last line.²

Dr. Roberts' great passion appeared to be Shakespeare, judging by the number of plays by Shakespeare that we read in his 11th Grade Class: "Julius Caesar", "Macbeth", "Anthony and Cleopatra". Furthermore, we were entertained in the school auditorium by a touring Shakespearian company, probably a regional theater group. How well I recall the chill-thrill of the three witches in "Macbeth":

*Double, double, toil and trouble,
 Fire, burn, and caldron bubble.*

Unfortunately, something happened to the smoke-making equipment, and the auditorium filled with smoke, which lasted the entire play. Didn't I say that I loved drama? If you have read Chapter 11 ("My Aïda"), or when you read next chapter about Joy Kinsburg's dramatic talents, you may will see why I was attracted to Joy, and her love of drama, which spilled over into her everyday life and persona.

Dave Evans was another effective English teacher whose forte was written essays. He made us struggle for *the* right expression or word, and would not let us go until we found it. He took good writing seriously, even humorous writing, which was what I liked best.

Robert Crosby, Speech and Drama Teacher

The most traumatic high school course I took was Speech under Mr. Robert R. Crosby. I do not recall who I owe the recommendation to, but soon I learned of the nigh irremediable

² I was reminded of this when Bill Clinton, in his testimony about Monica Lewinsky in 1999, said, "It depends on the meaning of "is," or words to that effect. (After all, he *is* a politician.) Ms. Stephans liked to tell jokes, and would defend an occasional "earthly" one with a coy remark, usually "Well, I have to show that I am human, don't I?" And, taken in, I would be in the back vigorously shaking my head sideways, "No"!

deficiencies of North Kentucky dialect: pin and pen were indistinguishable and wash was pronounced “warsh”. (We also said “necked” for naked!) The list of speech “defects” was practically endless—it’s a wonder anything ever got done, considering the fact that our speech was flavored to the point of incomprehensibility! Fifty years later, after reading the multi-volume “The Dictionary of American Regional English” that elucidates the pronunciation of words and phrase according to where you live, I decided that Mr. Crosby was all wrong about our Covington dialect, and ought to have codified and encouraged it. We were not all made out to be radio and TV announcers and talk-show emcees. Mr. Crosby also taught dramatics and was adviser to the school drama productions. This kept him busy but happy, as he was a bustling, energetic breezy man in his late twenties or early thirties. He came south against his will from the “upper echelons” of an Ohio education, and he made sure that his advantages were vouchsafed against contamination by Kentucky speech habits.

*The Lowells spoke only to the Cabots and the Cabots spoke only to God.*³

Crosby: Snob and Sneerer

Mr. Crosby was not the first snob, nor the first sneerer that I ever met, but his particular brand I found was rampant outside (and North) of Kentucky. When I was drafted into the Navy and traveled to Chicago, considering the speech patterns and attitudes, it was hard to believe that I had traveled just 320 miles from home. And even afterwards, in graduate school at Purdue U. in W. Lafayette, Indiana, just 180 miles from Covington, you would not believe the really coarse things that people (mostly Chicago and New York “effete intellectual snobs”—a Spiro Agnew epithet) had to say about the primitiveness of Kentucky and Kentuckians, the favorite being: “If you are from Kentucky, why are you wearing shoes?” (Kentuckians owe Al Capp a lot for this conception of their dress in his comic strip “Li’l Abner”, and I hope they give it to him someday!).⁴

The difference between Crosby’s and Roberts’ methods is noteworthy. They both hailed from “across the river”. Crosby focused on direct criticism, whereas Roberts relied on the ear to copy exacting speech. Probably each was effective with certain students and less so with others. I admired Roberts because of his romanticism.

Dramatic Readings in Crosby’s Classes: The difference between hearing a play well read by professional actors, and by students, is as great as that

³ Part of a quatrain by John Collins Bossidy at a Holy Cross Alumni Dinner in 1910 (see Bartlett’s).

⁴ It’s too late: Al Capp, originally Alfred Gerald Caplin, 1909-1979, is now receiving his heavenly (?) reward.

between professional and sandlot baseball. It is a shock to find out how difficult it is to read a sentence that does not sound like it is being read usually in that universally singsong way. Crosby taught us how different types talk, walk or sit, essentially what we now call “transactional analysis”. (To wit, a bank president, a beggar, an athlete, a clerk. Conceivably they could be the same person, but we dealt in stereotypes!) I read Thomas Paine’s passionate “The Sunshine Soldier and the Summer Patriot”⁵ so abominably that years later at the University of Kentucky, a high school friend⁶ who endured it in class with me invariably called me “Tom” thereafter, even at the U. of Kentucky years later. As an actor, I was destined to slaughter the language. To solve the problem, I was designated to be one of the 12 corpses in the finale of “Arsenic and Old Lace.” (But, as I wrote before, so was Frank Duff, George Ries, and nine others! See p. 267 for more.)

The Confluence of Languages and Mathematics: In the 9th grade they made indelible tracings on my cranium. By now everybody knows the same hemisphere of the brain—the left—controls these subjects and a talent for both is common. Mathematics has its rules of grammar that are every bit as strict as English grammar, and moreover, the vocabulary of mathematics is the *sine qua non* of its study. I doubt that students are sufficiently aware of their interrelationship. Does ignorance of English underlie the ignorance of foreign languages and mathematics? Personally, I learned a lot about English through the study of foreign languages. *Ave Latina!* How could one not?

Lillian Rasch: I was getting A’s in mathematics and A’s and B’s in Latin until the 11th grade when I switched to French and made A’s. I thought this a bold move as most of the class made Spanish their choice and only language. Under the tutelage of Ms. Lillian Rasch I became fairly fluent in French. Ms. Rasch used the oral approach having us lipsync the words. As a sidelines, I edited a column in French for the school newspaper, *The Holmespun*”, consisting mainly of jokes literally translated into French! However, I managed to pun in French *Je parle Francais avec un accent grave*. (Actually pun derives from the French *punir* or punish, as does punitentiary!) I wonder what Ms. Rasch would say about the following French saying:

Ah les bons view temps ou nous etions si malheureux.

Ah, the good old days when we were so unhappy.

I am puzzled by the “ou” which means “where” instead of “quand” (which means “when”), but no matter—I didn’t write it as I did the jokes in French for the *Holmespun*! In honor

⁵ American Crisis, #1; December 23, 1776. These are the times that try men’s souls. The summer soldier and sunshine patriot will . . . shrink from the service of their country . . . —

⁶ Roberta Anderson (deceased).

of Ms. Rasch, I took the English translation of a line from a French poem by François Villon for the title of the Chapter 69 of this book.

Ms. Rasch was Virginia Settle all over again. In a word, *too divine*, that is, *plus perfect*. I used to walk her home too, but alas holding hands was now taboo! I idolized her, as indeed I seemed to idolize *all* women, except Ms. Wise at District 7 School, whom I characterized in Chapter 10 as the “Beast of Belsen.” Dr. Freud, I don’t understand then why I never was able to get as close to any woman as I was to Mama and Sister! Ha-ha. In my yearbook, “Lest We Forget”, opposite her photograph, Ms. Rasch wrote:

Une bonne renommée vaut mieux que une ceinture dorée

Or, *a good name (or reputation) is worth more than a gilded (golden) sash*. A lot of people in public and private life whom I have known, found this out, often to their sorrow. *In life, I had an easy time of being good because I always had the feeling that Mama or Sister were looking over my shoulder disapprovingly when I had naughty thoughts (and who hasn’t?)*

Mr. Dave Evans, who also coached the JV’s (Jr. Varsity), tried to get Mama to let us go out for “contact” sports. In that respect Mr. Evans probably shared D.H. Lawrence’s mystique about physical contests as a safety valve and/or cement for male fraternity and love. I remember just as if it were yesterday explaining to Mr. Evans how much Mama hated football and other rough games. *The path of my life into intellectual rather than physical pursuits I owe to Mama*. To be honest, however, as I have said, “I’m no Larry Bird!” *Both Mr. Evans and Mr. Allen, the Gym coach, tried to make a man of me, or at least a real boy*. Mr. Allen taught me boxing and wrestling, while Mr. Evans got me to try out for the basketball Jr. Varsity when I was in the 10th grade.

Well, Mr. Evans walked the walk to 2439 Herman Street in vain, like so many other well-meaning teachers (starting in kindergarten) who tried to liberate our talents. The answer was always the same: “No”. Mama did not want to risk having her children get their teeth knocked out (a fate worse than death!) or a leg broken (“and remain a cripple limping around all his life”) or a concussion (“and live like a vegetable”), and a long list of avoidable horrors. Actually some athletes even died, but she never emphasized this—some things are worse than death as I have indicated. Besides, we had no money to pay doctor bills.

Suddenly Mr. Evans switched games on her, described basketball as a game of skill, not unlike ballet, and consequently the JV’s got a tall bench warmer for one season. (Next year I switched back to the Church Y-League because at least I got into most games.) Clearly the stock of Olympic Golds was safe forever after that. I was a good enough shot, but there was a cohesiveness of team play that could only be learned by

playing a lot, and I came into the game too late for high school. But the main barrier to sports was the lack of true inspiration. I had good physical and mental characteristics for baseball and basketball, but not the obsession that gifted players need.

Needless to say, I was no Larry Bird or Michael Jordan! One Olympic Gold Medallist whom I knew, a Princeton woman, Leslie Bush, practiced diving, five or six hours daily at the Community Park Pool where I swam. I realized then that I simply had too many other interests to devote *that* much time for a sports specialty, *not for the glory of Holmes High School, not for the nation, nor for my own.*

Harry T. Mitchell was our talented mathematics teacher, who invariably wore a bowtie to class. He greatly increased my comprehension of mathematics, and encouraged me by writing in my Class of 1945 Year Book, "*To my prize math student.*" Was I ever surprised! I suppose that is always the way with unrequited love—you are the last to know. Ha-ha.

Doc Coker may have been our most eccentric teacher, at least in his sartorial indifference, but we will reserve comment on this and his teaching until the next chapter.

CHAPTER 44

JOY, BENNY, FRANK, LOU ELVA, WALT AND DOTTIE

When we talk of the past, we lie with every breath we take—William Maxwell,
Attributed. by Frank McCourt in 2004. Also see Will Rogers on memoirs in the
Index & Glossary

At Holmes High School, Joy Deborah Kinsburg and I became even closer friends. We had known each other since the First Grade days of Fifth District School¹ and *Aida* in a Grade 3 play, but coming up into the rarified air of scholastic accomplishment, I kept bumping into Joy, our future Valedictorian. At graduation her GPA was a phenomenal 95.61 percent! (This and the following GPA's were in the Baccalaureate Program but not in the Class Yearbook "Lest We Forget.") By comparison, Joy McCarty, our Salutatorian, had a GPA of 94.71, Cecil Craig, 94.11, Walter Waymeyer 93.51, just .01 points above Cecil Walden's 93.50. I was a lowly grub, sixteenth on the list with a GPA of 91.33, .02 points behind Bert Bennett, and .08 points ahead of Doris Rudy. Ann Beers was 18th at 91.22, .02 points ahead of Francis Sue Stephenson. (My, didn't HHS split hairs? Inexplicably, I was awarded C's for two years of physical education, which dragged my academic average way down, but others probably had other tales of woe too, e.g., in mathematics!) Nevertheless, Joy's mother was overjoyed (no pun intended!) that I was up there on the dais on Honors Night. She told me, "Carl, I had no idea you were so smart!" Did Joy keep my talent hidden under the proverbial basket, or did Mrs. Kinsburg think

¹ Other high school classmates that I had known since the First Grade were Jimmy Townes, who lived across the street from us on Herman Street, Elaine Seligman, who live a block or two north of Jimmy, Mary Carpenter, who lived on Warren Street, a block west of Herman St, and Joan Sothard, who lived near Fifth District School, maybe on Euclid Ave. In "Lest We Forget," **Joan** wrote, "**Good Luck to someone I'll always remember.**" Well, it was mutual, wasn't it?

that I was one of Peaselburg's thugs? William Steig's rendering of thugs in his cartoon in the June 5, 2000 New Yorker Magazine with the punning title "Neighbor Hoods" depicts what Mrs. Kinsburg might have thought of us! (Just joking. Mrs. K. was a kind person, but, of course, no mother thinks that *any* boy is good enough for her daughter. And vice versa for mothers and sons, as I learned the hard way from Mama when Fred married.)

Joy Was Into Everything. One of the dynamos of our class, Joy was copy editor, then Editor-in-Chief of the Student magazine. She was not only in, but an officer in many, of clubs: Latin Club, Post-War-Planning, National Forensic (back when that meant debate and argumentation) Club, Tennis (!), Speakers Bureau, Debate, National Thespian, most of them for 2 or 3 years, while maintaining a straight A average! *She was the most brilliant of my many bright friends.* Yes, even at 16! She was born on December 29, 1928, just ten days after MY Fred, and graduated in June 1945, at age 16 and a half. (My mother-in law, Mrs. Dorothy Sullivan graduated her high school in Lubbock, Texas, at age 15 and a half.)

Dick Macke, two years behind us in the Homes High School Class of 1947, attributes his success in journalism—he was Assistant Editor for Sports of the venerable Cincinnati Enquirer—to Joy, who taught him how to copy-edit when as a sophomore he worked on the "Holmespun." N.B. However, this has to be taken with more than a grain of salt, since Dick is the most rabid sports fan I ever met. Dick protests this, and insists that he is a lover of sports. (Amateur derives from the Latin via French word for lover: *amo, amas, amat*, meaning *I love, you love, he loves.*) See his comments on the Cincinnati Reds in Chapter 37. (*Amo, Amas, Amat, Dick loves games a lot!*)

Joy and Zionism: Since Joy was reared in adherence to Judaism, e.g. strictly observed the Sabbath, and was an ardent Zionist (she became an Israeli citizen, by the Jewish Right of Return, and later immigrated there), she often found secular life puzzling and kept asking questions that "nobody" knew the answers to, and that practically "nobody" was interested in.

Madame Butterfly? Whatever Joy did was graceful and tasteful, and she made everything she did seem as effortless as a butterfly is, flitting from flower to flower. What a great "Madame Butterfly" she would have been! She was a consummate dramatic actress, as I had known ever since the 3rd grade. She was the leading lady of practically every play that I can remember, and if not that, then she was the stage manager or director!

Joy Stars in "A Murder Has Been Arranged" and "Arsenic and Old Lace"

Two plays were performed in our senior year, the first was "A Murder Has Been Arranged" (A Ghost Story in Three Acts.), with Joy playing Mrs. Arthur, and Walter Waymeyer the trombone in the orchestra along with Frank Duff, the class Veep, on the piano, and his brother Cline on the trumpet.

The second play, “Arsenic and Old Lace,” directed by Robert Crosby, also starred Joy Kinsburg as Martha Steward, one of the two dotty sisters, who out of kindness do away with thirteen of their complaining and aged lodgers, and bury them in the basement. Grace Fisher played Abby, the other sister, Jim Cobb was the Rev. Dr. Harper, Walter Ferguson, the screwball brother who thought he was Teddy Roosevelt, and Walter Waymeyer was the Head of Happy Farms, the loony bin that took in the Brewster sisters when Mortimer Brewster found out what was happening. Clarence Harden and Dick Jolson were the arresting officers Brophy and Klein, Doris Rudy was the stage manager, and I was her assistant.

I don’t know how much the performance was influenced by the 1944 movie starring Josephine Hull as Martha Brewster, Cary Grant as Mortimer Brewster, the only sane one in the family, Everett Horton as Mr. Witherpoor, Peter Lorre as a gangster brother, and Raymond Massey as his gangster partner-in-crime. Sadly, there was no line up of corpses in the movie. Maybe it was taken out, or maybe the director at Holmes, Mr. Robert R. Crosby, put corpses in just to give us something we were good at! At least he didn’t have to suffer our slaughtering the American language. His *Ave* to me written on my copy of the class album was “To Carl who is a good boy but who does not know how to spell!” Now how about that dyslexia? It was like flunking Grade 1B all over again!

Joy the Graceful Warbler: What brought a graceful warbler like Joy and an ungainly grackle like me together? Well, besides our being together since Grade 1, we were mostly together in the “forum” of our friends who came together for brown bag lunches (on the drive right next to the High School). We were usually in the same classes; Chemistry (under “Doc” Coker) or Physics (under Mr. Baulch), or Math (under Harry T. Mitchell) or Latin (under Mr. Ladd) or French (under Ms. Rasch).

Cecil Craig: Benny, the Family Pet Name, Cecil asked me to call him by. He was editor of the school newspaper, The Holmespun (Holmes-pun? Holme spun? What genius thought up this triple pun?), and the class president. We were best of friends and alter-egos: Benny was an immaculate, some would say supercilious, dresser since he would wear a suit and tie even to picnics (see photos)—nary a hair out of place, and pearly white teeth. Despite this, as he was the most popular person in our class, and owed his popularity to his tact—he never said an unkind thing about anyone and of course did not drink, smoke or curse. As a reward he was elected President of the Holmes High School Class of 1945, but ought to have been *beatified*. In fact, he practically *was*, since he was elected “King of the Prom,” and Ruth Carolyn Stephenson “Queen.”

In short, Benny was *another* Mama’s boy, and that is how we came to be so close as improbable as it might seem. (“What’s wrong with being a Mama’s boy? Aren’t all boys?”) Although as talented as Joy (Benny could act, dance, play the piano, make top grades), he also had a flair that enabled him to take part in myriad activities without looking harried or crumpled. In addition to everything else, he played in the Holmes High School Marching Band.

Part of my affection for Benny came from my admiration for his accomplishments, and, of course, "*Imitation is the sincerest form of flattery*"—a much-quoted phrase of Charles Caleb Colton, 1780-1822. Indeed I wanted to be like him. Naturally, I flunked that test cold, but this desire brought us together initially—not that I recall Benny coming across the railroad tracks to call, "O Carl" outside *my* house, although, together with Joy and other friends, he attended my sixteenth birthday party Sister gave at her house on Howell Street. They gave me an engraved silver ID bracelet that was the rage back then, and I wore it in addition to my "dog tag" in the navy two years later.

Benny also played *the* instrument, the piano in those days, and evenings after games I remember crowding around the upright in his house and raising our voices in song. Occasionally Joy came, Dorothy Blank, who lived several doors away (on Holmes Ct., down the hill from Holmes High School), Lou Elva Oldham, Walter Waymeyer, or Frank Duff.

Frank Duff was my best friend, and when he got to the U. of Cincinnati, he became a frat bother. He gave out with the emotions that Benny kept in. As with your most troublesome child that you come to love the most, my friendship with Frank was tempered in heat. I was attached to him, a trait that is burdensome, if not irksome, as I knew from my brother's Fred's "tagging along." Of course, no one wants to be "imitated." (We are all *sui generis*, aren't we?) Although a neat dresser, Frank was not the perfectionist that Benny was (e.g., Frank did not wear ties, or jackets) and for Frank, grades were not all-important. (For sociologists: Frank's papa was a foreman at the Newport Rolling Mills, and Benny's was a railroad engineer.) What put Frank in a class of his own was a talent for jazz. He was a terrific pianist (and still is, at age 78), and an avid fan of jazz. What I knew of jazz I first learned listening to Frank play, e.g., boogie-woogie, a fast blues piece with an iterative bass figure in double time, i.e., eight beats to the bar (Wentworth and Flexner). *Beat me, Daddy, Eight To the Bar!* is a boogie song, and "Bumble Bee Boogie" is a variation on "The Flight of the Bumble Bee." I also accompanied Frank to Cincinnati to listen to some great musicians play, e.g. Lionel Hampton (b.1908), or "Hambone" as we called him, and Benny Goodman, 1909-1986, a virtuoso clarinetist, who formed his own band (1934) and developed a new kind of jazz called "swing," characterized by driving, insistent rhythms interspersed with improvisational solos.

"Doc" Coker and Albert Einstein: Frank and I often got into manic states in class, and would not be able to stop laughing. As Doc Coker dead-panned, "It's not funny." Doc Coker, who signed "F.H. Coker" in my copy of the class yearbook, "Lest We Forget", was short and rotund, a good candidate for the pop song "Mr. Five-by-Five". I don't know if he held a doctorate, but we called him "Doc", the way we called "Doc" Roberts, who did have a doctorate. Coker introduced us not only to the world of chemistry, but also nuclear physics, as he explained the meaning of Einstein's famous equation $E = mc^2$, where m is the mass of an atom, and c is the speed of light, or 186,000 miles per second. *The meaning is that a little matter, if converted entirely to energy, would blow us all to kingdom come.* Remember, this was maybe six months before Hiroshima and Nagasaki.

Einstein's Theory of Relativity predicts that a clock traveling near the speed of light slows up (or down?), consequently, one would be able to come back from a trip traveling near that speed younger than when one began, while those left behind grew older. Paradoxical, isn't it, but nevertheless observable in experiments. Consequently, some wag wrote the following Limerick: *There was a young lady from Bright, / Whose speed was faster than light; / She went out one day, / In a relative way, / And returned the previous night.*

Doc Coker and Einstein Again: Frank reminded me in May 2003, when we attended Commencement at Holmes High School together with Dick Macke and our wives, that Doc Coker started out each school year with a brand-new suit, and wore it the entire year oblivious the holes sulfuric or hydrochloric acids ate into it. For that, he deserved the Albert Einstein Award for Sartorial Indifference. In later life, Einstein wore a sweatshirt, hence no ties, nor underwear, or socks. He claimed it saved him trouble washing his clothes, not that *he* ever did.) Doc Coker warned us in diluting sulfuric acid to pour the acid into water. As Coker, and Primo Levi on p. 36 of his book of essays, "The Periodic Table," admonish, the reverse can splatter acid on your clothes if not in your face and eyes. Coker: "you would wish you had been hit by a train, instead." He punctuated his sentences with an emphatic, "Yeah!" *It's a wonder nobody blew us up in chemistry class.* Primo Levi had such a scare handling potassium. (*Op. Cit.*)

"Filthy Frank and "Fairie Faith:" There was a radio program ("One Man's Family") with a character which sounded like "PB", and naturally for kicks we supposed this stood for "Peter-Beater", so whenever anybody quoted the radio line "Oh, I wouldn't say that, P.B." we would go into hysterics. Why, I still do not know, but like so many languages, *it was a secret language enabling us to mystify our classmates*, e.g., I called him "Filthy" Frank and he called me "Fairie" Faith, but they still elected him the class Veep. However, "Doc" Coker threw us out of class more than once because of our manic laughter over "PB"!

"DO YOUR STUFF, VOTE FOR DUFF." In fact, not only did I nominate him, but, as Frank recalled on the video of a class luncheon reunion in October 22, 2002², I passed out cards reading, "Do your stuff, vote for Duff!" How did I think that up, I wonder?

² Lovingly videoed by Mary Ann Unkraut, née Pingel (as we knew her at Holmes), who generously sent out copies at her own expense, refusing even postage. Sadly, everyone was in the video except Mary Ann herself. When I discovered that, I asked myself "Whatever happened to chivalry?" A curiosity of our lives is that the Pingels lived on Warren Street, which was adjacent to Herman Street (see Frontispiece Maps), yet we don't recall seeing each other there or at Holmes High School, despite having had mutual friends, e.g., Lee Memmering, and his mother, Josephine, who lived on Warren Street. Mary Ann also refused payment for helping me with photos, saying, "We are friends, aren't we?"

The United Cigar Store at 5th and Walnut in Cincinnati

Another activity I thought brought Frank and me closer was a job at the United Cigar Store (Whelan) at 5th and Walnut in Cincinnati. The war effort had drained the manpower pool, and good jobs were to be had for the asking. This tiny store had a tremendous volume of business presided over by L. H. Kreyenhagen, as Swedish as his name. Mr. Kreyenhagen did not like to hire “teenagers” (there was no such thing then!), but he had to because everybody else was working in “essential” industry socking away big money, whereas United paid their workers peanuts (peanuts were cheap then.).

Frank, Jack Fightmaster, George Ries, The Jesters, and Miss LaFleur.

This meant that a lot of high-schoolers were hired, that is, those below the draft age. I think Jack Fightmaster got either me, or Frank, the job at United, and we got the other the job. Or maybe Marvin Jester had a hand in it. (Both he and his brother, Howard worked there.) George Ries was another Holmespun (pun!) fellow-employee as he called us. Then, there was a French lady named Miss LaFleur (not “Fifi LaFleur”), who irritated Mr. Kreyenhagen with her long lunch breaks. But when Frank tried to emulate her, he got fired! This injustice justifiably still rankles Frank.

Mr. Kreyenhagen: To emphasize his dislike of his employees (whom George Ries called “fellow niggers,” not meant as a pejorative. Back then it indicated our low status.) Mr. Kreyenhagen had a card printed up with the statement: *Since we kiss your ass, we ask that you bathe daily.* He would pass this around at least once a day to restore his good humor. Think of him as Dagwood’s boss Mr. Dithers, and you won’t go far wrong. I think all of his employees sampled the merchandise at United Cigar Store even though there was really no “honest” way to do this. But, after smelling all those aromatic cigars and pipe tobaccos that you could not afford to smoke, maybe a clerk could be forgiven for indulging himself with Balkan Sobranie, Rameses, the oval-shaped Murad cigarettes, and honest-to-goodness Havana cigars. I got to know a lot about tobacco, e.g., short thick stogies, long slender panetellas, the hand-wrapped Havanas, Copenhagen snuff, while working there, much to the detriment of my health. After Dad’s cigarette-induced death (in 1952), I switched to smoking a pipe, and stoked it with Balkan Sobranie or other tobacco I had learned about there.

“Lucky Strike Green Goes to War:” The tobacco shortage was caused by the manpower shortage as well as by the requisitioning of tobacco for troops. Senator Robert Dole in “One Soldier’s Story” remembered finding four-cigarettes packets in his rations, and

smoking them for desert! Practically *everything* was rationed in wartime. Starting Dec. 1, 1942, almost a year after Pearl Harbor), rubber, copper, zinc, indeed, all metals. In 1943, Zinc replaced copper in pennies. Hershey bars, indeed all cacao, hence chocolate, went to war! Silk and rayon stockings, wool and cotton, and fabrics (the cuffs on trousers also went to war!), tobacco, tinfoil, paper—hence books, magazines, & newsprint—meat, sugar, hence candy, etc. This gave me a hint of the life of a politician: you saved them for the “regulars,” that is, sold them to favorites, if you had them, and they had a ration coupon.

Naturally people regularly shopped at many places to build up their credentials so they could stock up on items in short supply, and then, maybe, resell them at a tidy profit. These basically black-market profiteers, although penny-ante operators, were despised by the clerks as well as their clients.

To elaborate a bit on rationing, you have to realize that we were fighting the Nazis and the Japanese in a death struggle. Roosevelt and Churchill had proclaimed a policy of unconditional surrender, that is, no quarter or truce would be accepted short of the destruction of the war-making capability of the Axis nations. *Thus, everything, and everybody went to war.* Newsprint was rationed because of the shortage of paper and ink. Thus, the colors went to war, as the slogan “Lucky Strike Green goes to war” indicates. (It was green, with a big red circle) It was replaced with a red, white and blue package! I don’t know which dye in the green (copper?) went to war, but lots of things went with it, including silk stockings for parachutes. This was before nylon, which had been developed in 1939 by Dupont after ten years of research, was generally available to replace silk. Nylon and rayon stockings went to war too, so women painted their legs in ecru, tan, or any fashionable color, to give the effect of hosiery, even to the extent of drawing a line down the back of the leg. (Fifty years later, hose could be any livid color in the world.) The lines were mostly crooked, as who can draw a straight line on themselves? But like cuff-less pants, painted legs were fashionable. Most natural rubber from latex was imported, so rubber went.

In WW II, US started making synthetic rubber, Buna S, and growing a latex-producing plant, guayule, in the Southwest, especially, Texas. (See at Rubber in the Index/Glossary.) Leather went, hence so shoes were rationed too. The first publicly sold nylons were in 1939 in Wilmington, Delaware, just in time for rationing! Chocolate comes from cocoa, which was imported. Everything imported was scarce because of the incredible tonnage sent to the bottom of the Atlantic by the German U-boats. When you look at the statistics, you wonder how we ever won the war! The losses in maritime lives were staggering too. Troopships were sunk, and the survivors were strafed, a barbaric act that violated the rules of war, the Geneva Convention, that protect civilians, and military personnel who surrender.

Office of Price Administration, or OPA, supervised rationing to prevent gauging, black market activities, and to mete out scarce items on the basis of need. Many of the items listed above were rationed until sometime in 1945.

Holmes, *The Jewel in the Crown*: Meanwhile, back at Holmes, I had steadily climbed in academic ranking and had a high opinion of myself, especially in mathematics. I was able to solve problems, by dint of persistence, especially the hated “word problems” that most students could not do. This was especially true in algebra “solving equations”, geometry, and later trigonometry and the “trig identities” that were hated by many, but duck soup to me. I had a clear head for axiomatic reasoning that usually causes so much trouble for people who learn by rote. I am in no way able to explain how I came to have this talent, but I was happy to have something to hang my ego on. Besides that, I came to be one of the “fastest guns” in class answering questions by the teacher. That was heady stuff. After serving in the Navy’s RT program for 13 months, 1945-1946, I went to the University of Kentucky on the GI Bill, to become an electrical engineer, but in my sophomore year, I succumbed to my true love of abstract algebraic mathematics. Holmes High was one of Kentucky’s best high schools, *the Jewel in the Crown*, challenged only by Louisville’s Male High School. Holmes had about 1,000 students, with about 250 in each class. The labs were well equipped, and there was space for everybody. In chemistry there was enough equipment enough for everybody.

Miss Rasch and Le Cercle Français: In those days after school was the best school. Teachers stayed as late as necessary or requested. I remember walking home with Ms. Lillian Rasch many evenings after dark on the days the French Club (*Le Cercle Français*) met. She inherited my worship of Ms. Virginia Settle, my teacher in Grade 4. All the teachers were available after school, and the well-stocked library as well (open to 5 p.m.) In short I had what is now called a “quality” education. Some were qualified for college, and were as good as any I was encounter in college. It is a truism that an excellent high school turns out students who can coast the first two years in college in the basics: English, foreign languages, science and mathematic

Although I was not able to *match social strides with my academics*, I wasn’t “nerdy.” I suppose like many I look back on high school with the kind of horror that an adolescent had to endure. Everybody knows that the mind is not fully developed at 16 or 17 or 18, and that the emotions lag even further behind. *My problem was the problem of every boy: girls, and not any particular girl!* I had problem with *all* the girls I liked, and even problems with girls I did not like.³

There was never any balance. A conversation was a gangplank at the end of which was the sea of bewilderment. If she was my sister, why did I feel that way

³ In a “Blondie” cartoon, *circa* August 1, 2004, Dagwood’s son, Alexander, says, “Dad, why do women . . . ?”. Dagwood gloomily interjects, “No one knows.” Also, see the Index-Glossary at Blondie.

about her and not that way about Sis? Could the intuition be wrong all the time? The answer that Mama and my Baptist faith always gave was “yes”. And for Mama, general society wasn’t very much better. *I was a bottled-up boy, and I did not know what kind of genie would pop out if I ever uncorked.*⁴ This feeling is related to *claustrophobia*, being bottled up, and *agoraphobia*, fear of open spaces. It may be that, as a proverb goes “it is love that makes the world go round,” nevertheless it is a dizzying swirl.

I was still a virgin after a year in the U.S. Navy, 1945-46. If anyone asked me how I managed *that* while attending USOs for a year dancing with the pretty hostesses, I would say, “Aw, shucks, it was easy!” George Bernard Shaw lost his virginity at age 29, with someone not his wife! (Cf. p.161 of Michael Holroyd’s “Bernard Shaw, “The Search for Love.”) In issue on Einstein in September 2004 Discovery magazine, it is stated that Newton was a virgin—all his life!

⁴ *Ask, and it shall be given you, seek, and ye shall find, knock and it shall be opened unto you.* (Matthew 7:7.) If only I had followed the Scriptures, as I had promised to. I was painfully shy, and easily embarrassed, e.g., by my lack of proper attire, or some other superficial thing. It is a truism: *Faint heart never won fair lady.* (See Cervantes’ Don Quixote, III, 10, or Sir William Gilbert’s, *Ioanthe*, act I.) I was very much a conflicted boy and young man, like many others.

CHAPTER 45

CORALYNN, MARTY, CALLA LILY, DORIS, AND “HOPIE”

Oh wad some power the giftie gie us, / To see oursel's as others see us!

It wad frae monie a blunder free us, / An' foolish notion.

Robert Burns (1759-1796), “To a Louse”, st. 8, 1786.

*If all men knew what others say of them,
there would not be four friends in the world—*

Blaise Pascal, 1822-1875.

If I had a nickel, tell what I'd do, I'd spend it all on candy,

And give it all to you

The loves are not the love. One gets used to loving just one person—

Henry Miller, 1960, in *Die Zeit* newspaper;

In German: *Die Lieben sind nicht die Liebe.*

Picture yourself in a boat on a river / With tangerine trees and marmalade skies.

Somebody calls you, you answer quite slowly, / A girl with kaleidoscope eyes.

John Lennon (1940-1980), “Lucy in the Sky with Diamonds,”

In a 1967 Beatle's Album, “Sgt. Pepper's Lonely Hearts Club Band.”

See “Yesterdays,” pp.443-445

Robert Burns: How did he learn so much in just 27 years? That was his age when he published “To a Louse”, just a year after he published “To a Mousie”, an apology for having plowed up the “mousie's” nest, and in which there occurs the immortal line *The best laid plans of mice and men/Gang aft agley*.

Coralynn Seymour

When I was off in the service, Fred wrote me that when Coralynn Seymour became engaged, hundreds of male suicides piled up in the streets of Covington: she was tall, and beautiful, in every way that the eye could see. She had lovely straight limbs, and generally exhibited the “American Girl” look, whatever that means. Although sexier than Doris Day, Coralynn was just as wholesome. I wonder if she knew why boys stuttered when we talked to her?

Martie Harris

Everybody loved Martha (“Martie”) Harris too, who was the opposite of Coralynn in most aspects: short, and compact in a pleasing way with the cutest turned-up nose and more freckles you ever did see. Once when I showed up for a football date in overalls, her older brother told me, “Boy you have a lot to learn about girls.” Well, yes, but I was engaging in “on-the job-training.” *How else was I to learn?* “O wad some power the giftie gie us!”

Squirming in my humiliation, as Robert Burns’ epigram suggests, someone had given me the “giftie.” In any case, my date with Marty was *just a half* of a date, since somebody in the band was getting her into the football field for free, while I crawled in under the fence because I didn’t have the dough for a tik. See? But then I got to parade around the bleachers with Marty, while the other guy (was it Vernon “Squirrelly” Kidwell?) took her out afterwards for a coke date. I didn’t even have coke money because Mama took any money I earned to the bank to save college.

Martie’s brother’s admonishment was the truest of words ever spoken to me. *Nobody can make you feel inferior without your consent*, said Eleanor Roosevelt in “This is My Story,” 1937. (But, my don’ they try?) Considering this bit of philosophy, isn’t it disgusting how willingly we grovel? I remember a line from a movie “I really hate you groveling the way you do!”

“Clothes make the man” was the often quoted slogan of some haberdasher, wasn’t it? Years later I strutted into Cincinnati’s bars, the “Barn” or upstairs at the “Loft”, in a Maxie’s 10th Avenue zootsuit with a long chain and wide brim hat, just like any other jazz-inspired young person, and with a spit-shine on my thick-soled brogans, and even Mama would have had to look hard to recognize me. But *that wasn’t the real me*, and I vowed to *disprove* the advertising gimmick *clothes make the man*. (I hadn’t yet heard of Einstein’s sartorial indifference.) Nothing has given me more satisfaction than fulfilling this, and finding friends such as Benny, Frank, Joy, Lou Elva, Dottie, Doris, Walt, Hopie, and others, *nota bene*, who looked beyond the superficial aspects of others, especially one’s poverty. This can be changed. But can snobbery?

Harold C. Fox, a Chicago clothier and sometime big-band trumpeter, claimed credit for “zootsuit with the reet pleat, the reave sleeve, the ripe stripe, the stuff cuff, and the drape shape.” Musicians such as Dizzie Gillespie, Louis (Satchmo) Armstrong, Woody Herman, and Stan Kenton (*all of whom I since have heard play*) made it their “garb of choice” (N.Y. Times Obituary by Robert McG. Thomas, Jr., August 1, 1996). (My emphasis.) My longtime dentist-friend, Jack McNeill reminded me in the dental chair, Nov. 18, 2004, that coats of zootsuits had very wide lapels, and the legs of the pants were pegged, contributing to the “draped shape.” The American Heritage Dictionary: “a man’s suit popular in the early 1940’s, characterized by full-legged, tight-cuffed trousers and a long coat with wide lapels and heavily padded wide shoulders.”

At such times, I would think about Martie or her brother and think, “If only they could see me now” (way before the musical “Sweet Charity” popularized the song!), but deep down I knew they would only laugh. *For when you enter a world where what you carry on your back is more important than what you carry in your head, or in your heart, you are always going to be a loser there no matter how gifted. Judging a person by clothes and status, and ignoring a person’s gifts, is just another form of subjugation. I quite agree with Eleanor Roosevelt: “No one can make you feel inferior without your cooperation.”*

I realize that Martie may never have known what her brother said, or may never have approved of it had she known. I describe my anguish as an example of the foolishness that has to be gotten through, or past, in order to finish high school (so lovingly satirized in F. Scott Fitzgerald’s short story, “Bernice Bobs Her Hair.”) Childhood and youth are what *must* be overcome.

Who is King? Probably none of my girl friends liked the boy I became in their presence: overawed, self-conscious, tongue-tied, and painfully aware of their charm, but denying mine. Their power made me obsequious. It’s a hateful condition in any person, but more so in front of a girl friend. “*He who is more kingly is king.*” (Who wrote that?)

Dottie Blank, Doris Rudy, Vernie Neville and Jeanne Ostendorf

Besides Joy, I dated Dorothy (“Dottie”) Blank, the wittiest of the Holme-spun (Holmes-pun?) wits, Doris Rudy, the kindest and gentlest person, HHS friend whom I dated, and kissed goodbye when I left for the Navy. I also kissed “Vernie” (LaVerne) Neville, a pretty blond with an impish face and roguish eyes. Another friend, Jeanne Ostendorf, was a vivacious red-head. The passion underlying “Betrayed by Rita Hayworth” by Manuel Puig illustrates how I felt about her.)

Calla Lily, Calla Smith

This is just a start on the people I had “crushes” on at one time or another. Calla Smith caused me to go mad with love on so many occasions both big and small. I loved her hair in braids, tightly pulled up around her head wearing a straight-cut cotton dress that accentuated the clean lines of her lithe, sylphlike body and her summer-bronzed shapely legs, but never talked to her at length because of my painful shyness. Every since knowing Calla, I have had such a deep affection for her namesake flower, the incomparable Calla Lily.

“Love overcame morality” is a line I read in a novel about two young people in love. I never knew whether my love for Calla or Joy was too weak, vice versa, or whether our morality was too strong. But I trust that the carefully observed taboos were a manifestation of instinct that vanquished the mating instinct. (This was long before I saw Robert Flaherty’s and F.W. Murnau’s 1931 movie “Tabu: A Story of The South Seas”, or read Freud’s “Totem and Taboo”.)

Intellect Is Also Instinctual

After all, intellect is also an instinct, and maybe it told us the best way in the long run. The only trouble with this consolation, as has been succinctly put by John Maynard Keynes: *in the long run we are all dead!*

Sadie Hawkins Day

On the other side of the coin, perhaps girls had it even worse, since, traditionally, they had to wait, and sometimes wait and wait, for a boy to ask them out for a date, except for that blessed event called “Sadie Hawkins Day,” another of Al Capp’s creations, when the tables are turned, and a girl may ask a boy out.

Remember Slam Books?

Somebody would start a 3 by 5 ruled notebook, with the names of various classmates at the top, and then other classmates would write their anonymous opinions of them below. This was either good for the ego, or bad, depending on what was written, naturally. In those days, “nerd” wasn’t in the vocabulary, and in any case studiousness wasn’t the downer then that it is considered to be today, possibly because of *the exigencies of the war made us all much more serious*. And, as I said, above, intelligence is an instinct as much as other groovier attributes. The typical expression that I remember is “Swell,” written with a large number of “ells.” “Groovy” wasn’t an option back then, but

“handsome was.” Nor was “sexy!” allowed, not to say “shapely!” or “stacked!” Nobody commented on anybody’s “pecs,” or “abs,” either. In short, it was mainly a way of conveying popularity. Smaaaarrrrrrrtttt

Lest We Forget

Judging by the warm notes written in my Holmes High School 1945 Year Book, “Lest We Forget,” I had a lot more admirers than I ever realized. But, then, when we wrote in the Year Book, we thought we might never see each other again. And for many of us, that was indeed the case. When I saw the video of the 2002 Reunion Luncheon emceed by Frank Duff, and videoed by Mary Ann Pingel Unkraut, I failed to recognize most of the people. A few, but just a few, were kind enough to identify themselves, and the oversight by those who did not resulted in a keen loss of pleasure to me.

Nedra “Hopie” Cummins

Nedra Hope (“Hopie,” as she signed Lest We Forget opposite my photo) Cummins was a close friend, and one of the most popular girls in High School. Although we never dated, we were linked by the inevitable joke inspired by the triad “Faith, Hope and Charity” bandied around: everyone able to guess who Charity would be. I was the kind of guy that was oblivious to the buzz that was created when I was seen with her, which was frequently. Although Hope could compete with Miss Universe, e.g., Anita Ekberg, in the statuesque department, I resented the implication that I was seeing her for *that* reason. Hopie was no dummy like her detractors. I suppose I did idealize everyone, but I didn’t know *any* wicked classmates, and I didn’t like being accused of something I didn’t do. Now, however, I can imagine what Hope had to endure, and I regret it deeply. As far as I was concerned, girls were as pure as the proverbial snow. In any case, this is the way I thought of them, and I liked them better that way. My love for Joy, indeed for all girls, was platonic in every sense of the word, and I would have been incapable of any other kind because of Mama and my Baptist faith. I was appalled and repelled by the degradation of women that I had to witness in the Navy (see Chapter 55), and the smirks and prurient innuendos. *In this, as in all things, I was being exactly what Mama wanted me to be.* I knew whose child I was, and I never forgot that, and what I owed Mama, for a minute. I bless her memory despite the fact that she instilled in me a great fear of falling in love, and even beyond that, of sex. But in any case, I was in no way prepared to accept the kind responsibility required for a committed relation with a girl, not to mention sex, about which I knew nothing. Beyond that I had no profession and nothing to offer anyone in the way of substance, and wouldn’t until I finished college.

What Did I Know About Girls?

What did I know about women? Nothing beyond what I knew about Mama and Sister, whom I loved and respected. As the cliché goes: *What I didn't know about girls would have filled a book.* (Maybe this book?) But I knew enough not to take a chance at a premature romantic liaison that might have led to an unwanted pregnancy and social ostracism. (Think of Thomas Hardy's 1891 novel "Tess of the D'Urbervilles" regarding the former, and Leo Tolstoy's "Anna Karenina," written in 1874-1876, about the latter. In the 1997 film, "As Good As It Gets," there's a wonderful kissing scene in which Jack Nicholson kisses Helen Hunt, steps back, says, "I know I can do better than that!" and then does. Ah movies!

"Goodbye, Mr. Chips"

This 1939 Classic film is a rendering of the 1934 James Hilton novel about a shy Latin professor, Mr. Chips, in an English school, who marries a vivacious woman only to tragically lose her. He spends the rest of his life devoting himself to his students and becomes a school legend. At the end of the story, Mr. Chips says goodbye to his last class telling them "I will remember you just as you are." When I saw the film, there wasn't a dry eye in the movie house. Robert Donat won the Academy Award for Best Actor and Greer Garson in her first film received a nomination for Best Actress as Mrs. Chips. I think of my Holmes High School Classmates the same way; I realized when I saw the aforementioned video of the October 20, 2004 Reunion Luncheon—I *didn't recognize anyone except Frank Duff, who hadn't changed a bit.* Mary Ann Pingel Unkraut's modesty did not permit herself to be shown, but *I would have recognized her as the pretty girl in the pinafore in the front row in the Class Photograph Ensemble*, which appears in Photographs.

Lou Elva Oldham Again, Pictures Editor

About the photographs at the end of "Lest We Forget, Lou Elva Oldham, as chairman, put in an embarrassing number of photographs of Joy, Frank, Dottie, me, and her many other friends in groups of various sizes. They came as a delightful surprise since I did not have a camera, and many of them I had not seen before. There was an obviously posed one of me and others standing soberly in the library reading books. I have no absolutely no recollection of that photograph—what a wonderful memory-aid old photographs are! Lou, as we often called her, was a deeply loving and devoted friend of many; as mentioned earlier, Lou had an unhappy marriage, which ended when her husband went off with a high school friend. Then in the 90's she suffered a series of debilitating strokes culminating in her death. Like so many worthy people, she deserved better. She was unfailingly devoted and attentive to, and loving of, her friends. (See, e.g., pp. 165-166.) Just like Mary Ann.

CHAPTER 46

SWEET SIXTEEN

*I've loved you as I never loved before, / When first I met you on the village green;/
Come to me or our days of love are o'er, / I've loved you as I've loved you, /
When you were s-w-e-e-t, / When you were s-w-e-e-t, six-t-e-e-n.*

Riley B. King (aka BB King) and Joe Josea

"Love is funny / Or it's sad / Or it's quiet / Or it's mad; / It's a good thing or it's bad, / but beautiful! . . . And I'm thinking / If you were mine / I'd never let you go, / And that would be / But beautiful / I know. "But Beautiful," 1947 song by Johnny Burke and Jimmy Van Heusen.

It's wisdom to believe the heart—George Santayana

Dunkirk: The dark days of Dunkirk (also Dunkerque) of France, even the siege of Stalingrad, were long past by the time I was a senior. Actually, the evacuation at Dunkirk of 338,226 men and women, 139,097 of them French, began on May 26, 1940, and ended on June 4, when I was in my last year of Junior High School. (See *The Readers Digest History of World War II*, pp.40-41.) I had just turned 13 a week earlier, on April 27, and Joy 12 the previous December 29.

The Battle of Britain: On July 10, of the same year the 114-day Battle of Britain began as the Nazi Air Force (*Luftwaffe*) began attacking southern England by air. The Luftwaffe incurred heavy losses, so that by September 15, the tide had turned. As Churchill so eloquently put it: *Never in the field of human conflict was so much owed by so many to so few.* (Tribute to the Royal Air Force, House of Commons, August 20, 1940.)

El Alamein, Pacific Islands, and Kamikaze Attacks

The Allies had defeated Rommel's Panzer divisions in 1942 at El Alamein in North Africa¹, Italy had been invaded at Anzio (a costly mistake in retrospect), the momentous D-Day invasion of France and the Benelux countries across the channel had been achieved, but with staggering casualties. I could taste the sand of the Sahara, and pick the hedges of Normandy out of my hair. Meanwhile Guadalcanal, Iwo Jima, Bataan, Midway, Guam, Okinawa, Saipan (in the Mariannas), the Solomon Islands, were now familiar places to me. (Japanese resistance on Guam ceased on August 10, 1944.) In high school, I kept my eyes glued to the newspapers about the progress of the Allies. Japan was losing the war island-by-island, but estimates on the casualties and invasion of Japan would cost in the millions, a projection based on the tenacity with which the Japanese fought in the islands, and the Kamikaze attacks. They were bound to fight harder for their homeland.

The Battle of the Bulge: Bastogne

Cheering for the Allies was not like pulling for the Cincinnati Reds. When the Reds lost, I was gloomy of course, but when the Allies were battered, in the Battle of the Bulge, for instance, I felt as if I would be handing over my life to the Armed Services forever, or what's worse, we could lose the war. On December 16, 1944, secretly amassed German artillery opened fire in the Ardennes, a plateau region of northern France, southeast Belgium, and northern Luxembourg, east and south of the Meuse River, an area the Allies thought impassable to tanks. This mixture of complacency and disbelief allowed the Germans to amass 25 divisions, ten of them armored. Driving a wedge between the thinly defended Allied lines, the German forces, 275,000 men, 1900 heavy artillery pieces and 950 armored vehicles, created a "bulge" or wedge. By Christmas the Germans had punched a 50-mile dent in the Allied lines. With St. Vith taken and Bastogne besieged, it seemed that Hitler's gamble might pay off. The successful defense of Bastogne by the 101st Airborne Division was the key to the American recovery in the Ardennes. If Bastogne has fallen, the Germans would have been free to attack St. Vith defenders from the rear and reach the Meuse virtually unopposed. As it was, the 2nd Panzer Division skirting Bastogne came close to the Meuse, but lacked the support of units to deal with Patton's counterattack, which raised the siege of Bastogne on December 26.

¹ About which Churchill said, "*Before El Alamein we never had a victory, after El Alamein, we never had a defeat*" (i.e., the turning point of WWII)—from Churchill's "Second World War", vol. 4, chapter 33 (also in the "Oxford Dictionary of Modern Quotations", Tony Augarde (ed.), p. 76).

Field Marshall Montgomery launched his attack towards Houffalize on January 3, 1945. By the 7th, American forces had taken Baraque de Fraiture on the Liège-Bastogne road in deep snow and icy conditions. Two days later Patton launched a renewed attack northwards from Bastogne and Eternach, with nearly 100,000 men. On January 15, the two ends of the pincers met at Houffalize, and mopping up took until the end of January, but by then the German forces largely had been destroyed and the Bulge squeezed out.

Causalities: The Ardennes “Battle of the Bulge” cost Americans 8,497 killed, 46,000 wounded, and 21,000 missing or captured, but the cream of Hitler’s last forces had been mauled. German losses were 12,652 killed, 57,000 wounded, and 50,000 captured. In 1945, these German losses were irreplaceable, especially as the Russians had opened an offensive on the Vistula River on January 12, 1945 after an appeal from Churchill, which forced Hitler to divert troops from the Western Front. (The material on the Ardennes and the Battle of the Bulge has been extracted from the Reader’s Digest Illustrated History of World War II.)

Children are fatalists. There I was, 17 years old, not yet dry behind the ears, never even been properly kissed, never held a full-time job, and the biggest prospect in my future was the chance to serve my country. As I mention in Chapter 45, I never had the guts to do what Jack Nicholson did with Helen Hunt in a 1998 film “As Good As It Gets.” After a mediocre kiss, Jack stepped back like a batter who has swung and missed, and said *I know I can do better than that!* And not only did he, but both of them got Academy Awards in 1999 for the ensuing kiss!

The fact that *now* I see the point of it does not alter the myopic view of these prospects that I held then. Eldridge objected to fighting “Britain’s war”, and opted out with an “essential services” deferment, (the G.O.P. party’s position was isolationist for the longest time, although Senator Arthur Vandenberg of Michigan was able to forge a bipartisan foreign policy in the war years.)

Joy Wept: One day in fall 1944, when Joy was not yet 16, we ran down the hill on Holmes’ campus out of sheer exuberance, when suddenly Joy crumpled and began crying. At first I thought she might have twisted her ankle, but she did not seem injured. I was upset but did not know what to do. As with many boys, I had been disciplined at home not to cry (“Stop that sniveling!”), and to hide my feelings. In any case, I never before had to be a soother. *Joy was crying about the Holocaust* before it was called that, but at that moment *I didn’t quite understand exactly why Joy was weeping*. She didn’t mention anybody specific, such as an aunt or uncle, but I think she was right in crying about the killing of Jews. (See Anne Frank, R and p. 175.) No doubt she would have wept over the A-Bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, but I was not with her in August 1945, nor did she ever broach the subject with me when I did meet her on leave after Boot Camp.

She finally cried herself out. I was embarrassed to have witnessed her break-down, but I ought not have been. The world had such horrible destruction and

killing, enough for anybody to cry over. She was particularly upset by the news she had received of the pogroms. I was taken aback by my insensitivity, yet nobody I ever knew showed any emotion comparable to what Joy was expressing.

I believe that sharing Joy's sadness at the Holocaust, way before anyone had named it that, was the single greatest learning experience of my life. It made me see once and for all the greatness of human beings, and the dominance of human love relationships and emotion over formal education or religion. It was left with an ineffable sadness that Joy did not feel this way too.

Joy Undergoes Electroconvulsive Shock Treatments: In spring 1948, Mrs. Kinsburg saw me working in Shillito's Department Store in Cincinnati (I was taking a break from the steady diet of engineering courses that I had to swallow at the University of Cincinnati after I had transferred there from the University of Kentucky, where I had taken all liberal arts course allowed for the engineering degree.) Mrs. K came over to me to tell me disturbing news: *Joy had suffered from depression, and had undergone electroshock therapy.*

I was stunned. Mrs. K went on to tell me that Joy kept calling my name during and after the induced electroconvulsive therapy. That shocked me too! This was the first time Mrs. K acknowledged that Joy's love for me ran deep beneath the surface. She seemed, if not apologetic to me, deeply compassionate for us as "star-crossed: lovers." (I had not known that Joy was married until then.) Perhaps this was part of the guilt that all parents feel when their child is ill. Sadly, no one had realized this before. Mental illness was a taboo subject, and seeking psychiatric help was considered just for loonies. However, when I met Joy soon after, she seemed her "normal self," although she had lost a lot of memory (maybe the aim of the treatment?)

Joy's Beautiful Soul. Getting back to Holmes High School, I felt elated because I was certain that I had found a rare and beautiful soul—one who, at the age of sixteen (on December 29, 1944), registered pain at the sufferings of her kinsmen oceans away. My own horizon was very circumscribed, and hardly anything farther away than Paducah and the towns Eldridge and Mary lived: Stamford Connecticut first, and then in an Indiana town ironically named *New Palestine*. That shocked me into an awareness of my own moral deficiency. Wasn't it true that I only worried about my own skin and the lives of a few close relatives, e.g., my brother-in-law, Charley Menefee, in France? I just could not visualize the sufferings of the millions dead and their loved ones. Compared to Joy, I was a moral dwarf. Even Sister, whose moral superiority over me was obvious by every yardstick (if superiority or morality can be so measured) never ever gave out such a *crie de coeur*. Right then and there I felt the power of Evil: it could reach out over continents and oceans and move my friend Joy to tears of utter desolation. Heretofore, only God in the name of Jesus had exercised such a power over me, and others I knew.

I very much doubted that Joy ever knew what and how much of my own hatred of the war, the holocaust, and the importance I felt for my short wartime service that I owe to her. I told only one person, Molly, who never met Joy. After the war, I saw her only twice, briefly, both in Cincinnati, once, as I said above, in spring 1948, several months after her Jewish marriage to Joseph Marks,² and again in 1980(?), after the death of Joseph in 1979, when she called me up after a visit to his grave. She was left bereft by his death, and I did what I could to console her. I knew then that I could never tell her how much I owed her because we had lost the intimacy and camaraderie of our long friendship dating back to the First Grade at Fifth District School, when we were chums, and later sweethearts at Holmes High School, especially during the war years.

Telephone Calls from Joy: However we continued to talk to each other over the telephone, especially on birthdays, until about 1998 when she became ill, without my knowing about it. It makes me sad, because *now I can never tell Joy*. She died on August 16, 2003 in her beloved city of Jerusalem. A high school friend, June Parsell, née McCoy, called Joy's brother-in-law, Bernie Marks at 2628 St. Albans (Joy's old address was Erkenbrecker Street, No. 328), in Cincinnati, and despite misgivings he gave her Joy's address. (*That is why June called him instead of me, because she rightly thought that a woman friend would be more acceptable.*) Once we had Joy's address in Jerusalem, we both wrote to her, but, alas, too late. In the return mail, in September, her daughter Ariela sent us the news of Joy's death. I received a "visitation" from Joy on two nights after I received Ariela's letter, an indication of the emotional ties that still bound me to Joy after all these years. (See Chap. 70, for the last two of Joy's Letters.) As Edward Dahlberg has remarked, "Memory is more indelible as ink."

Going back to war, I once read an article commenting on the annual reunions of the survivors of the World War I Battle of Verdun, in which the author wondered at how human beings who had seen so much killing and maiming could bear to come back year-after-year and relive it. (Before 1939-40, World War I was *the* World War, also called the Great War.) And not only relive it, but relieve it with an animation that came only at those times.

² In September 1951, I married a raven-haired beauty, Betty Frances Compton, whom I met at the YWCA Young People's Lounge, and knew by her Georgetown (Baptist) College nickname, "Mickey." She suggested I get a job at Shillito's where she worked. I persuaded her to switch to U. KY (UK), where I could keep an eye on her. Before she left she entered and won the title of Miss Shillito at a Bathing Beauty contest co-sponsored by Shillito's and the Cincinnati Post or Inquirer. She won a dark brown stylish French outfit, matching low-brimmed hat with a veil, suede shoes with curved heels, and a fox fur, all of which was lost on the simple folk and veterans at UK who wore their service fatigues, blue jeans, chambray shirts, and, often, so did their girl-friends.

The author of this article was disapproving and expressed his repugnance at the human race for having displayed this capacity. Although I have never taken part in killing, not even a killing game (except accompanying Dad hunting), I have taken part in groups enough to know the peculiar emotion of remembrance called nostalgia, and I am certain that a love for violence and killing was completely absent from those old codgers. They may talk about the mustard gas attacks, the machine guns and Big Berthas, the long-range guns of World War I, but I am certain that their hearts are in the right place: *they are honoring their friends and comrades who died there*. And they are re-visiting their youth and that of surviving comrades.

How often is it given to anybody to feel at one with a time, a place, and a person or persons? Life often is a parade of ambiguities offering half-choices that are met with half-decisions. Yet there are times with friend, teammates, classmates, bunkmates and pals in the armed forces, or fraternity, or dating and marrying your sweetheart, fathering your child, and then seeing your children graduate, marry, and have a baby—your grandchild! When this miraculous trinity occurs, you have met the right person or persons at the right place at the right time!

Hadassah: Sometime in our senior year at Holmes High School, Joy took me to Cincinnati for a meeting of Hadassah, a women Zionist organization founded in 1912 by Henrietta Szold, that transports children and youths to Israel, and then supports them once they are there. In the USA, its principal activities are education and charitable work. Hadassah is the Hebrew name of Esther, the Jewish woman, who became queen of the Persians, and saved her people from death by intervening with the King. I think Joy's taking me there was proof of her trust in me, and her belief of my caring for not only herself, but also her people. See the Index at Joy, for how they closed the meeting.

CHAPTER 47

THE SENIOR SLUMP

When Der Fuehrer said, "They'll never bomb this place," / Sieg Heil,

Sieg Heil, Right in the Fueher's face!

Not to love der Fuehrer is a great disgrace / Sieg Heil! Sieg Heil!

Right in der Fuehrer's face!

Ist ve not der super race? Yah, ve ist der super race! / Would ve leave dis place if ve could?

Yah, ve would leave dis place if ve could! / Sieg Hiel! Sieg Heil! Right in der Fuehrer's face

Sung by Spike Jones in 1943, way before Mel Brooks' satirical "The Producers," 1968.

The first time I heard the term "senior slump" was in 1973 when my daughter, Heidi, was graduating from high school. It came after all the application forms for college had been signed, sealed and delivered and lasted past graduation day through the summer. Later, I heard of Junior slump, but the fad never caught on—it was just one step above being a dropout.

There were no Senior "slumps" when I went to high school, not only because not all that many were going on to college for the simple reason that almost one-half of the graduating classes were going into the services.

You could lead a normal life up to the age 18, then, pop! you left your family, hometown, homestate, and set off to train for war, and kissing the girls goodbye as often as they would allow. By 1945, some 16,000,000 men and women (mostly men) were in arms. With a population of maybe 130,000,00, with 65,000,000 males, and perhaps less than 30,000,000 adult men and women, the number under arms represents quite a chunk of those of the appropriate age and fitness.

Thanatopsis dominated my thoughts. I had an abhorrence of mud and so decided to become either an airman or a sailor. My youthful predilections "ayed" in favor of the sea, although I knew that many navy men were landlubbers, just as many airmen were technicians on the ground.

And Sea Battles: Besides this I liked the concept of sea battles, probably through the influence of C. S. Forrester's Captain Horatio Hornblower novels. It seemed right, somehow, that a ship that could carry the bigger guns ought to blow the other ships to kingdom come, unless the latter were more mobile, like the destroyer, or the torpedo boat, and their quick kill and run techniques that could overcome the cumbersome dreadnaughts. And if a Kamikaze crashed through your aircraft defenses, then you joined Davy Jones locker at the bottom of the sea in your snow-whites, at least unbesplattered with mud.

The problem with this scenario was that for most of World War II, the United States Navy could pick and choose its recruits from the plethora of boys who evidently shared my conclusions. (The Marines and the Air Force were also difficult branches to get into.)

The Navy's RT Program was one option that the Navy offered men, where RT is the acronym for *Radio Technician*. If you could pass as rigorous test, devised by a Captain Eddy, and called the Eddy Test, on mathematics, electricity and magnetic theory, then you would be sent to what were called radio material schools for periods up to 12 months, or more, training to understand radio and radar theory, and to repair and construct radios and other electronic equipment. I enlisted in the Navy in July 1945, and a year later I was still in school—in Corpus Christi, Texas of all places! I called it the *USS Corpus Christi*.

Dust Off Ohm's and Kirkhoff's Laws: High school physics course gave me the basic knowledge, but I wanted to learn all that I could beyond Kirkhoff's and Ohm's laws, so that passing it would be a snap. (Here Albert Einstein's theory of learning unwittingly was being applied: surround the problem!) Mr. Baulch was our physics teacher, and a more unassuming person could not be imagined. Just as the renowned painter Georges Braque was a former carpenter, Mr. Baulch was a former machinist, or lathe operator, to my recollection. He was best at applications rather than theoretical knowledge. So I had to go elsewhere for what I wanted.

My Solomon: I told Joy's father, Solomon, my difficulties learning the prerequisites to pass the Eddy test necessary to enter the navy as a student in radio-technology, and he volunteered to help me. Mr. Kinsburg proved to be an excellent tutor—knowledgeable, inspiring, and patient. Like his namesake, Solomon, he had so much wisdom. For my subsequent navy career, I owed him much—I passed the Eddy Test! But, for my emotional life, I owed even more, because working with him brought me closer to the family, hence inevitably to Joy.

Getting to Know You: As in any good education there's also so much more to learn than the immediate shortsighted goal at hand—I was given a glimpse, an intimate glimpse, of Jewish Orthodox family life, although we never broke bread together. I loved Joy, in my awkward boyish way, learning from Mr. Kinsburg, and also getting to know Mrs. Kinsburg and Vivien better. We had been acquaintances since the first or second grade at 5th District, but now we became friends.

No doubt, with the exception of Joy, I was more their friend than they mine. As far as I could tell (and I was on their doorstep practically every day, walking Joy home after rehearsal for the class play, or to get a lesson from Mr. Kinsburg), I was the only goy that came into their house as a friend. (I could be wrong about this, but if my memory serves, I encountered nobody besides the nuclear family there.

The Kinsburgs and Jewish Law. The most spectacular aspect of their departure from WASP (see SNAPAFADA in Chapter 50) practices was the ban on work, or lighting fire, s on the Sabbath—from sundown Friday to sundown Saturday. Eruv is the practice allowing Jews to carry on the Sabbath, e.g., a “Shabbes goy” to light the candles, or push the elevator button. Creative people no doubt find other ways to get the cows milked without breaking Jewish laws. An Orthodox Jew may not carry heavy loads, and is restricted to the area of the house and grounds. I have been told that there is a way out however. In case of need, one may extend the boundary of ones domain, a practice called Eruv enabling Jews to carry on the Sabbath. I also have been told that Jews may not cause pain, or suffering in an animal, hence a cow heavy with milk must be milked, and also must be fed in spite of the prohibition of carrying heavy loads, e.g., bales of hay. On this theme, I read a short story by Nathan Englander in which the protagonist was permitted by a rabbi to visit a prostitute “For the Relief of Unbearable Urges.” This is not an unusual practice I have been told. In some places in the Middle East there are Jewish prostitutes for Arabs, and Arab prostitutes for Jews! See *The Shabbat Elevator* by Alan Dundes for much more on Eruv. Also consult “Two Jews, Three Opinions” in the Bibliography.

Now many people would think that eating kosher would be a great departure from Christian practices, but not if you are a Catholic observing Lent. Other Jewish observances are Yom Kippur, the Day of Atonement on the 10 day of Tishri (October), Rosh Hashana, Jewish New Year, literally, “the head of the year,” Hanukkah, also Hanukah, an eight day festival commemorating the 165 B.C. victor of the Maccabees over the Epiphanes, and the rededication of the Temple at Jerusalem, also called the Festival of Lights, or Feast of Dedication.

Mr. Kinsburg, Polymath: Mr. Kinsburg was indisputably the most learned man outside my teachers that I knew. Of course, Mr. Duff knew the smelting business ground up you might say. And Mr. Cecil Craig, Benny’s father, was a veteran railroader. And I am sure Mr. Kelly could give Mr. Kinsburg some pointers on military procedure, but Mr. Kinsburg had a deeper knowledge of electricity, it seemed to me, than even Mr. Baulch. At least to a very green seventeen-year-old, it appeared that way, especially in his understanding of the mathematical aspects of the subject.

“Doc” Coker was the teacher that combined the ideals of theory and practice use. He could write out strings of equations, or reactions, clear across the black-board before you could say “chemical reaction”, and at the same time, he could talk to you in

everyday language: “if you pour water on sulfur in your beaker, then you’ll wish a truck would hit you instead. Yeah!” Presumably that a dangerous chemical reaction—you should pour water on the sulfur. Or is it the reverse?

Harry T. Mitchell taught math the way math is traditionally taught: like it was hermetically sealed off from experience. Not that he was any worse—on the contrary he was an excellent expositor—than any other math professor in this respect. It appears certain that math professors will put as little physics, chemistry, biology, economics, and other applications into their lectures, as these disciplines put math theory into theirs. Each knows something of the other but the knowledge appears not to give them the same pleasure as their own subject, which I suppose is reasonable in our age of specialization.

I Pass The Eddy Test! Anyway, the upshot of it all was that I passed the Eddy Test for R.T. training in the Navy. Just 2 out of 41 in Northern Kentucky got by. The Covington Post proudly cited me, and other fellow, John “Whitey” Sweitzer, and we became fast friends. After we were inducted and rode the train to Great Lakes Training Center together, passing through the great city of Chicago for the first time. (See Chapters 52 and 55.) Mr. Kinsburg was as proud of me as you would have imagined, but it was beyond my Dad to know just what was involved. However, I did put in lights in the basement of our new residence on 20th Street. I had learned *something* useful: stringing the wires *in parallel* instead of arranging the lights *in series* meant that each light got the full 110 volts! I was a little apprehensive before screwing the fuse back into the fuse-box, but . . . *EUREKA!*

As I remarked on p.158, Lou Alva Oldham, Chair of the Annual Committee put in an embarrassing number of photographs at the end of “Lest We Forget,” of Joy, Frank, Dottie, me, and many other friends in groups of various sizes. This came as a surprise since I did not have a camera, and, except for those with Joy and Frank, I had not seen them before. There was one of me and other students I could not identify in which I was standing in the library solemnly reading a book. Since I was wearing a tie, it obviously was pre-planned. What a wonderful memory-aid old photographs are! Lou, as we called her, was a deeply loving and devoted friend of many, and as Joy told me later, had an unhappy marriage that ended with her husband walking off with a high school friend. She also suffered a series of debilitating strokes that culminated in her death. She deserved better of life than she got.

Informal Photographs in “Lest We Forget: I will give a brief run-down of these. Although “Lest We Forget” is un-paginated, the one of me in the library is on a page with the number 309 under a study hall. I don’t know what the number 309 represents, but for convenience, think of it as page 309 (which it isn’t) and number the preceding, and following pages, accordingly. Then, on page 304 is the Staff of the Holmespun, with Lou Elva, Cecil (“Benny”) Craig, Lorraine Gooch, and two other

students. Below that photo is the Staff of The Student. Dorothy Stephans, the faculty adviser signed my copy, but I'm unable to ID her, but I can ID Lois Strother, Mary Carpenter, Clarence ("Lefty") Harden, Ruth Stephenson, Mary Lou Hill, Joy McCarty, Joy Kinsburg, the editor, Walter Ferguson, Eunice Etler, and Dottie Blank. On the next page, p.305, are the G(irl) R(eserves) and Hi-Y's: Front Row from Left to Right: Lou, Edith Rogers, Lefty, and others, e.g., Barry O'Grady is third from the right end. Second Row: Dottie Blank, Lois, etc. Don Jones is the fourth student from the left end of the third row, Frank Duff is on the right end, and George Ries is the fourth student to Frank's left. Eldon Pickett is second from the end of the last row, Phil Riley is third from the right end, and Stan Brenning is to his left. On the same page is Boy's Service Club with Gus Berger, Benny, Walter Waymeyer, and a student to their left.

On p. 306, Bob Mills is holding the faucet down for a girl, and on p. 307, Calla Smith(?), Mary Ann Pringle (Unkraut), and Ed Winters with others are walking in the hall. At Assembly on p. 308, we pledge allegiance to the flag, remember?

We discussed p. 309 above. On p. 310, is "Cafeteria, Cooking, and Sewing." On top of p. 311 is a Chemistry lab-class with Gus Berger, and Cecil Walden, who ranked fifth in the class, with an average of 93.50, just 0.01 behind Walter Waymeyer's 93.51! Below that is a physics workshop with Mr. Baulch, "Lefty", Edith, Jim Beers, and another student. On p. 312 is Football (Don Jones, and Barry O'Grady), Basketball (Eldon Pickett . . .). On p. 313 is Bowling, with Doris Rudy seated smack dab in the middle of the front row, Roberta Anderson on the far right of row two, Lefty on the back row, third from the left, and Bill Emmons second from the right.

On p. 314 is Dramatics Club, with Edith Rodgers to the far left, Joy Kinsburg seated in front of her, Robert Crosby holding forth facing the class at the right, Doris Rudy standing left and back of him, Dorothy Cabage to her left, and Lou Elva, is easy to identify with the open shirt collar, as was her wont, to Dorothy's left. On the same page is a journalism class, and also a small typing class. On p. 315, standing regally with their crowns are Benny Craig and Ruth Stephenson, the Senior (mis-labeled Junior) Prom King and Queen. On the same page is a photograph of a Y-Dance.

On pp. 316-317 is the Class Prophecy that some "brainiac" thought up for each of us! E.g., Benny was to be a beach-comber, Frank, a stage hand, I was to be a heavy weight boxer, and Joy Kinsburg (whose last name was misspelled with an e replacing the u) an elevator operator at Pogue's (a Department Store in Cincinnati.) On pp. 318-319 is the "Song to Remember" with Benny "Going My Way", Frank "Who Dat Up Dere?" Carl "My Ideal," and Joy "Why Don't You Do Right?" (Why don't you do right, Baby?)

Then follows two delicious pages of group photographs, on pp. 320-321, right preceding Alma Mater, on p. 322, and the Annual Committee (Lou, Mary Carpenter, Lorraine Gooch, Bill Emmons, Anna Leers, Grace Fisher, and Nedra Hope Cummins) on

p. 323. This precedes the advertisements. Top of p. 320, is a duo: Lorraine and Lou Elva, the second below that is Frank with his tongue stuck out, a frequent display of what he thinks of you. And below that is Lou and Carl clasping a hand of the other (to reduce stress?) In the middle of p. 320, near the top, is a row of seven cyclists on their bikes, with Joy third from the right; below them is Lois Strother and Benny, shoulder-to-shoulder; and below them is a sweet head-to-head photo of June McCoy with her boyfriend, Hagan Thompson (HHS '46 student, who moved to Jackson, Mississippi in summer '45.) To the right of Benny and Lois is Box Cox between Marty Harris and Mary Lou Hill. On top of p. 321 are Marty Harris and Mary Lou Hill, to their right are Ed Winters with a friend, in the middle is Lois, Benny, Dottie, and Carl, then Frank in a hat, then Benny and Carl together, with Calla to our lower left, and Calla (?) with a friend second photo to her left. At the bottom are Carl, Benny, Dottie, Joy, and Lois. Bob Cox and Ed Winters are in groups in the middle right side. At the front of Lest We Forget, following the photographs of the faculty, some in groups, is the Class Song with lyrics (*We sing a ditty, that we think is pretty . . .*) by Roberta Anderson and music by Walter Waymeyer. Across from that is a photograph of our class officers: Frank Duff Vice.Pres., Dorothy Blank, Secretary, Cecil Craig, President., and Phil Gardner, Treasurer.

CHAPTER 48

THE CARNIVAL OF LIFE

The important thing about acting

is to be able to laugh and cry.

If I have to cry, I think of my sex life.

If I have to laugh, I think of my sex life.

Glenda Jackson, Actress (“Women in Love”

“A Touch of Class

The most important thing in acting is honesty;

once you learn to fake that, you’re in!—Anon.!

Alfred Hitchcock once told a method actress (Kim Novak?)

when she said that she couldn’t feel it: “*Then fake it.*”

Acting is happy agony—Alec Guinness, 1904-2000

The sins of the flesh have always

been very attractive to me—all of them.

Michael Caine, Actor, born in 1933.

Power is the great aphrodisiac.

Henry Kissinger, quoted in the NY Times, January 19, 1971

Guns aren’t lawful; Nooses give;

Gas smells awful; You might as well live.

Dorothy Parker, 1893-1967

“Resumé”, in “Enough Rope”, 1927.

Between two evils, I always pick the one I haven’t tried before.

Mae West, screen play for “Klondike Annie,” 1936

Envy, like lightning seeks the highest places—Livy (Titus Livius), 59BC-17AD

High School is like a family in that you do not fully realize how important it is until you have left it, and usually only when you have left for some time. I remember one

political columnist (or was it a comedian?) saying that the way to understand Richard M. Nixon's Presidency was to remember what high school was like!

Sociologists love to count the percentage of Nobel Laureates, Pulitzer Prize winners, bank presidents, etc., who were the first-born children in their families. (It is high—about 50%). The message is clear: your station in life is determined by your station in your family. *Numero uno es simplemente numero uno, sabe?* (Number one is simply number one, you know?)

Going from family to high school I dropped from 3rd to 16th (academically, but there were about 250 in the Holmes High School Class of 1945) whereas Joy stood still: *numero uno*. Percentagewise, however, I climbed from the bottom half to the top ten percent! (Benny stayed Number 2.).¹ Benny later was Chairman of the Department of Mathematics at the University of Cincinnati.

I escorted Joy to the Senior Prom. Her gown was pastel with a V-neck that did not quite plunge, but nevertheless revealed that Joy, at age 16, wasn't a little girl anymore. Oddly, I had never noticed before how much she had grown in all the years we had known each other—since Grade 1 at Fifth District. By now, I was at the height of my growth, 6' 2" tall and Joy was 5 feet 6 or 7 inches tall, with deep brown hair, though not as dark as Vivien's, which she burnished to a high gloss. Her lively eyes were brown, and sparkled with amusement and intelligence.

Joy's Beauty and Intelligence

Joy liked to act off-stage as well as on, and occasionally she alienated classmates with her "put-ons," but, no doubt, her beauty and intelligence were the major barriers between Joy and the wide popularity that Dorothy Blank, Benny Craig, Frank Duff or Lou Alva Oldham enjoyed. Perhaps good looks *and* intelligence more tolerated in men is part of our double standard. Joy was good *at everything*.

. . . And Daffy At Times

On the other hand, Joy had a "daffy" side to her that nobody could penetrate. She would "disassociate" (in the modern lingo) in your presence, and suddenly be all by herself somewhere far away, a kind of catatonia would seize her. (Dr. Oliver Sacks in an article in the August 23, 2004 New Yorker explained on p. 68 that this is related, and even a kind of,

¹ Benny's brother Clyde was one of my idols after Herbert Kelly died. Although not naturally superior, by his methodical training Clyde developed into a track star. His was the first instance I encountered of "suffering" in order to win.

“bipolar disorder.”) In any event, Joy never returned to your company after those trips to what I called “La La Land.”

At such times, if at home, Mrs. Kinsburg would sadly send me home, certain that as a family friend, I would understand, and not cause Joy further misery by telling others. It was as if Mrs. Kinsburg understood Joy, but realized that not everyone could be expected to. These disassociations puzzled me, but eventually I interpreted them as manifestations of emotional conflicts only part of which were created by the holocaust being enacted in Europe at that time.

Joy, the Belle of the Ball

At the prom, Joy was truly there with me, and indisputably a “Belle of the Ball.” I had learned the steps for the waltz and fox-trot, so I asserted my rights on the dance floor, holding her in my arms, smelling her freshly shampooed hair, but taking care not to crush the corsage of roses (which cost a dollar back then.)

Jitterbug was the current dance rage, having succeeded the Big Apple, but I never quite managed to keep up with the fast pace it required. Ordinarily Joy did not dance—perhaps she got special permission for this one night—so she did not seem to mind sitting out the Bumble Bee and other Boogies.

Moonlight Sonata au Clair de Lune

Soon after the prom, the whole class was invited to an all-night party at a lakeside cottage at Jim Cobb’s house. (In response to my query of April 2004, Frank Duff told me he thinks the lake was called Ryland.) I was delirious with happiness: *Mama gave me permission!* That meant I could feast my eyes on Joy all night. It was the happiest day of my life up to then.

The next morning the entire class got up at daybreak, and went for a pre-breakfast swim. I almost lost my mind when Joy came out in a swimming suit that could not conceal the obvious. She was exquisite. If I had ever hoped to salvage something of my sanity from my (doomed) relationship with Joy, that hope was dashed on the torso of her lovely body that bright, sunny morning. I sank deeper in love with this brilliant, studious girl who metamorphosed into a bathing queen from her intellectual cocoon.

Carl, Like a Sick Poet? I was just like the sick poet who went from “bed to verse.” My only chance for Joy lay in my service to the country. I hoped to come back grown up enough to comprehend her deep and complex emotions. With her intellectually, I was to Joy what sartorially I was with Marty Harris, but, even worse, morally I was wearing a hair-shirt instead of something as refined as my overalls! *My problem both morally and intellectually was that when people said that this or that was right or wrong, often I did not have the experience to make a judgment.*

Was masturbation wrong, harmful or evil? Everybody said so, but how could I be sure that anything that felt that good could be all wrong? And how could I be sure that the same people who condemned it did not in fact play with themselves? Woodie Allen quipped, "Don't knock masturbation, it's sex with someone I love." (Elsewhere he calls it his "favorite hobby.") But what about those "nocturnal emissions," that plague young men? These orgasms, euphemistically called "wet dreams, are involuntary, and occur more frequently during periods of abstinence. At least Mama never complained about our "starching the sheets," another expression for wet dreams.

Woodie Allen and Mae West on Sex

"Is Sex dirty? Only if it is done right", is another of Woodie Allen's jokes, in this case a 'Chapter Title' of his 1972 film, "Everything You Ever Wanted to Know About Sex (But Were Afraid to Ask.)" About bisexuality, "It immediately doubles your chances for a date on Saturday night", a quote of Allen's in the New York Times, December 1, 1975. You can read thousands more in "The New Penguin Dictionary of Modern Quotations", 2001. Woodie Allen's name at birth was Allen Steward Königsberg.²

Mae West quipped, "When I'm good, I'm very good, but when I'm bad, I'm better. This is a takeoff on the familiar poem of Longfellow: *There was a little girl / who had a little curl / right in the middle of her forehead; / When she was good, / she was very good, / but when she was bad, she was horrid.* (According to Bartlett, this was written for the poet's children "on a day when Edith did not want to have her hair curled.")

"It is not the men in my life that count, it's the life in my men," is another Mae West quip, this one from her screenplay, "I'm No Angel," 1933. A take-off on another phrase, "A hard man is good to find," is another of Mae West's *double-entendres*. She was famous for her figure, which was immortalized in World War II by seamen who called their inflated life vests, "Mae Wests." As indicated above, her plays and skits were replete with sexual innuendos, such as "Come up and see me sometime," cooed in a seductive voice. "When women go wrong, men go right after them," she noted (from her own experience?) She thereby changed the status of women. "I used to be Snow White, but I drifted," is another Mae West quip.

² Königsberg means "King's Mountain," or "Hill," a variant of Ginsberg according to the Oxford Dictionary of Names (ODN). Kinsburg may well be a variant of Ginsberg, although the ODN does not claim this. Berg indicates a mountain, e.g., Rosenberg (Rose Mt.), or Greenberg (Green Mt.) Jews in Germany were not allowed to have trade names such as other Germans had, e.g., Fleischer, for butcher, Schneider, for tailor. While "burg" as in Kinsburg can be a habitation name, a change in a vowel change is not considered significant by linguists. Burg is the German suffix meaning "town of", or "city of", as in Hamburg, as "ton" is in English, e.g., Covington.

Sin Anyone? For had I not learned from the Bible that *all* men sin, and only Jesus was free of sin? And had not Jesus said to the multitude, “Let he who has not sinned throw the first stone”. And when he looked up, had they not all gone away?

Heterosexual Love? I knew virtually nothing about it, absolutely nothing about sex. I was just eighteen years old; I had already been inducted into the United States Navy; I was willing to do anything the country asked of me that was honorable and decent, yet I was still a baby in life’s deepest experience. (And I was to remain that way all during my navy service and after, as so many did.) But not only sexually, *I was still a baby emotionally*. I cried easily and was deeply attached to my family; I could not imagine life away from home; and what was worse, I could not imagine liking it, wherever it was. I recall a joke about an application form. Beside “Sex”, the applicant wrote, “Yes.” I would have written, “No.” The old joke about a “girl in every port” did not entice me, because I was already in love with Joy, but *I did not have a chance because I was not Jewish*. I now wonder if that wasn’t in some way a liberation that suited me more than I knew at the time. I think of the ass that so burdened himself with straw that just one more broke him—I wasn’t in any way ready at the age of eighteen to start a family, and assume the responsibility.

The fact is that in my heart I knew that Joy was not for me. She was simply too precious—like gold or sapphire—and I was of quite a bit more rawhide from my family’s countrified origins. This was not to say that I was unworthy in any human sense. Some of the letters Joy wrote to me, e.g., May 7 and May 17, 1946, read like love letters. (See Chapter 70.) My letters to Joy have not survived, but I do hope I reciprocated, i.e., revealed my heart; yet given my immaturity, I probably did not.

The Urbanity of the Kinsburgs: Still, Joy’s parents, Henrietta and Solomon Kinsburg, were much more urbane than mine were. Dad and Mama lived as if they were still back on the farm. The only things Mama liked about cities were the indoor-toilets, the sidewalks, and the stores. Mostly they talked about Paducah and their friends and relations there as it were yesterday.

In this connection, I will quote an observation about the playwright Carl Zuckmayer, who wrote “The Devil’s General” (*Der General des Teuffels*), a play (and film) that portrayed the evil and horrors of Nazi Society. He wrote the play on his farm in Connecticut, 5000 miles or more from the corruption of the Third Reich, but a friend commented that while he *resided* in Connecticut, he *lived* in Germany.

The same was true of my parents vis-a-vis Covington and Paducah: *their bodies were in Covington but their hearts and minds were still embedded in the rich soil of Paducah*. I might add that their humor was embedded there too. The following song is by Pete Seeger in 1961:

Where Have All The Flowers Gone?

Where have all the flowers gone?

Where have all the flowers gone, long time ago?

Where have all the flowers gone?

Gone to young girls everyone!

When will they ever learn, when will they ever learn?

This stanza is repeated by replacing “flowers” by “young girls”, and in the fourth line “young girls” by “young men”, then successively repeat the substitutions: young men/soldiers, soldiers/graveyards, and finally graveyards/flowers, to complete the cycle. The last three lines of the fourth stanza is”

Where have all the soldiers gone? / Gone to graveyards every one!

When will they ever learn, / oh when will they ever learn?

Marlene Dietrich sang a German version and it became a substantial hit in W. Germany on Electrola in 1965: *Sag Mir Wo die Blumen Sind*, i.e., “Tell Me Where The Flowers Are.”

CHAPTER 49

THE DECLINE OF THE WASP: HOLOCAUST AND AUSCHWITZ

*In future centuries, if there are any, the twentieth century
will be known as the century of Auschwitz and Hiroshima—Primo Levi, 1919-1987*
*Jewishness in the twentieth century is a club from
which there can be no resignations—George Steiner*

It takes, I thought, a truly divine love to choose this people—Joseph Roth
How odd of God / To choose / The Jews / But not so odd / As those who choose /
*A Jewish God/ And spurn the Jews—1924, Norman Ewer, 1885-1976 (in Oxford Dict. of Humorous
Quotations.)*

Not odd / Of God. / Goyim / Annoy 'im—Leo Rosten, 1908-,
I'm not a Jew. I'm Jewish. I don't go the whole hog.
Jonathan Miller, 1934-, in "Beyond the Fringe." Cf. Disraeli in the Index/Glossary.

WASP is the acronym for White Anglo-Saxon Protestant, which describes most, but not all, U.S. Presidents up to Kennedy, who was not only Catholic, but also Irish, or Celtic. It is a symbol for the ruling class in America's first 200 years. Me? As a Baptist, I was a WASB. According to the American Heritage Dictionary "a Saxon" is a member of the Germanic tribal group that invaded Britain in the fifth and sixth centuries A.D. with the Angles and the Jutes." (A.D., or *Anno Domini*, has been replaced widely by C.E., or the Common Era. *Angle* is the "Anglo" part of Anglo-Saxon.) Thus, the Roosevelts (Dutch ancestry) and Eisenhower (German) were Anglo-Saxons, hence Wasps according to this classification.

All But Three US Presidents Have Been WASPS

It's hard to account for the fact that all but three US Presidents have been WASPs. The exceptions are John Fitzpatrick Kennedy, an Irish-Catholic (who said, "I do not speak for the Church on public matters, and the Church does not speak for me," in order to undercut criticism. It worked! But the way I remember it was "I do not tell the Pope what to do, etc."), Nixon, a Quaker (who swore like the proverbial sailor, as recorded on tapes of his conversations in the Oval Office), and Reagan, of Irish, that is, Celtic, ancestry. (See "The Anglo-Saxon Chronicle" in the Bibliography.)

Russell Baker, in a tongue-in-cheek Op-Ed article for the New York Times in the late 90's, wrote that WASP should be replaced by SNAPFADA, since "the Norman French were bedrocks of Waspery", and P for Protestant ought to be expanded to PAAD, where A is for Agnostic, another A for Atheistic, and D for Deist. Then, rearranged to form SNAPFADA! *But where does W fit in?*

Jews Are Better? In his appreciation of James Joyce (Vanguard Press, 1948), Frank Budgen quoted Joyce about the Jew as a family man: "They are better husbands than we are, better fathers, and better sons." When I told my wife, Molly Sullivan, about this, she said with merriment, "He obviously never married a Jew!" (Joyce might have been thinking of Italo Svevo, "who served as an initially unwitting prototype for Leopold Bloom in *Ulysses*." (See, e.g., John McCourt's "James Joyce," p. 53.) Molly's two previous husbands had been Jewish, so I thereby have become the standard bearer for Christendom! Also, see Joseph Roth's take on this directly below. Thorstein Veblen gave a succinct argument on the subject of the intellectual superiority of the Jews. (See the Viking "Portable Veblen.")

Joseph Roth (1885(?)–1939) disagreed. After reading reports in the newspapers about the fighting in Palestine between the Jews and the Arabs, where Jewish journalists in Berlin in "appalling black on white"[wrote] "Thank God not pogroms but honest-to-goodness battles", Roth comments: "Here you could finally understand that the views that Jews are cleverer than other people is erroneous. Not only that, they are sometimes more stupid . . . Of course, it's only natural they should put up a fight in Palestine [where they were attacked], but to have their heroism confirmed to them in the newspapers—having been uncommonly heroic over thousands of years without journalistic clichés—that furnishes proof of that. No, there are several hundred thousand idiots, who fail to understand the destiny of their people." Roth believed that the destiny of the Jews was not national but supranational, that Jews adapt everywhere, and are at home nowhere, including Palestine (Joseph Roth, "Reports from Berlin, 1920–1933", pp. 49–50. (See the Bibliography.)

Joseph Roth "speculates comically": "It takes, I thought, a truly divine love to choose this people. That is, to be 'God's Chosen'. This and some of the following

paragraph was quoted by Joan Acocella, in the January 12, 2004 New Yorker Magazine, but I have taken the fuller quote from Roth's book, "Voice of Memory: Interviews 1961-1989" (see Bibliography), which Acocella referenced and which I purchased and read:

"There were so many others that were nice, malleable, and well trained: happy balanced Greeks, adventurous Phoenicians, artful Egyptians, Assyrians with strange imaginations, northern tribes with beautiful, blond-haired, as it were, ethical primitiveness and refreshing forest smells. But none of the above! The weakest and far from loveliest of peoples was given the most dreadful curse and most dreadful blessing, the hardest law and the most difficult mission: to sow love on earth, and to reap hatred".

The Intellectual Superiority of the Kinsburgs

Nevertheless, the intellectual and moral superiority of the Kinsburgs were unquestionable, and, at the same time, they were physically beautiful. I have mentioned Joy's brilliance and statuesque beauty but her sister Vivien was a raven-haired, almond-eyed beauty herself, and also bright. All this was coupled with the fact that they were ardent Zionists, that is, committed to a homeland for Jews and Judaism. Israel was not a nation back then, but Jews had been promised one by the British in the 1927 Balfour agreement *provided that the rights of the existing communities would be safeguarded*. Israel became a nation in 1948, for the backing of the Western allies, partly in fulfillment of the Balfour agreement, and partly for the Jewish divisions and underground that fought and sabotaged the Nazis. In any case, Joy planned to help Israel in any way she could, and I did not doubt that any help Joy could give would be considerable.

I was right about that. Joy attended the University of Cincinnati, graduated, and then attended the Ohio State University in Columbus, where in 1957 she obtained a Ph.D. in Biochemistry. In August 1948, Joy married Joseph Marks, a four-year veteran of World War II, and they had two daughters, Shoshana born October 18, 1952, and Ariela on April 5, 1961. In 1970, the family immigrated to Beersheba (also, Beersheva, literally, the city of seven wells) in Israel, fulfilling Joy's childhood desire. In December 1974 and January 1975, I gave some mathematics lectures in Israel, at Haifa and Jerusalem, and, while traveling around, I looked up Joy but missed her, because, as she explained later over the phone, she often stayed at the Beersheva hospital. She spoke of the difficulty she had with the medications she took, when what used to help no longer did, a familiar problem with psychotropic—indeed all—drugs.

Joy's Telephone Calls and Joseph's Death.

In 1980(?), Joy called to tell me that Joseph had died. Some months after this, she called, weeping and obviously grieving after a visit to Joseph's gravestone. I did what little I

could to console her. In September 2003, Ariela wrote me the sad news that Joy died suddenly on the morning of August 16. (She would have been 75 years old on her birthday, December 29.) In a telephone call I made on February 23, 2004, I asked Ariela when her father died, and she told me Oct 17, 1979, one month short of his 59th birthday. Irrationally, I was thinking Ariela might have been my child had Joy and I married. My daughter Heidi was born on September 22, 1955, and Cindy, on March 10, 1957. So I asked Ariela when she was born. She told me that she was born on April 5, 1961, and that, Joy, had become ill in spring 1948, several months before her marriage.

Joy's Electroshock Therapy

These dates jibed with my memory of the time in spring 1948, related in Chapter 46, when Joy's mother, Henrietta, espied me while I was working as a shoe salesman at Shillito's in downtown Cincinnati. (As I have stated elsewhere, I was taking a break from the steady diet of technology and science courses at the University of Cincinnati.) She came over to see me. As we chatted, she abruptly told me that Joy had undergone electroshock treatments, and had asked for me at these times, while still groping for her memory. I was shocked, in fact stunned, and, for once, speechless. How could this have happened to that lovely, brilliant girl? At the time, I knew nothing about mental illness, and I did not know what was in store for Joy, but based on a 1948 movie, "The Snake Pit," that I saw about this time, electroshocks convulse the brain in order to re-channel thoughts into happier modes. (This movie was one of the first to explore compassionately mental illness and its treatment.) It seemed to me that Mrs. Kinsburg belatedly had discovered the depth of our love for each other, not that I could in any way have prevented her illness. Soon after this, Joy came to see me and to invite me to their home on Erkenbrecker for dinner to meet Joseph. It was the most awkward evening of my life, especially since they insisted I accompany them to the Taft Auditorium in downtown Cincinnati, to listen to an opera that I don't recall a single aria from. Irrationally, I kept thinking of the title of Hemingway's "To Have and Have Not," but in the 1944 movie at least Humphrey Bogart and Lauren Bacall had some "fiery romantic bouts," and subsequently married. No wonder I became a movie addict! (Movies as wish fulfillments?)

Going back to the alleged subject of this chapter. It appeared to me that the Holocaust may have "proven" the Jewish thesis that Christ was not the Messiah, and that Christianity was not the true off-shoot of Judaism, since neither could prevent its believers from behaving worse than animals. (We are still doing it all these years later!) Almost all species of animals have survival mechanisms that prevent them from killing one of the same species. Rats, spiders, praying mantises, and humans are exceptions.

I do not mean that Christians stopped believing, rather that Jews now had an invincible bulwark against the Christian threat, not that 2,000 years since Christ had not

already supplied them with enough. As a Christian, I felt morally degraded in contrast by the eagerness with which the Jews leaped to the defense of their own minority in Europe and elsewhere, while the war was going on between predominately Christian nations, and while Christians barely reached out to help.

Fussell on Why There Was No S.O.S. To Save the Jews. Paul Fussell in "The Great War and Modern Memory" gives one explanation for this, blaming it on the groundless atrocity stories circulated about the Germans in WWI. Thus, the allies simply did not believe the stories about the gas ovens and the extermination of the Jews "until it was too late." Eisenhower himself made a comment on this. "I want every American unit not actually in the front line to see this place," in "World War II Remembered, Vol. 5, 1945: Victory at Last." Also see the Index at Holocaust and Eisenhower.

Bonhoeffer and Wallenberg

Moreover, the story of the bravery of men involved in the plot against Hitler was not known to the public until after the War. In Dietrich Bonhoeffer (1906-1945?), and his friends who were executed in the failed plot to kill Hitler, Germany and Christendom had their own authentic heroes. Bonhoeffer was imprisoned in 1943 and hanged in 1945. Another inspiring hero was Raoul Wallenberg (1927-1947?) who, under his cover as a "diplomat" in Hungary, devised a Swedish Protection passport, and arranged "Swedish houses" offering Jews refuge, thereby saving up to 100,000 Jews. When USSR occupied Hungary in 1945 he was taken to Soviet headquarters and never seen again. (From the Cambridge Biographical Encyclopedia.)

Roosevelt and Jews

Roosevelt's image has been tarnished considerably by modern research on his failure to save millions of Jews from gas ovens. (See the paragraph headings on the following pages: "Primo Levi: Who Knew?" and "James MacDonald's Diary.") No matter how he justified his refusal on the principle of not negotiating with Nazis short of unconditional surrender, the unprecedented scale of Nazi savagery demanded of him unprecedented force that might have saved millions.

Why should the relatively small European Jewish community have to sacrifice in human lives twenty-times what the USA, the biggest of the Western Allies lost in the war? This violated every reasonable scale of comparison, and cannot be explained anymore than other genocides in Europe can be explained, e.g. the Albanians and the Armenians. If help for the Jews was not given, it was not from want of being told what was happening, for Roosevelt, adhering to the Allied policy of "Unconditional Surrender", explicitly forbade trading trucks for Jews in a deal arranged by a Jewish committee to save lives.

Reverse Anti-Semitism? I did not know all of this then, but I did know that I was not worthy of being Solomon and Henrietta Kinsburg's son-in-law, so unworthy that it was never mentioned. Later, some joker told me in a different context that I was a victim of "reverse anti-Semitism," but I did not believe him because I do not believe in such tripe.

As far as I could tell, there was no other steady boyfriend in Joy's life at Holmes High School. (At least none visible) I didn't know who her friends were at the Synagogue, or even if they had choir lofts there. I often walked her to her home. It gave me a thrill to be seen walking with the tall, slim, beautiful, vivacious girl who *dazzled* me with her wit and warmed me with her charm. But, it was not for real—since nothing could come of it: *I wasn't a Jew*.

The Holocaust and Auschwitz

During WWII, Auschwitz (now Oświęcim, with a diacritical mark under the c, like ç) was the site of the largest Nazi concentration camp. According to Raymond P. Scheindlin in *A Short History of the Jewish People*, "Eichmann chose Poland as the extermination center because that was the main center of Jewish population, and because of the [Polish] ancient and deeply rooted—anti-Semitism" (*ibid.* p. 211). Scheindlin illustrates with a map (p. 205, *ibid.*) of European Jewry on the eve of the Holocaust (1937-41): Poland had 3,275,000 Jews, while Germany had in comparison "only" 365,000. Other figures: Ukraine—1,700,000, Central Russia—900,000, Romania—800,000, Hungary—440,000, White Russia—400,000, France—270,000, Austria—180,000, Lithuania—160,000, Greece—75,000, Turkey—75,000, Bulgaria—50,000, Belgium—40,000, Czechoslovakia—36,000; None of the rest exceeded Sweden's 10,000, except Ukraine's 30,000—see Index at Grossman. These numbers total 8,776,000. With a conservative estimate of 6,000,000 killed in the Holocaust, one realizes how few escaped the horrible German efficiency in killing. A map (*ibid.*, p.207) shows the routes of the pathetically few who managed to escape.

These figures are not precise. For example, in a TLS March 12, 2004 review by Caroline Morehead of, "Nine Suitcases" by Béla Szölt, it is stated that in spring 1944 there were 725,000 Jews still free in Hungary, but this changed after Germany invaded Hungary on March 19, 1944, and Eichmann arrived with his *Einsatzgruppen* (special mission forces.) By 1945, only 260,000 Jews were still alive according to Szolt. The rest had been murdered, gassed, died in camps, or on forced death marches. Himmler, head of the SS (Shutzstaffel), and the Gestapo, initiated the systematic executions of Jews. Ironically, Shutz (Staffel) means protection (team).

Auschwitz did not consist of a single camp but rather forty camps, the central of which lay on the outskirts of the city Auschwitz with the same (anglicized) name, and

had a capacity of about 20,000 prisoners. Birkenau was also a group of three to five camps, which grew to hold 60,000 prisoners, 40,000 of them women. The gas chambers were diabolically camouflaged to look like showers to the unsuspecting victims, including pipes, faucets, dressing rooms, cloths hooks, benches, and the unsuspecting prisoners were even handed soap and towels. In this, the Germans demonstrated their ruthless and feared efficiency: no detail was too small for them to attend to. Auschwitz-Lüge is German for lies about, Jewish deaths at Auschwitz. The Nazis murdered 56,000 people of different nationalities at Buchenwald, 1935-1945. Ironically, Birke (Buchen) means birch (beech) tree, and Birken (Buchenwald) is a forest of birch (beech) trees.

Anne Frank and the Holocaust

On August 4, 1944, Nazi police, the Gestapo, raided the secret annex of a building in Amsterdam and arrested Anne Frank, her family, and seven others. Anne's diary became a famous account of the Holocaust. She died of typhus in Bergen-Belsen Concentration camp in February-March 1945, a few days after her sister, Margot, succumbed to it, shortly before it was liberated. She was born in Frankfurt, Germany, June 12, 1929, and in 1933 fled with her family to Amsterdam when she was three. In 1935 the Nuremberg laws deprived German Jews of their citizenship. On September 6, 1941 all Jews in Nazi occupied territories had to wear the yellow Stars of David. Starting July 9, 1942, the family hid for two and a half years in a sealed-off office flat in Amsterdam until her family, and four others were betrayed and captured on August 4, 1944. Of these, only her father Otto Frank, escaped death when Auschwitz was liberated. He came to the US, and was instrumental in having her diary, in expurgated form, published in 1947. Doubleday published the Definitive Edition in 1995. A significant entry for October 9, 1942: *The English Radio says they're [the Jews] are being gassed. Perhaps that is the quickest way to die.* The Diary is heart wrenching, written by a precocious girl who was brutally denied the chance to live: she, and 6,000,000 other Jews.

Primo Levi: *Who Knew?* As a horrible illustration of their efficiency, a record 24,000 were killed on a single day in August 1944. This statistic, and other items above were gleaned from the book "The Voice of Memory: Interviews with Primo Levi, 1961-1981" cited at the top of the next chapter. "In future centuries, if there are any, the twentieth century will be known as the century of Auschwitz and Hiroshima", *ibid.*, p.29. "Not a single German could have been unaware of the fact that the prisons were full to overflowing, and that the executions were taking place continually all over the country. Thousands of magistrates and police functionaries, lawyers, priests and social workers generally knew that the situation was very grave." Eugen Kogon, from his book "Der SS Staat", literally, "The SS State", and quoted in "The Voice of Memory," p. 189.

“In Hitler’s Germany, a particular code was widespread: those who knew did not talk; those who did not know did not ask questions; those who did ask questions received no answers. In this way, the typical German citizen won and defended his ignorance . . .”—Primo Levi, *ibid.*

James G. MacDonald’s previously unpublicized diaries, numbering over 10,000 pages, of an American diplomat who knew every major public figure in the 1930’s, showed that he “believed that as early 1933 the Nazis were considering the mass killing of European Jews. It was a view that he apparently shared with President Roosevelt, who seemed deeply concerned and said he wanted to find a way to send a warning message to the German people over the head of Hitler, according to the entries . . . The Nazi leaders generally did not put their plans in writing, fueling the debate over when their full intension for the Jews became clear.” (Excerpts from a news story in the New York Times of April 22, 2004, by Neil A. Lewis.)

If Primo Levi’s Views Were True, it would not have done any good for Roosevelt “to send a warning message to the German people over the head of Hitler”, but it may have done a lot of good to galvanize Americans to confront Hitler at a much earlier stage. In fact, to listen to the Republicans trying to defeat Roosevelt at the polls, e.g., Robert A. Taft, FDR *was* hell-bent for war at an early date in his administration, and, in fact, did seize on Pearl Harbor to declare war on *both* Germany and Japan, who were bound by a treaty. Up to then, people had characterized Britain going to war against Germany after the invasion of Poland in 1939 as “Britain’s war,” but after Pearl Harbor, *Britain’s war became “our war.”*

Auschwitz Concentration Camp: the Red Army liberated Auschwitz in January 1945. On April 29, 1945, a day after my 18th birthday, American soldiers liberated Dachau Concentration Camp. When he heard that Heinrich Himmler had begun peace negotiations that same day, Adolf Hitler married his mistress of many years, Eva Braun—they committed suicide the next day! Auschwitz’s liberation saved thousands from death, including Otto Frank. Photographs of emaciated prisoners were taken by their liberators and were published worldwide by news agencies. For many, this was the first “proof” of what Jews had endured under the Nazis. Of course, the families of the victims who perished there, or who escaped, there had been proof ever since the Nazis began their program of extinction of the Jews, which went under the code name “Endliche Einlösung”, i.e., “the final solution.” *It was so secret that the Nazis never wrote it down.*

The Gulag was a system of forced labor camps in the USSR, especially for political dissidents, of great hardship and suffering. As one who suffered long imprisonment in the Gulag, the writer Aleksandr Solzhenitsyn lived to write a condemnation in his 1973-1976 book, *The Gulag Archipelago*, based on his recollections, and notes that he smuggled out of camp. A book, “Gulag; A History” by

Anne Applebaum (Anchor, 2003) maintains that the Soviet concentration-camp system was equal to the Nazi's killing machine, and supports Solzhenitsyn's assertion in his "Gulag Archipelago" that the Gulag was not a Stalinist aberration, but an integral part of Lenin's socialist dream. Whatever the cause, millions of people died in the Gulag, including Osip Mandelstam, whose chief crime, besides being a Jew and a poet, was referring to Stalin as a butcher, or rather to Stalin's hands, as those of a butcher. One 1934 poem, entitled "Stalin" refers to Stalin as "The Kremlin's Mountaineer." (Stalin *was* from Georgia.) Mandelstam died in Vtoraya Rechka in December 1938 according to Applebaum, *op. cit.*, p. 583. A program on the Cable, International History, set the number killed in the Gulag at as many as 30,000,000! Applebaum, *loc. cit.*, "reluctantly cites 2,749,163 as the number of people who died in the Gulag between 1929 and 1953," a figure that does not reflect the real number, between ten and twelve million deaths in Stalin's prison system.

CHAPTER 50

VE DAY!

*The only thing necessary for the triumph of Evil
is for good men to do nothing*

Edmund Burke (1729-1797) (attributed.)

*In future centuries, if there are any, the twentieth century
will be known as the century of Auschwitz and Hiroshima.*

Primo Levi, 1919-1997, From "The Voice of Memory: Interviews, 1961-1987"

By Marco Bellpoliti and Robert Gordon, The New York Press, NY, 2001

*. . . we shall defend our island, whatever the cost may be,
we shall fight on the beaches, we shall fight on the landing grounds,
we shall fight in the fields, and in the streets, and we shall never surrender.*

Winston Churchill, Speech on Dunkirk, House of Commons, June 4, 1940

*Let us . . . brace ourselves to our duties and so bear ourselves that if the
British Empire and its Commonwealth last for a thousand years,
men will still say: "This was their finest hour."*

Winston Churchill, Speech in the House of Commons, June 18, 1940

VE Day, Victory in Europe, was declared by the Allies on May 8, 1945, the day after Germany signed "Unconditional Surrender" at Allied Headquarters in Rheims, situated in northeast France, east-northeast of Paris, and one of the most important cities of Roman Gaul. It was a day that so many people had waited so long to celebrate, dating back to 1933 and the beginning of the Nazi aggression, which began rearmament in defiance to the Treaty of Versailles in 1918. A second surrender document was signed in Berlin on VE-Day.

Allied Veterans of World War II

On that great day there were more than 13,000,000 men and women on Active Duty in the United States Armed Services. The total of US men and women who served in World

War II was 16,000,000, according to figures put out at the National War Memorial that opened unofficially on April 29, 2004 according to the New York Times front page article the following day. This figure jibes with the peak force of 16.4 million listed in the Reader's Digest Illustrated History of World War II. In addition to this, Britain had a peak Military force of 4.7 million, bringing the total for the Allies to over 21,000,000.

According to the World Almanac, the Army had 8,266,868, its maximum strength over the four year period; the Navy had 3,380,817; the Air Force, 2,282,292, down slightly from its maximum strength in 1944; and the Marines, 474,680, not counting the Merchant Marine. Using a multiplier as small as 10 to count relatives and friends, it amounts to maybe the total US population of about 132,000,000, all eagerly awaiting this wonderful day.

VE Day, May 8 1945, Celebration at Fountain Square in Cincinnati

There was a huge celebration in Fountain Square in Cincinnati on VE Day, May 8, 1945. There is a photograph in Part 4 given us by Dick Macke (see Chapters 37 and 45), using his connections with the Cincinnati Enquirer. (It's not the original, but a copy of the one appearing in the Roto Magazine on Sunday, May 20.) Amazingly enough, Dick appears in the photograph, along with 10 other students from Holmes High School (see the photograph for Dick's ID's) all of whom defied Russell Helmick, the Principal, in order to celebrate what may be the greatest day, next to the end of the Civil War, in US History. Heeding Helmick's prohibition, I wimped out attending the celebration in Fountain Square, to my everlasting sorrow, but not that I did not celebrate. In fact, I cried with tears of joy not only on that day, but also on VJ Day, August 15, 1945, while I was still at the US Naval Training Center at Great Lakes, Illinois, preparing to take part in a war that was no longer there. A week later, Joy Kinsburg sent me a photograph of the VJ celebration from the Cincinnati Enquirer in one of her letters. Ironically, according to Dick Macke, Helmick rescinded his threat of detention for those attending. But wouldn't it have been a badge of honor for anyone thrown into the slammer for such a wonderful occasion?

Bloodiest War in History

This was the end of the bloodiest war in history—a war in which civilian casualties exceeded 20,000,000. The Western Allies lost approximately 1.2 million people, including civilians, USSR dead numbered more than 28 million; the Axis powers (Germany, Italy, and Japan) lost more than 9.7 million dead, while China alone lost 22 million! (See Horrors of War below.) Six million Jews were executed in Europe by Nazis and their collaborators (see the previous page). This exceeded all previously recorded instances

of man's brutality, and was committed by a so-called "civilized" country that prided itself on its pre-war leadership in many areas of music, science, mathematics and literature.¹ And they executed Jewish men and women who were preeminent in the very same areas, and the ones who escaped their claws contributed mightily to the defeat of the Axis, men such as Einstein, whose famous equation, $E = mc^2$, where m is the mass and c is the very high speed of light (186,000 miles per second), was the germ of the possibility of making an A-Bomb by releasing the energy in Uranium and Plutonium via a self-sustaining chain reaction. Leo Szilard, who first conceived of the possibility of the latter in 1934, persuaded Einstein to sign a letter to FDR, asking him to start a "crash" program to develop the A-bomb before Werner Heisenberg and his Nazi team did. The list is long. (See, the "Intellectual Migration," a book on this subject.) At the instigation of Leo Szilard, Einstein on August 2, 1939 signed the letter to President Roosevelt urging the creation of an atomic weapons research program that led to the so-called "Manhattan Project," which developed the first atomic chain-reaction.

Stalin

In his 2004 book, "Stalin: The Court of the Red Tsar", Simon Sebag Montefiore creates a harrowing portrait of life in the dictator's inner circle. In doing so, "he gives us . . . the culture of sadism, ruthlessness and dread that flourished around him, fueling a murderous regime that would leave tens of millions of people dead"—so writes the reviewer, Michiko Kakutani in the review in the New York Times, April 16, 2004. "Systematic murder started soon after Lenin took power in 1917 and never stopped until Stalin's death" [in 1953]. Even so, Montefiore's book slighted many of "the larger events that occurred during Stalin's reign—from collectivization, the Great Famine, and the massacres of kulaks and Jews . . ." (See also The Gulag in the preceding Chapter 50.) Stalin's wife committed suicide, and his daughter, Alliluyeva, defected to the US in 1966, aided by George F. Kennan, former ambassador to the USSR. Settling down in Princeton, Alliluyeva wrote of her experiences in her 1966 book "Only One Year," Random House.

Mao Tse Tung

Not to be outdone by Hitler and Stalin, Mao Tse Tung eliminated 20,000,000 Chinese (about 3% of the population) who *also* resisted communism and working in communes. (The population of China was about 700 million in 1960, 800 million in '69, and 1,200

¹ Over a 30-year period, Stalin had killed over 20,000,000 Soviet citizens, many of which were "kulaks," while others were political dissidents who resisted communization of their farms and their lives. (See Solzhenitsyn's "The Gulag Archipelago".)

million (1.2 billion) in '97, with a population density of 327 per square mile. This compares with about 300,000,000 million U.S. residents in 2004 in an area of 3,615,191 sq. mi. with a population density of 83.3 per square mile.

Roosevelt and Lend Lease

The public elation of the United States citizens at the unconditional surrender of Germany and Italy was unparalleled. People yelled themselves hoarse from shouting over the tops of other shouters. Times Square in New York, Fountain Square in Cincinnati, and city centers all over the USA were mobbed by revelers.

But many people were reflective. I heard some say it was a pity that Roosevelt had not lived to see the day of victory. It was his, not Truman's, wartime policies of "Lend Lease Act" of March 1941, before we entered the War, which authorized the sending of supplies and armaments to Britain, China and other allied nations, e.g., Australia, New Zealand, and the USSR, for repayment "in kind", e.g., for support of the US military in England and elsewhere, thereby making the United States the "arsenal of democracy." It was also Roosevelt's "total mobilization" of manpower that had forged the victory for the Allies. All in all, the British Commonwealth received \$31 billion, and USSR \$11 billion under the Lend Lease agreement. (See, e.g., the Columbia Encyclopedia.)

Roosevelt Dies 20 Days Before the Greatest Military Victory in History

Sadly, Divine Providence robbed Roosevelt of the greatest military victory in history, by giving him his heavenly reward on April 12, instead of May 8, 1945: Germany signed unconditional surrender on May 7, and President Truman declared that the war against Germany was over the next day, about a month less than a year after D-Day on June 6, 1944.

Lived there a man or woman or child so lacking in human spirit and soul who was not thrilled by what only can be considered a holy day delivered by divine providence to the forces of good over the evils of Nazi Germany? Those of us who lived through this period have been blessed to have lived on to victory, and henceforth never in doubt about the necessity of going to war to defeat the forces of evil, no matter what the sacrifices.

The Horrors of the A-Bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki

People were sure that Japan would surrender momentarily, and surprised that it took *two* A-bomb attacks, the Hiroshima and Nagasaki A-bombings, to accomplish this.

Hiroshima was flattened by an A-bomb, called “Little Boy,” dropped from the Enola Gay Bomber, (incongruously named after the pilot’s mother), on August 1945, just three weeks after the first A-bomb was dropped near Alamogordo, New Mexico, on July 16. Between 75,000 and 100,000 people were killed at Hiroshima by the fireball and blast, which injured and maimed many others. This was the first use of nuclear weapons in warfare. Nagasaki was destroyed 3 days later on August 9 by a different kind of A-bomb, called “Fat Boy,” killing between 35,000 and 87,000 while injuring and maiming countless others. Birth defects began to appear in their children soon afterwards and continue to this day, caused by the release of radioactive radiation (gamma rays) over a large area.

On August 14, 1945, President Truman announced that Japan had surrendered unconditionally ending World War II, but VJ Day was celebrated the next day, August 15. The formal pact of surrender was signed on the USS Missouri in Tokyo Bay, on September 2. Many thought that Truman ought to have A-Bombed several Pacific atolls to demonstrate their power and terror before destroying lives and cities. Others accused Truman and the General Staff of racism, claiming that the USA waited to first hit an Asian nation with the most hideously destructive bomb ever devised. Many of these ethical questions are still politically alive today to the Japanese and Chinese who have become leaders in international commerce. As Hiram Johnson said, “The first casualty, in wartime, is truth.”

Judging by how tenaciously the Japanese fought to defend the Pacific Islands, Midway, Guam, Guadalcanal, Okinawa and others, e.g., the Philippines, at deadly cost to themselves and the Allies, I have read estimates of the cost of attacking Japan itself ranged upward of 1,000,000 casualties, or as many or more than the total number for the USA in the entire war. (See The Horrors of War following the next paragraph.) President Truman believed this justified the use of A-Bombs.

World War II Memorial Opens 59 Years After

The National World War II Memorial in the Washington Mall opened almost 59 years after VJ Day. Considering there already was a Vietnam Memorial Wall with the names of every soldier who died in battle there, it is amazing that those who fought and died in the greatest war in US History had to wait this long to be so honored. Sadly, by May 29, 2004, the date of the *official* opening of the WW II Memorial, there will be fewer than 4 million Veterans alive to enjoy the honor. This means that over 12,000,000 Veterans have died, and the rest of us are dying at the rate of 1,056 a day, or 385,000 a year, a grisly statistic that I read on the front page of the Times of Trenton on April 9, 2004. (Update of Nov. 2005: 1,100 die each day, fewer than 3.6 million survive, & their median age is 82. See the Index at US Armed Services.) Like the Vietnam Memorial, dedicated Nov. 13, 1982,

the WW II memorial contains a “Freedom Wall” with 4,000 gold stars to commemorate more than 400,000 Americans killed in the war. (This figure, also taken from the Trenton Times, does not jibe with the 292,000 death toll that was listed by the venerable and usually reliable Readers Digest in the next paragraph. Since there were 692,000 wounded, undoubtedly many died of their wounds.)

The Horrors of World War II

The enormous cost of victory and defeat is given some indication in statistics in “Reader’s Digest Illustrated History of World War II, p.485. I cite just a few approximations. Note that Total Military Killed and Wounded, and Civilians Killed, also include those who are ‘missing’. Note also that m = millions, k = thousands.

Country	Wartime Population	Peak Size/Mil.	Military Killed	Wounded	Civilians Killed
Britain	47.8m	4.7m	420k	380k	70k
Canadall.	4m	780k	43k	53k	0
China	541m	5m	1.5m	2m	20m
France	41.9m	5m	245k	390k	173k
Germany	79.4m	10m	3.5m	2m	2m (incl. Austria)
Hungary	14m	350k	147k	unknown	280k
India	388.8m	2.4m	48k	65k	0
Italy	45.4m	4.5m	80k	225k	180k
Japan	73.1m	6m	2.6m	326k	953k
Poland	35m	1m	600k	530k	6m
USA	132m	16.4m	292k	675k	less than 10
USSR ²	193m	20m	13.6m	5m	7.7m

World War II started on September 1, 1939, when Germany invaded Poland. Britain and France declared war on Germany two days later, and Canada followed on September 10. Then USSR invaded Poland on September 17, and annexed East Poland in a treaty

² According to the History Channel, July 22, 2004, there were 13 million Soviet citizens killed by German Soldiers in WW II, and not just 7.7 million indicated in the Readers Digest’s Tables above. Moreover, the Red Army shot and killed 8,000 of its own troops, often in the back, for cowardice, or trying to desert (*ibid.*) The soldiers had no alternative but to stand and fight, be shot by their officers, or commit suicide. According to William Grimes in the Feb. 15, 2006 review of “Ivan’s War” (see Bibliography), two and a half million Soviet soldiers were captured by the Germans in the first five months of the war when the Germans invaded Russia in operation Barbarossa in June 1941, and by the time of the siege of Stalingrad, 45 percent of the Soviet population was under Nazi control. Moreover, Grimes states that “more than 8 million Soviet soldier were killed by the war’s end” in 1945, and “more than 30 million men and women served in the Soviet military.”

with Germany on September 18. For Britain, France and Canada, the war lasted almost 5 years. It is a commentary on the political climate prevailing then that the USA proclaimed its neutrality on September 5, and did not declare war on Germany until the day after Pearl Harbor, when it had no choice, inasmuch as Japan and Germany were allies by a treaty.

The Western Allies (Great Britain, France, Canada, India, and USA) lost 1,048,000 military personnel, and approximately 243,000 civilian deaths, for a total of **1,291,000 Western Allies dead**. Poland lost 600,000 military, and 6,000,000 civilians for a total of 6,600,000; whereas USSR lost 13,600,000 military personnel and 7,700,000 civilians, for a staggering total of 21,300,000 people; China lost 1,500,000 military and 20,000,000 civilians, or 21,500,000 total. Of the Axis powers, Germany (including Austria) lost 3,500,000 military, and 2,000,000 civilians, for a total of 5,500,000 killed; Italy lost 80,000 military and 180,000 civilians, for a total of 260,000 dead; and Japan lost 2,600,000 military and 953,000 civilians, many of whom died at Nagasaki and Hiroshima, for a total of 3,553,000 dead. **Total Axis dead was 9,313,000**. On October 2, 1944, Nazi troops crushed the two-month Warsaw uprising, during which 25,000 people were killed.

Total Allied and Axis Deaths: Adding up 1,291,000 dead in the Western Alliance, and 9,313,000 Axis dead, totals **10,604,000 Western Allies and Axis dead**. Adding **27,900,000 dead in USSR and Poland** (many of the Poles were killed by the USSR when the latter joined Germany invading in Poland in 1939), this comes to approximately **38,504,000 total Allies and Axis deaths**. **Counting China's dead, more than 60 million men, women, and children died in WWII**, not counting casualties in Norway, Denmark, Finland, and other occupied countries.

Kiev, Kharkov, and the Ukraine

Hitler invaded USSR on June 22, 1941, catching the Soviets by surprise, and capturing large areas. Hitler called the battle of Kiev the “greatest battle in history,” according to the History Channel, July 22, 2004. Red Army and Ukrainian Partisans defended Kiev, but the Germans captured Kiev on September 19, 1941, and claimed to have captured 655,000 prisoners (one third of the Red Army strength at the opening of “Barbarossa”), 884 armored vehicles and 3,718 guns. (These figures are from the Readers Digest Illustrated History of World War II, p. 116.) Kharkov fell to the Germans on October 24, “but this time there was no great haul of prisoners and weapons; Stalin, whose name means man of steel, did not intend to turn Kharkov into another Kiev” (*Ibid.*) However, according to the History Channel cited above, 100,000 Ukrainian civilians died under the resulting German occupation, as they were deprived of their own granaries when the Germans stripped the country—side, and, of course, also deprived of medical attention, and often housing. In a book in 2004 by Kate Brown (see Bibliography), an equal

number of Soviet Poles (about half from Soviet Ukraine), were summarily executed by Stalinist violence in the 1930's. Also see Karel Berkhoff's account.

Bataan Death March: On April 9, 1942, 70,000 American and Philippine defenders on Bataan, a peninsula of Western Luzon between Manilla Bay and South China Sea, surrendered and then were subjected to the ghastly Bataan "Death March." Many were beaten to death before they started out on the six—(for some, a twelve-) day march, while others died of disease and malnutrition, with only 54,000 reaching the destination alive. Of those, thousands more (10,000 according to one source) died of starvation, medical neglect, and brutality, in violation of almost every standard of civilized conduct of the Geneva Convention.

Catastrophe of the Canadians and Brits at Dieppe: On August 19, 1942 in preparation for D-Day an ill-conceived raid to test the coastal defenses of the port of Dieppe, France 6,000 mostly Canadian troops were met with hellish Nazi firepower, suffering about 50 percent casualties, including 907 Canadian dead.

Russian Casualties in the Capture of Berlin: In an all-out effort to capture Berlin in 1945, before the Western Allies, Stalin's forces suffered 600,000 dead (or 106,000 fewer than the dead at Verdun. See below), the most of any engagement in the war by the allies according to a documentary "Turning Points in History" on the Discovery Times Channel on January 19, 2004. This is almost the number of both Union and Confederate dead in the American Civil War, 1861-65, which was approximately 364,000 Union dead and 258,000 Confederate dead, a total of 622,000 over the four year period. The battle of Antietam, also called Sparksburg by the South, fought on September 17, 1862, cost the Union over 12,400 dead and the Confederacy 10,300, or a total of 22,700 in a single day! Nevertheless, wars have become more deadly with the increased power of weapons, bombs, and airpower. Hitler committed suicide on April 30, and Berlin fell on May 2.

These figures cannot convey the enormous destruction of cities, nor the anguish at the loss of families, friends, sweethearts, and the destruction of civilization as it was known between WWI and WW II. Heretofore, many considered Germany with its valuable contributions in the fine arts, literature and science the epitome of civilization before its descent into the paganism of Nazi "socialism" under Hitler and his thugs. The betrayal of higher aspirations of mankind by the ever-present primitivism that rules whenever it can is ever-present in all societies, as the lynchings in the USA after the Civil War and up to recent times illustrate. (It is interesting to note that, according to the American Heritage Dictionary, although Captain William Lynch, after whom the term "lynch" and "lynch laws" were named, did not invent vigilante justice on September 22, 1780, yet he tried to justify them, only to end up with the disgrace of having given his name to this ignoble practice.)

WW I and Why France Surrendered in WW II

I'll make several observations on the figures in the chart on p.180. It shows why France had to quit the war, especially when you consider France's enormous losses in WWI. According to Walker Percy on p.17 of "The Message in the Bottle:" "In 1916, a million French and German soldiers were killed in a single battle." This is something of an exaggeration, since the longest battle of 1916 was at Verdun, lasting a whole year, at the cost of 358,500 German and 348,000 French dead. Verdun lies in northeast France in Lorraine on the Meuse River. The battle was initiated on February 21, 1916, when "Crown Prince Frederick William launched a massive offensive against Verdun, an awkward salient in the French line." The French under General Petain rallied under the cry, "They shall not pass!" and the two sides literally bled themselves to death. The French recaptured all lost territory by the following December, and, with the Americans, were victorious over the Germans in 1918. (See the New Columbia Encyclopedia.) The French honor the dead there at the Verdun National Cemetery. The total dead for World War I, also called the Great War before World War II, has been estimated at some 10,000,000 dead, and 20,000,000 wounded. The USA lost 55,513 men in battle, and 63,195 others in WW I, while France lost 1,400,000 killed or missing. Of France's missing, 250,000 soldiers were never recovered. These losses literally bled France of its most gallant men, and weakened the following generations.

Despite France's surrender in World War II on June 21, 1940, after the Germans invaded the Benelux countries and struck France on its weakest side by flanking its vaunted Maginot Line, which consisted of underground fortifications all along its Eastern border and faced the German equally impregnable "Siegfried" line. In contrast, the USSR had the will and the courage to turn Germany back, but at the frightening cost of approximately 21.3 million dead including 7.7 million civilians. China alone lost 21.5 million including 20 million civilians, while Poland lost 6.6 million, or approximately 20 % of its population. Germany lost 5.5 million, or about 14% of its population, and Japan lost 3.7 million, or approximately 8% of its population. These are horrible losses for each side. *You would have thought countries had learned the futility of war in WWI, and again by WW II.*

Sprechen Sie Deutch? (Do You Speak German?)

No country was spared—everyone was fighting for their lives against the long-held military superiority of the Axis countries and the specter of atomic weapons and the German V-rockets which buzzed down on helpless London late in the war. Nobody knew what Germany would be capable of, but everybody feared it, whatever it would be, but it and if

Germany had won, we would all be speaking and writing “auf Deutsch”. In 1959-60, As a Fulbright-Nato Postdoctoral Scholar at Heidelberg University, I learned firsthand the difficulties inherent in an American learning German. Despite the similarities, mostly vocabulary, between the two languages, Mark Twain had this to say (as quoted in Bartlett’s): *Whenever the literary German dives into a sentence, that is the last you are going to see of him till he emerges on the other side of the Atlantic with his verb in his mouth.*

I think Prof. Hans Rohrbach forced me to give my lecture at Dortmund University to torture both me and perhaps amuse the audience, despite the fact that English was taught in German schools for 8 years, and consequently, Germans were fluent in English. The profs at other universities, e.g., Frankfort and Munich, were much kinder, to say the least. I take this opportunity to offer a corrective to the German Motto “Deutschland Über Alles,” which has been interpreted as advocating German supremacy. It is the German National Anthem and means “Germany above all others”, or patriotism. There are many American analogies, e.g., “Our country . . . may she always be in the right; but our country, right or wrong!”—Stephen Decatur toast at Norfolk, 1816. John Crittenden, 1787-1863, expressed a similar sentiment in “On the Mexican War.” See Bartlett’s.

Nettuno, Italy: A counterpart to the WW I cemetery in Flanders,³ a graveyard in Nettuno, Italy, contains the remains of 7,862 Americans who died in combat in Italy in WW II. Its 80 acres are carefully maintained by the Government of Italy out of respect for those who gave their lives to free Italy from the tyranny of the Nazis and the Italian Fascists. Nettuno is south of Rome on the Tyrrhenian Sea which connects Corsica, Sardinian, Sicily, and Italy.

Omaha Beach, Normandy, Colleville-sur-Mer and Pointe Du Hoc

“There’s a cemetery⁴ on top the of the bluffs overlooking Omaha Beach, in Normandy. Acre upon acre of white crosses and Stars of David. Row upon row of graves, reaching almost out of sight. Neat paths with grassy borders. Not a sound anywhere, except maybe the call of a bird perched on the arm of a cross. It’s the kind of place where you take off your hat without thinking. So many and so young, still in their teens and 20’s. They would be in their 80’s now, or almost, and who know what they might have done with themselves . . .”—Excerpt from an Op-Ed article, May 31, 2004, Memorial Day, in the

³ Flanders is a region of northwest Europe consisting of parts of north France, west Belgium, and southwest Netherlands. In the immaculately maintained Flanders Fields American Cemetery 368 Americans are interred. The poppies growing in Flanders Fields form a beautiful bouquet to the fallen.

⁴ The American Cemetery at Colleville-sur-Mer. See below.

New York Times entitled “War Immemorial”, by Gardner Botsford, then a second lieutenant with the First Infantry Division who landed on Omaha Beach on D-Day.

The American Cemetery at Colleville-sur-Mer overlooking Omaha Beach contains 9,387 marble headstones, according to the NY Times article of June 5, 2004 commemorating the 60th anniversary of D-Day the next day. The article displayed a map indicating the location of Omaha Beach between Utah Beach and Pointe du Hoc to the west, and Gold, Juno, and Sword Beaches to the East, on the English Channel. Also, see “D-Day” by Stephen Ambrose for more specifics. On D-Day 1984, President Ronald Reagan, who died the day before the 60th Anniversary of D-Day, stood next to the spike-like stele at Pointe du Hoc, and, pointing to the steep cliffs that US Rangers climbed “one-by-one”, reportedly said with deep emotion, “These are the boys of Pointe du Hoc.” (From the New York Times coverage of the 60th Anniversary of D-Day published on June 7, 2004.) Following Reagan’s death, there was a week of national mourning, with his body lying in state at the Rotunda in D.C., then it was returned to California and buried in the grounds of the Reagan Library.

World War II Memorial in Battery Park in Manhattan

The WW II Memorial consists of eight gigantic granite slabs, 25 feet high, inscribed with the names of the 4,597 soldiers and sailors sent to the bottom of the Atlantic by German U-boats in World War II. Forty-five hundred and more! Drowned! One was a guy torpedoed off New Jersey in sight of land, in 1942. Excerpted from “War Immemorial” by Gardner Botsford, *ibid*. He comments about the “New Jersey guy.” “As it happens, I knew one of those long-gone soldiers, but I have never been able to find his name on the endless roll-call. He wasn’t really a friend—just a guy I knew . . .”

Soldatenfriedhof (German Soldiers’ Cemetery), La Cambe, Normandy

This cemetery contains graves of 21,222 German soldiers. There is a computer terminal at the cemetery where anyway may locate the graves of any soldier. Ms. Graham visited there, printed in the name Klein, and found 210 of them. Ironically, Klein is the German word for “small”, and also many Germans. This is the subject of a poem by Jorie Graham on the Op-Ed page, Memorial Day, 2004. Many who fell there and elsewhere in the last days of the war were barely teenagers.

Korean War Casualties: The Korean War lasted from June 25, 1950 to June 26, 1953. Many veterans of WW II were called back into service, especially those who were in the Army and Navy Reserve. (I was one, but escaped being called back.) Under the aegis of the United Nations, on June 27, 1950, President Harry Truman ordered US

troops into the fray as a “police action” to push back North Korea, which had attacked South Korea. The casualties were grim on both sides: 37,000 US service men and women died, while 92,000 were wounded, and 1000 missing. (The Columbia Encyclopedia puts these figures at 54,000 dead, and 103,000 wounded.) About 1,000,000 Korean military personnel, both North and South, were killed, while China lost 900,000, and civilian casualties were set at 3,000,000. *Again, we see the horrible costs of war.*

The Flu Pandemic of 1918. According to the earliest estimates, 20,000,000 people died in the flu pandemic of 1918, but modern experts say this figure is far too low; in fact 20,000,000 million people may have died in India alone, according to the 2004 book “The Great Influenza, Or The Epic Story of the Greatest Plague in History”, by John M. Barry. (For these, and figures below, see the New York Times Sunday Book Review of March 14, 2004 by Barry Gewen.)

The total number of 1918 flu victims is calculated at between 50 and 100 million worldwide. In the U.S., about one quarter of the population, more than 25 million took ill, and 675, 000 died. (The comparable figure for today’s U.S. population would be 75 million afflicted, and 9 million dead!) “The morgues ran out of space. Corpses were placed in spare rooms, in closets, on porches, until they could be collected for mass graves. The odor must have been unbearable . . . Life expectancy in the U.S. dropped about 10 years . . . The youthful Franklin D. Roosevelt got sick. So did the journalist Walter Lippmann, . . . [and] the artist Egon Schiele perished. . . . Woodrow Wilson . . . fell ill . . . observers report that he was not the same man when he returned to the bargaining table. . . . one leading physician . . . thought that he might be witnessing the end of civilization.”

CHAPTER 51

THE LONG GOODBYE

(*IF I COULD TELL YOU I WOULD LET YOU KNOW.*)

*Silence is the perfectest herald of joy
I were but little happy,
If I could say how much.
William Shakespeare
Much Ado About Nothing, II, I, 319*

*I'm going to buy a paper doll that I can call my own,
A doll that other fellows cannot steal /And then those flirty, flirty guys with their flirty, flirty eyes,/*
Will have to flirt with dollies that are real./ When I come home at night she will be waiting,
The truest doll in all this world./ I'd rather have a paper doll to call my own,
Than a fickle-minded real life girl—Johnny S. Black, 1930

“Love is like war: easy to begin, but hard to stop,”—H.L. Mencken

It can be a curse to love—John Patrick Shanley in “Sailor’s Song,” A play.

When you get to the end of your rope, tie a knot and hang on.

Thomas Jefferson, quoted in a NY Times Cross Word Puzzle, about July 5, 2004

If I had not been going into the service, I think Joy would have definitely told me that nothing would come of our love, but she did not have the heart to give me that as a goodbye present. In retrospect, W. H. Auden’s poem, “If I Could Tell You” comes as close to the sadness and the ineffable communion of our parting lives.

*Time will say nothing but I told you so.
Time only knows the price we have to pay;
If I could tell you I would let you know.*

*If we should weep when clowns put on their show,
 If we should stumble when musicians play,
 Time will say nothing but I told you so.
 There are no fortunes to be told, although,
 Because I love you more than I can say,
 If I could tell you I would let you know.
 The winds must come from somewhere when they blow,
 There must be reasons why the leaves decay;
 Time will say nothing but I told you so.
 Perhaps the roses really want to grow,
 The vision seriously intends to say;
 If I could tell you I would let you know.
 Suppose all the lions get up and go,
 And all the brooks and soldiers run away;
 Will time say nothing but I told you so?
 If I could tell you, I would let you know.*

Everybody reading this poem will be able to fit it someplace into their past.¹

If we should weep when clowns put on their show

This is what we do every day. I thought of Hitler, Mussolini, Tojo and Hirohito. Cf. Graham Greene's "The Commedians."

If we should stumble when musicians play

This is what we did at the prom!

There are no fortunes to be told

¹ Hannah Arendt's appreciation of Auden in "Auden: A Tribute" (edited by S. Spender) brought this poem to my attention. I owe her a great debt.

This was true since I did not know what role I would play in the war against Japan, and whether or not we would still be together afterwards.

Because I love you more than I could say

This line is the jewel of the poem, and its chief message. It precisely describes my situation with Joy, and not only did I love her more than I could say, but more than I *dared* think about. Had I been a man, or even manly, I would have done it.

There must be reasons why the leaves decay

There must be reasons why love dies or goes away unrequited

Perhaps the roses really want to grow

Maybe she wanted me to say it; maybe she wanted our love to grow.

The vision seriously intends to say

Maybe we would remain lovers in our memories and desires. Later, Joy told me she wanted this to happen.

And soldiers run away;

Or maybe sailors? Here's a 1924 song that I like:

*I'll see you in my dreams, / Hold you in my arms, / Someone took you
out of my arms, / Still I feel the thrill of your charms. / Lips that once
were mine, / Tender eyes that shine, / They will light my way tonight, /
I'll see you in my dreams.—Gus Kahn, 1886-1941*

And this:

*I'm falling in love with someone, someone, who
Could make me feel happy, / Could make me feel blue,
Could make me love you!*

Victor Herbert, from *Naughty Marietta*, 1910

A song we use to sing running cables at Western Electric:

All of Me

All of me, why not take all of me?

Can't you see, I'm no good without you? . . .

You took a part, that once was my heart,

So why not take all of me?

Seymour Simons and Gerald Marks, 1931 (see e.g., "Reading Lyrics," p. 631.)

Lastly, one written in 1936 by Anna Sosenko, which I use to sing studying French!

Darling, Je vous aime beaucoup,

Je ne sais pas what to do . . .

CHAPTER 52

BORN ON THE FOURTH JULY

*I'm a Yankee Doodle-dandy, / A Yankee Doodle, do or die;
A real live nephew of my Uncle Sam's, / Born on the Fourth of July.*

Refrain, st. 1, "The Yankee Doodle Boy," 1901, by George M. Cohan.

"Yankee Doodle," was a pejorative used by British soldiers for American troops in Revolutionary War. See Index.

This is the Army, Mister Jones / No private rooms or telephones

You had your breakfast in bed before / But you won't have it there anymore.

Written in 1942 by Irving Berlin. See the Index at Army for several other stanzas

Oh How I hate to Get Up in the Morning (Oh, how I love to lie in bed!)

Comic song by Irving Berlin in the 1918 musical, "Yip, Yip, Yaphank."

Fugit irreparabile tempus

(Time flies, never to return) Georgics, III, Virgil¹.

Time goes you say? Ah no! Alas, Time stays, we go

1875 verse by Henry Austin Dobson, 1840-1925

Virgil's characteristic economy of words, *Tempus fugit*, often quoted by (chronophobic?) Benny Craig, invariably comes into my mind at departure times. Eventually the sands of time run out and there is no time left, not even for another goodbye. I had said goodbye to everyone, and had received those famous orders to report for duty at the U. S. Naval Office in Cincinnati, 9:00 a.m., July 12, 1945.

¹ Usually quoted in its briefer form: *tempus fugit*, i.e., *time flies*. The full translation: "But it is flying, irretrievable time is flying." *Omnia vincit amor: et nos cedamus amori* is another of Virgil's most popular quotes, meaning *Love conquers all things: let us give in to love*. (See the Oxford Dictionary of Quotations.) He was preaching to the converted, but didn't give the instructions how to go about it. (I assume "Doing what comes naturally!")

President Roosevelt Died of a Cerebral Hemorrhage in Warm Springs, Georgia

On April 12th. Vice President Truman ascended to the presidency; a train to D.C, carried Roosevelt's remains, where he was to given national honors, At every stop, throngs of mourners waved at the train. I saw films clips of the incredible outpouring of emotion I was 18 on April 28th, just 10 days before VE Day, May 8. For four years, ever since Pearl Harbor, and even earlier since the September 1, 1939 invasion of Poland by Nazi Germany, everything pointed to the day that millions, over fourteen million in all, would leave for the U. S. Armed Services. I graduated from Holmes High School on June 12, and now I was joining them and heading for the U. S. Naval Training Center at Great Lakes, Illinois, some 20 miles north of Chicago on Lake Michigan.

I was gloomy. Our leader out of the Great Depression and World War II was dead. I was not going to like the Navy, the military mind, military dress, and all the paraphernalia. I thought that I would not like the food, but I was wrong about that. I would not like barracks life, and was right about that. And I would miss Mama, the giver, and protector, and the inspiration for all I ever did.

The New Testament is My Protector

I was leaving but not alone. I felt the tiny New Testament Mama pressed into my hands as we kissed goodbye at the streetcar stop. *It was the second Bible she had given me since kindergarten, and she asked me to wear it over my heart; she read that one had stopped a bullet and saved a soldier's life. I broke down and cried. Why do sons mean so much to their mothers? And Mama cried and cried. And why do mothers mean so much to their sons?*

I can not remember any sadder moment than that morning when Mama hugged me one last time, bringing me once more into the softness of her body, protecting me one last time before she sent a son off to war, her first to go. I knew that I would be no Sergeant York, the greatest hero of WW I, who almost single-handedly killed 25 Germans, and captured 132 more, but the idealized 1941 movie starring Gary Cooper showed what a Tennessee hick (and maybe a Kentucky one?) could do for his country.

Eldridge had an "essential industry deferment," and once one realizes the importance of sulfa drugs, his area of research, to the War effort, one realizes how essential he was as a civilian. Not that he wanted to "fight Britain's War," as he, and many other conservative, Roosevelt-hating Republicans, including Robert A. Taft, put it. This shows how shortsighted even intelligent people can be. Andy Rooney, in "My War," expressed the same sentiment, but went into the services anyway, albeit as a correspondent for the armed services newspaper, "Stars and Stripes." And he received a medal for his heroism

in placing himself in the very front lines to report on the war. Even the Bible-quoting Alvin York had his doubts about killing, but resolved them after he signed up.

Number 5, the Holman Streetcar rumbled up with that ridiculous anachronistic cow-catcher in front, its double-doors opened and gobbled me up with my pathetic cardboard suitcase. The first one I ever had, or needed, and the only one we could afford.

I sat in the car practically rigid with the fear of the unknown. I couldn't believe this was happening to me. There were so many other "first times" beckoning to me. Here I was, old "skin and bones" off to settle Hirohito's hash. I was a ridiculous 155 lbs of quivering humanity scared out of my wits.² I wondered if I would ever see Mama and Dad again? Such was the power of governments to separate us for the "first time". Although I had strutted around like a hero my last days, I now felt insignificant waiting to join, what?—14 or 16 million other U. S. citizens in uniform. What good could an 18-year-old "baby" do for his country? (This was before I ever heard of "Sergeant York".) *Render under Caesar [what] are Caesar's, and unto God [what] are God's—Matthew 22:21.* When I crossed the Suspension Bridge I looked back one last time. I never thought much about Covington before, but now that I was leaving it, it loomed big in my mind. There was a hard knot in my throat that I could not swallow.

"Whitey" and I Are Bound for Great Lakes. *By a quirk of railroad logic, the train bound for Chicago, carrying my new pal, "Whitey" Sweitzer and me, traveled along the Ohio River just opposite my birthplace. I could see the entire waterfront of Covington stretched out from the Bridge all the way along the River Road we were paralleling. I poked Whitey" and pointed across the Ohio River to Fifth Street in Covington, "You know, I was born right over there!" "Whitey" said, "Yeah?" and I said, "Yeah."*

Now I was a child of my country, and there was not anything I could do about it except try to be a good one.

"The sun shines bright on my Old Kentucky home, 'tis summer . . ."

"Oh, give me something to remember you by, when I am far away from home . . ." song.

² A noted Princetonian, the late Peter Putnam, tried to commit suicide out of fear of going to war. When he shot himself in the temple the bullet missed his brain, but severed an optic nerve rendering him totally blind. He overcame the disability and earned his Ph.D. from Princeton and accolades for his writings and personal struggle.

PART III

My Navy Memoirs

Anchors Aweigh!

*Anchors Aweigh, my boys, Anchors Aweigh
Farewell to college joys,
We sail at break of day-day-day.
To our last night on shore,
Drink to the foam.
Until we meet once more
Here's wishing you a happy voyage home!*

Bell Bottom Trousers

*Bell bottom trousers, coat of Navy blue
Girls love the sailors, and they love them too!
Pop song, circa 1945, song by Louis Prima.*

I joined the navy to see the sea, and what did I see? I saw the sea!
Anonymous, although it sounds something that Gilbert (of Gilbert and Sullivan) would write.

By the Beautiful Sea

*By the sea, by the sea, by the beautiful sea,
You and me, you and me,
Oh, how happy we will be,
By the beautiful sea!*

Written by Harry Carroll (music) and Harold Atteridge (lyrics) in 1914;
See Ewen's "All the Years of Popular Music," p. 224.

*The sea speaks a language that polite people never repeat,
It's a colossal scavenger sang and has no respect,
Is it a terrible thing to be lonely?*

Carl Sandburg, "Two Nocturnes," 1928

America the Beautiful

*O beautiful for spacious skies
For amber waves of grain,
For purple mountains majesties
Above the fruited plain!*

*America! America!
God shed his grace on thee
And crown thy good with brotherhood
From sea to shining sea!*

*America! America!
God mend thy ever flaw,
Confirm thyself in self-control,
This liberty in law!*

*O beautiful for heroes prove
In liberating strife,
Who more than self their country loved
And mercy more than life.
America the Beautiful, 1898,*

Lyrics by Katherine Lee Bates, 1859-1929; Music by Sam Ward¹

¹ **Historical Note:** Bates was an English professor at Wellesley when she was inspired by a visit to Pike's Peak. The Grandeur of the sight moved her to write a poem, entitled *America, the Beautiful*, which was published in *The Congregationalist*, a Boston magazine, on July 4, 1895. An existing melody was borrowed, that of "Matena," by Samuel Augustus Ward, which had been written in 1882. Nobody knows who was first to join the music to the poem, but they proved to be perfect mates and combined into one of America's most patriotic poems. Ward was an organist in a church in Newark, NJ, whose music for the poem won out around 1910 over many others that were proposed. Many people have proposed this for the National Anthem to replace the more militant *Star Spangled Banner*. (This was paraphrased from p. 141 of Ewen's "All the Years of American Popular Music. On the following page 142 is a summary of the history of John Philip Sousa's, *The Stars and Stripes Forever*, written in 1896; his lyrics, however, failed to match the magnificence of the rousing march, which survives to this day. Before I found Ewen's historical note, I had three other sources for *America, the Beautiful*, Bates, and Ward are: *Bartlett's Familiar Quotations*, a *Parade Magazine* Special, October 10, 2001, and a news article by Clyde Haberman in the *New York Times* of June 16, 2004. However, to me, Ewen's seemed the most stirring and succinct summation.

PHOTOGRAPHS, MAPS AND DOCUMENTS FOR PART III



Carl on leave from the Navy, Christmas 1945 at Sister's House, 22nd & Howell Streets. Carl is wearing his Navy "Blues", peacoat and all.

Faith—Menefee* Families

Herbert, Eldridge, Charlie*, Louise (Sis), Vila, Carl, Frederick, Mark, Billy*, Kathy.



Fred Faith
Holmes High School
Class of 1946



An Enthusiastic Crowd Gathered in Fountain Square on VE Day on May 20, 1945. (The official VE Day is May 8, 1945).

**C-2 Jimmy Floyd '46
C-8 Bob Richards '46
B-14 Allan Collier '46
E-20 Eldon Pickett '45**

**C-20 Dave Pitts '46
D-22 Dick Macke '47
F-24 Joe Luchte '45
B-28 Hugh Johnson '46**

**D-24 Jim Hensley '45
C-30 Chuck Thompson '46
D-36 Bob Ruhl '46**

ID's and photographs are courtesy of Dick Macke.

This is the picture of V-E Day celebrators who gathered on Fountain Square. It first appeared in the Roto section of the Cincinnati Enquirer. There is a story that goes with it.

There had been two rumored stories that preceded the actual peace signing. Each time the rumor was heard, many students at Cincinnati-area schools broke from their classrooms to celebrate.

This caused Holmes High School principal Russell Helmick to threaten students with a week's detention if they left school again without permission.

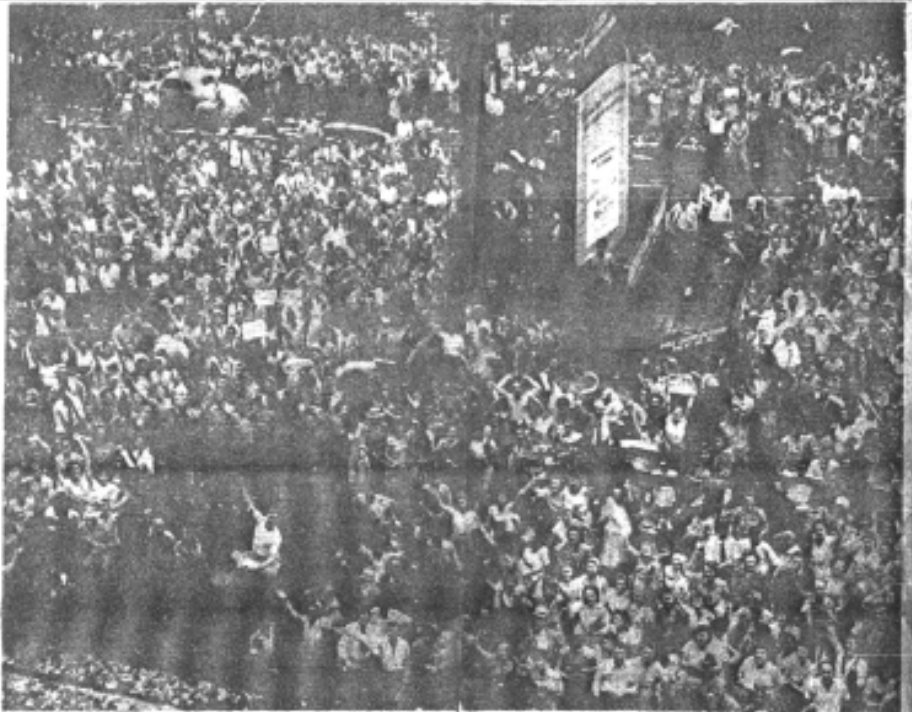
Several Holmes students defied the edict as the picture shows. A dozen or so boys can easily be identified and I feel there are several others in the crowd. Perhaps some girls. I don't remember.

At least three 1945 graduates are shown. They are Eldon Pickett, Joe Luchte, Jim Hensley, near the center of the picture about $\frac{2}{3}$ s of the way down.

Somehow, I am in the cluster of the three 1945 grads. They were seniors. I was a sophomore.

The detention threat was not enforced.

CELEBRATION WILDEST IN HISTORY OF CITY



Thousands of Greater Cincinnati's gathered in Fountain Square shooting, screaming and waving their arms to express their joy as news of final victory was flashed over the wires last night. In the wildest celebration ever seen in Cincinnati, men, women and children jammed into the square, waving flags and streamers, blowing horns giving vent to the great spirit of thanksgiving in every heart. The boy on top of the Bible Society booth expresses his high spirits, as youngsters will, by getting on top of the crowd.

Tears, Cheers, Whistles, Paper Mark End Of War As Cincinnati Celebrate Peace

Cincinnati became a carnival city yesterday—a city of laughter and tears, of prayers and profanity.

It was the end of the war. It was the day Cincinnati had waited for, prayed for, worked for and fought for since that December 7 three years, eight months and seven days ago when the Japanese attacked Pearl Harbor.

The news that peace was here at last came at 6:55 p. m., when President Truman announced the Japanese surrender, after four days of tense waiting for the outcome of the Jap offer to capitulate.

The echoes of the news had not faded when the celebrating began. A whistle along the Ohio River, followed by a "V" shout in the

suburban areas quickly were placed in position as the first celebrators poured onto the streets.

Police, moving by a prearranged schedule, hurried into the downtown blocks—Fourth to Eighth Streets and Elm to Sprague Streets—set aside for the merry-makers. They were augmented by 300 members of the Auxiliary Corps, assigned to traffic duty.

The crowd, swelling in Fountain and Government Squares, grew as the hours passed, pouring in from the suburbs and from war plants which had released their night shifts.

Within an hour the downtown area was jammed by happy, laughing men, women and children, parading arm in arm through the

American Legion, Drum Corps brought hundreds of merry-makers scurrying to join a line of march.

Many servicemen and women were among the happy, cheering throng.

Those who sought churches to which to go their rejoicing were confused by an announcement that services would be held at 8 p. m. on the day peace came if it came before 8 p. m. and at 8 p. m. on the following day if it came after 8 p. m. It came at 6:55 p. m.

As a result, some churches held services last night and will hold them again tonight. Among these was Knox Presbyterian Church, where 300 to 400 gathered last night. The pastor, Dr. E. W. Brown, with much on "For the Liberty

Joy sent me this clipping
From a Cincinnati newspaper
On VJ-Day. The letter opposite is from Dick Macke.

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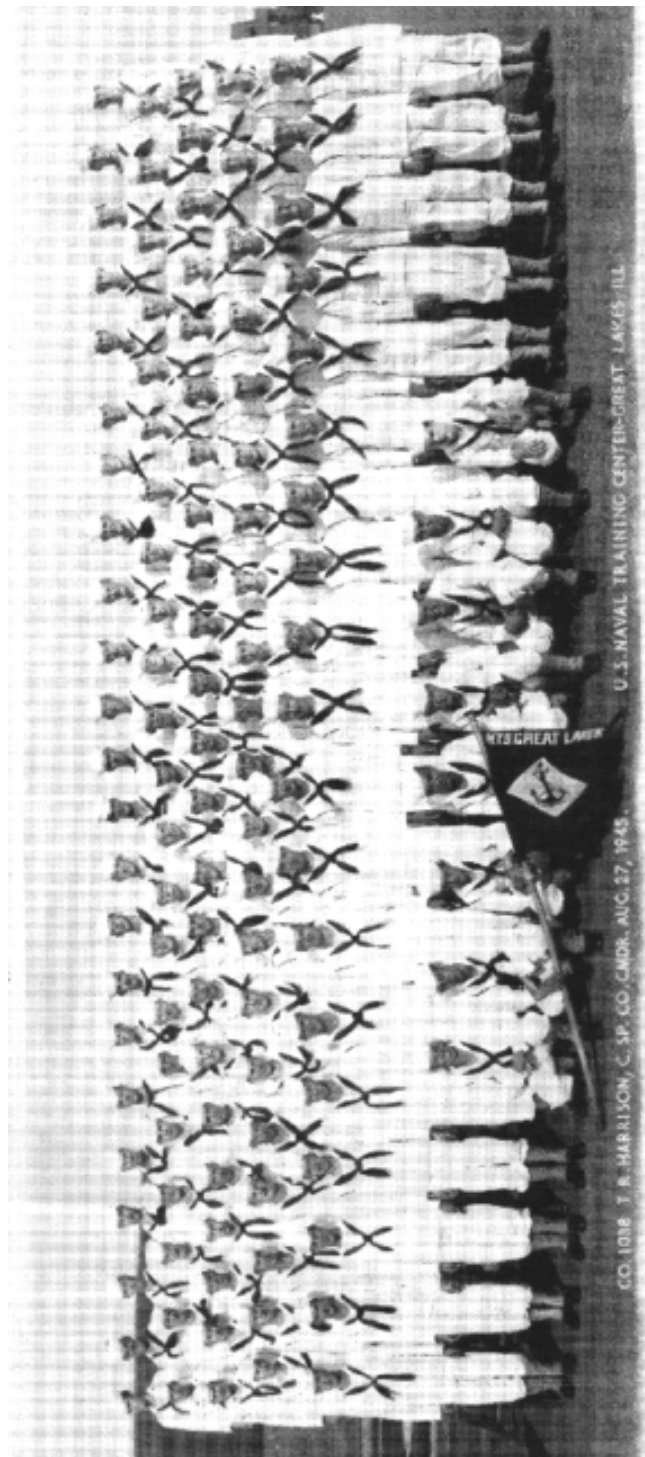
World War II Victory

15. SIGNATURE (in direction of commanding officer)

W. E. PICKENS, JR., CHAIR
BY DIRECTOR

3. NAME AND ADDRESS OF LAST EMPLOYER School		6. DATE OF LAST EMP. EN- FROM --- TO ---		5. MAIN USUAL OCCUPATION AND S. O. S. NO. Student	
10. JOB PREFERENCE (LIST TYPE, LOCALITY, AND GENERAL AREA) College		11. PREFERENCE FOR ADDITIONAL TRAINING (TYPE OF TRAINING) College Mag.		12. VOUCHERS ON TRADE COURSES (NATURE AND DATES OF COURSES)	
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9. HIGHEST DEGREE POSSESSED None		13. GPP ONLY EDUCATIONAL COURSE COMPLETED None		14. SIGNATURE OF PERSON BEING EMPLOYED 14 August 1946 X Carl C. Faith	

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Superior, Wis.

21.
Bill Sprague
637 E. Gorham St.
Madison, Wis.

22.
David Lucas
Rt. 1
Mathews, N. C.

7.
Gordon Sinler ?
4125 Miraleste ?
San Pedro, Calif.

8.
Jack Seibert
614 Lincoln W.W.
Massillon, Oh.

9.
Rod Berger
5026 N. Elkhart Ave.
Milwaukee, Wis. (11)

10.
Kenneth Roesebach
218 N. Butler Ave.
Compton 60, Calif.

11.
Art Zoellner
913 Duff
Ames, Iowa

12.
Merrill C. Mooshead, Jr.
Moore Rd.
Redwood City, Calif.

13.
Alan Van Covering
1734 Hillside Dr.
Glendale 8, Calif.
CI-3-2806

14.
Cecil Eby Jr.
308 George St.
Charlestown, W. Va.

15.
Charles May
410 Carroll Ave.
Takoma Park, 12, Maryland

16.
Paul M. Gelling
R.F.D. 2
Syracuse, N. Y.

17.
Tom Iszard

Elmira, N. Y.

18.
Hugh Parker
1640 Euclid Ave.
Flint 4, Mich.

19.
Kenneth MacDonald
238 West Ivy St.
New Haven, Conn.

20.
James D. King
18314 Scottsdale Blvd.
Shaker Heights 22, Oh.

21.
Don May
21 E. 66 ?
New York City, N. Y.

22.
Randy Hudson
420 Lowell Ave.
Palo Alto, Calif.

**23.
Carl Faith
199 Longview Dr.
Princeton, N.J. 08540
1-609-924-1633

(address in 1945:
418 W. 16th St.
Covington, Ky.)

ROW VI.

1.
Daniel Lever Woodside
34 Shadyside Ave.
Summit, N. J.

2.
Russell Powell
72 N. Lake St.
Northeast, Pa.

3.
Tom Winter
11128 Montana Ave.
Los Angeles 24, Calif.

4.
George C. Wagner
4300 State St.
Quincy, Ill.

5.
Harvey Saks
2432 Traymore Rd.
University Hgts., Oh.

6.
John W. Webb
1658 Parkwood
Lakewood, Oh.

GLENN FITKIN, JR.
& ASSOCIATES

4511 CERBY ROAD

IA LIMITED PARTNERSHIP
TOLEDO, OHIO 43615

419-537-6942

May 20, 1988

Carl Faith
199 Longview Dr.
Princeton, NJ 08540

Dear Carl:

My goodness! You really have started to record the history of where we were in 1945-46. You brought back a lot of memories! I share almost all of your feelings about our Navy stay. I liked it about as much as you did.

You also cast some light on my life that I was not aware of. You mention that I came from a rich WASP family. I guess that this is true, but I always thought I had a middle class upbringing. I guess that this is one of the joys of being an American - most everyone thinks that they are middle class. A small correction - the sailboat was only 12' long, cost \$345, and my family planned to have me sell it in Corpus and give them the money back. My father's income was about \$5000 per year at the time. This was well above average, but since most of my schoolmates father's had much higher incomes, I was poorer than most of my friends.

A couple of things I recall with pride ^{occurred in} ~~the~~ the period after schooling in Corpus had finished, and we were stuck there for about a month with little to do. The company was mustered out every morning right after breakfast and sent out to do meaningless tasks to keep us out of trouble. You and I and JR used to sneak off to the library and read all morning, rejoin the company for lunch, and go back to the library in the afternoon. As I recall the library was the only place without a PA system, so they could not announce our absence there. I really enjoyed trying to beat the system. The second is our trip over some long weekend to Laredo and eventually to Monterey, Mexico. We really got off into a different environment! I particularly remember You and I and JR stopping at the barred window of the local brothel chatting with the girls. JR was so scared that he walked further down the street and left us there while an openwindowed bus full of people stopped next to us in the street, and a lot of the people yelled at us to go on in. For the record - we didn't. I don't know why JR was upset - after all he used to tell us that he always felt safer around "Catholic girls", and I am sure that they were.

I take it that you have lost contact with JR. I think that he attended Culver Military Academy for a while before we knew him. If they are still in existence they might have an address for him. I think he would enjoy a copy of your article.

Sincerely,

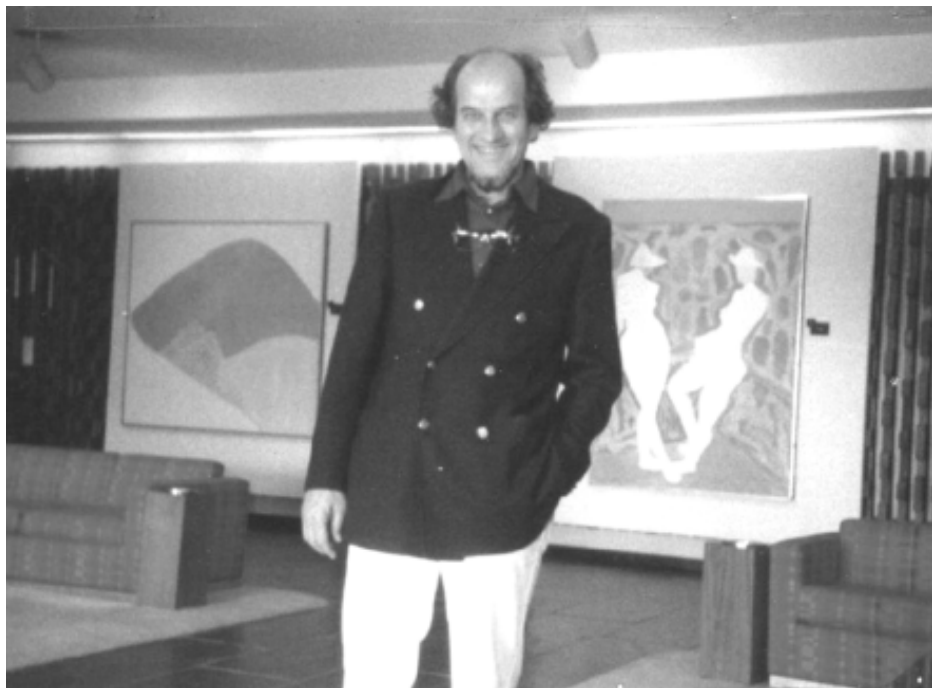


Letter from Glenn L. Fitkin in Toledo, Ohio to Carl

May 20, 1988



Maps of the Navy Air Base At Ward Island, Corpus Christi, Laguna Island, Gulf of Mexico, Laguna Madre, and Padre Island



CARL FAITH

The Author

**At the Milton Avery Exhibition at
Western Electric Company
Princeton, New Jersey
Fall 1979**

CHAPTER 53

WELCOME TO GREAT LAKES U.S. NAVAL TRAINING BASE

*Hog Butcher for the World, / Tool Maker, Stacker of Wheat,
Player with Railroads and the Nation's Freight Handler;
Stormy, husky, brawling, / City of Big Shoulders.
"Chicago," st.1, by Carl Sandburg, 1878-1967.*

The five Great *Lakes*—*Huron, Superior, Erie, Michigan* and *Ontario*—compose the planet's largest freshwater system. Covering (4,00 square miles, containing 5,500 cubic miles of water, and bordered by 10,210 miles of shoreline, the lakes account for 20 percent of the world's freshwater and more than 95 percent of surface freshwater for the Lower 48 states. Only the polar ice caps contain more fresh water. The greatest of the Lakes is Superior. With a volume of 2,900 cubic miles, it could hold all the other Great Lakes plus three more Lake Eries, or cover all of North American under 1 foot of water if spread out over the Continent. (Taken verbatim from National Wildlife, June/July 2004.)

A Dismal Array

Great Lakes Training Center, or Base, is on Lack Michigan about 20 miles north of Chicago. (Chicago is Alonquian for "onion field" but this cannot account for the terrible smells from the stockyards. They are long gone now.) GLTC was a dismal array of battleship-gray barracks, and barrack-like buildings that were to become familiar to generations of college students as "temporary" housing and classrooms in postwar academia, and government job training centers. I did not need time to adjust to the eternal gray colors of the place, as I went in numb, stayed numb, and went out numb.

Military Life is Better Than No Life At All

The main consolation of much military life is that it is better than death. And my branch, called “R.T.” for Radio Technician, was considered the *crème de la crème*: we were supposed to be in the “upper two percent” of the nation’s intelligence—whatever that meant. The scores were called “GCQ”, or General Classification Quotient, which differed from your I.Q. since it emphasized mechanical, spatial, and mathematical skills.

The Stupidity of Everything At Great Lakes

The hilarious part about this accolade was the utter stupidity of everything you encountered at Great Lakes: there was madness in their method. The orientation officers were proud to acknowledge that even Ph.D.’s have flunked out of the Navy’s R. T. program, only to turn us over to some simian types just because they wore their rank on the right (as opposed to the left) sleeve. The former were “line” officers, and were (to be) “technicians.” They inspired the joke: “If it moves, salute it, if it doesn’t move, paint it.” That is “The lunatic logic of bureaucracy”—George Steiner.

Boys fresh out of high school were what most of the “men” were actually. We had thrown safety razors in our toiletries chiefly for morale. I still had my peaches and cream complexion, which embarrassed me. Even seven years later a Dean’s wife at Purdue ran up to me, and gushed, “I wish I had a complexion like that!” So do I now.

Cusses Like a Sailor?

In order to make ‘men’ of us, the Navy threw a battery of cretins at us who intended to shock us into manhood by the abuse of obscene language. People can say, as they will, “He cusses like a sailor”, but until you hear a stream of invective and blasphemy from the lips of an “old salt” just itching to do mental and sadistic surgery on you, this will always be an understatement. Their idea of fun is to keep the obscenities going for an hour or so without repetition. I was totally unprepared for anything like what the Navy threw at us. Compared to our Great Lakes “salts”, Peaseburg was a saintly community of do-gooders whose occasional “damns” or “shee-its” were mostly for emphasis, or gilding a lily. The Navy gave us the hardcore of which the obscenities were the substance, not the vehicle. I merely thought these people were stupid, limited as their vocabulary was, without a hint of originality.

Navy Lingo

We also had to learn navy lingo for toilet was “head”, lunch or dinner was “mess”, or “chow”, eaten in a mess or chow hall, you “chowed down” (ate) at “chow time,” you slept in a hammock, or a bunk on a “fart-sack.” The latter had to be snow-white clean (amusingly enough like diapers, which is derived from the Greek word *diapros*, meaning pure white); so taut that a dropped coin could bounce off it. Being young mostly continent men, we faced the embarrassment of keeping the sheets clean after a “wet dreams.” At least, we “starched” them, another term for a wet dream.

Sailors climb up ladders to get on deck, or topside,¹ instead of steps, walls were bulkheads, floors were decks which you swabbed, doors were gangways, and if you were incarcerated you were put in a brig. Your stuff was called gear, and you stowed it in a large cylindrical bag made of canvas or duck, called a duffel (bag.) Sailors lived in barracks, and officers had, or shared, cabins, went fore to the bow, aft to the stern, abaft to go to the sides your ship, port was the left side, so-called because the ship docked on the side next to the port, and starboard, that is, facing the stars, was to the right, as they faced the bow.

A ship is “rigged” with hawsers, and hawsers were to be belayed (tied down). Ahoy was the command to attract attention, or to hail a ship, and “Landho!” everybody knows. Avast was the command of the captain, or deck officer, e.g., the Bos’un mate, for the ship to stop, and also used as a command for sailors, or whoever, to desist. Of course, landlubbers were hardly seamen. A depth charge thrown overboard to explode over an enemy submarine was called an ash can. A cathead is a beam over the bow used as a support to lift the anchor.

Still, even a landlubber knows what a keel of a boat is, but what about the meaning of “keelhaul”? This was a severe punishment that instead a throwing a culprit into the brig, he was hauled under the keel through the water from one side of the ship to the other, or from stem, i.e., the fore part, to stern, i.e. the aft part, hence more generally, to severely reprimand, or even ruin someone. New navy recruits were “boots” because of the above-ankle canvas attachments worn above the shoes, ergo, Great Lakes Training Center was called “Boot Camp.” Ironically, wearing “boots” meant wearing knickers again. See Chapter 11 for the ignominy of it all! A sailor is variously a Swab (for swabbing, i.e., mopping the decks), Swabby, or Tar (from tarpaulin?); if he went to sea, he was a Salt, and a Sea Dog if he was a veteran Salt. Gob is slang for sailor (from Gobshite, a spit-wad

¹ Topside: (1) the surface of a ship above water line. (2) The highest position of authority; *Nautical*. 1. On or to the upper parts of a ship; on deck. 2. In a position of authority. American Heritage Dictionary.

of tobacco?) If given an order by a superior officer, you saluted with four fingers, and rang out “Aye-Aye, Sir!”

“The Last Detail”: “Sir” was *de rigueur*, and omitting it led to verbal and other forms of chastisement, as the movie, “The Last Detail” illustrated so well in the last moments when the two members of the Shore Patrol (navy police, convincingly played by Jack Nicholson and Otis Young) deliver their prisoner (Randy Quaid) to a chicken-shit marine officer played by Michael Moriarty, who later became the longest lasting DA in “Law and Order. (See p. 116(215-216) for a bit more on this movie, if you haven’t already done so.)

Liberty meant authorization to go “ashore,” although a sailor didn’t have to be on a ship, or at sea, to get it. “Grab your socks, and hold your cocks, we’re going on liberty!” was a frequent expression, which conveys something about what sailors expected to get when they went on leave! “*But Not For Me*” is a George Gershwin song, in “Girl Crazy,” 1930, which applied to me. This also applied to clap, or gonorrhea—venereal diseases I never had to worry about. Frequently, sailors were given “short arms,” the lingo for inspections of the penis for signs of VD.

Navy Time is measure by a bell, one bell for each half-hour, so that 8 bells is 4 o’clock. Each watch, that is, tour of duty last 8 bells, when you are relieved from duty, and the next watch begins. The bells do not register when it is 4 or 8, or 12 o’clock. (More Navy Lingo in Ch. 58.)

Navy Clothes

Navy work-clothes were called “fatigues.” You usually wore your “whites,” when not on fatigue duty, your woolen “blues” in winter, and your “dress whites and blues” for more formal occasions. There was no fly on your trousers to open. Instead, there were 13 buttons to unfasten and fasten in order to open or close a large front flap, one button for every one of the original colonies—each button represents a colony in order of ratification of the Constitution. This was a good reason for the epithet “monkey suits.” If you got lost contemplating which colony a button represented, then you probably ended up damp, or worse. Clothes were not ironed, but rolled tightly into rolls, and stored in your duffel bag.

Degradation of Recruits

The degradation suffered by enlisted men was called “chicken shit”. Anybody who saw the 1955 movie “Mr. Roberts,” starring Jack Lemmon in the title role, and James Cagney as the wacky captain, or the 1954 movie, “The Caine Mutiny,” starring Humphrey Bogart as the obsessive-compulsive captain, will learn a lot about it.

“Snafu” is an acronym meaning “situation normal all fucked up.” Not that everybody

using profanity was hostile towards us, but rather at their frustration at being in the Navy. Grab-ass was rough horseplay, or grabbing at and squeezing a buddy's buttocks, as a display of affection, or degradation. George Orwell had this to say about the often meant-to-be-funny stream of profanity that was common in the navy.

Dirty Jokes As Rebellion?

*Whatever is funny is subversive, every joke is ultimately a custard pie, and the reason why so large proportion of jokes centre [sic] round obscenity is simply that all societies, as the price of survival, have to insist on a fairly high standard of sexual morality. A dirty joke is not, of course, a serious attack upon morality, but is a sort of mental rebellion, a momentary wish that things were otherwise—*From Orwell's "Art of Donald McGill", in *Horizon*, September 1941, and in Orwell's *Collected Essays*, 1961; also see the "New Penguin Dictionary of Modern Quotations."

Going back to profanity, if anyone would have told me that I was a "privileged child, or had led a sheltered life, I would have snorted. (See chapters entitled 2439 Herman Street, Lower Depths, The Gang, The Herman Street Jungle, etc.) There I was, a Bible-toting, clean-living, God-fearing Kentucky Baptist virgin being inundated with the filth, depravity, and bilge of the most lurid and sadistic kind, that violated everything that I had thought the country stood for.

The Slaughter of the Innocents . . . and Brainwashing: You might call this "the slaughter of the innocents." Certainly many others must have felt their ideals were being violated. (See. e. g., Gary Swanson in "Brave Men, Gentle Heroes," p. 384: ". . . the military brainwashes their inductees . . . They take away your dignity. It's not right.") The point of the obscenity was to demoralize you, to degrade humanity, and, by implication, degrade you, in order to make you more submissive. If humans act like monkeys, as these old navy hands did, then they forfeit their human rights. In effect, they are sneering at the veneer of human dignity and idealism. This was a dirt-by-association accusation. But, if George Orwell is to be believed (see quote above), they had their reasons for their profanity. What bothered me most were the degraded images of women that constituted practically one hundred percent of obscenity. I was no "bastard," no "mother-fucker," not even a "fucker," no "son-of-a-bitch," and none of the degrading epithets that casually came out of the mouths of the Bos'n mates and other line officers that I encountered during my six-week training period at Great Lakes. Yet I was called all of these and more, directly and by innuendo, even though I had never even met a prostitute.

No doubt this kind of brainwashing has its defenders who will insist that individualism (and individuality) has to be destroyed in order to weld together men into a war machine that will blindly follow orders to kill. However, the success of the Chinese

in their own brand of brainwashing of U. S. Korean War prisoners discredits the type of soldier that is produced by that kind of thinking. The Chinese success showed that the military could have profited a great deal by soldiers individualized enough to know the true historical and ideological foundations of their country. As it were, the Navy's motto was: "Shape up or ship out!"

One Fishball!

A song "One Meatball!" by Hy Zare and Lou Singer and introduced and popularized in 1943 by Josh White, was on the radio a lot at Great Lakes. I wasn't able to find the lyrics, but "One Fishball," I found in the Book of Concise Quotations; George Martin Lane who actually experienced the embarrassment wrote about it. It had appeared in July 1855 in Harper's Monthly:

And gently whispers
The waiter he to him doth call—"One Fishball."
The waiter roars it through the hall,
The guests they start at "One Fishball!"
The guest then says, quote ill at ease,
"A piece of bread, sir, if you please."
The waiter roars it through the hall:
"We don't give bread with one Fishball!"

Not that we ever were served fishballs! Maybe fish on Fridays for Catholics, but this was before the days of frozen food, and the fish, well, smelled like fish. The phrase, "there's something fishy here," expresses why many people do not like fish—any kind of fish, frozen or fresh. This was eons before fish, and chicken, came to be wholesome alternatives to meat. And rabbit food was an epithet for salad. All in all, people did not live long enough to worry about vitamins, and minerals, and, anyway, they probably got their daily requirements before the advent of fast foods, French fries, etc.

Did the Navy serve navy beans? You betcha! Only, at home we called them "boom-boom beans." So there's no doubt that we ate nutritious food at home. The modern nutritionists tell us that *less is more* since experiments show that skinny rats live longer. Well, eating at home, we were skinny all right, but very soon I begin to add weight—for the first time in my life, apart from feast days at home, I was able to eat all I wanted in the Navy's mess hall. Fred had the same happy experience when he enlisted in the paratroopers in 1946.

CHAPTER 54

V.D. OR NOT V.D.?

It is better to have flunked your Wassermann

Test than never to have loved at all.

APOCRYPHIA OF LOVE

A test for syphilis was discovered in 1906 by August von Wassermann, 1856-1925, he also developed anti-toxin treatment for diphtheria, and inoculations for cholera, typhoid, and tetanus.

Paul Ehrlich, 1854-1915, discovered the first antidote for syphilis, Salvarsan, and shared a Nobel Prize in 1908 for his work on immunology.

After several days of “orientation”, interspersed with nine types of inoculations from typhoid to tetanus, we were given the “Horrors of V.D.” routine. This was so effective that if drunken and careless drivers were similarly indoctrinated, the number of traffic fatalities would plummet from the present 50-55,000 per annum to about 5,000 or less!

Syphilis in Technicolor!

Looking at medical books on diseases is enough to make anyone ill who has not become calloused to disease and suffering. What made the Navy’s anti-V.D. program so effective is that the diseases in all their progressions were shown in motion pictures—in Technicolor!

Before the widespread of penicillin and other anti-biotics, there was no sure cure for syphilis, although in 1908 the renown biologist Paul Ehrlich, 1854-1915, shared the Nobel Prize for his studies in immunology, including a antidote, Salvarsan, and later, the less toxic neo-Salvarsan, for syphilis. Then why was syphilis so dreaded? Well, if the chancre that appears is not treated, it becomes dormant until later in life when it can cause madness. Nowadays, gonorrhea, or what is called “clap,” is routinely treated with

ten or more days of an antibiotic, e.g., penicillin, and tuberculosis was cured this way by the discovery of streptomycin in 1943.

Sailors were advised to approach strange women cautiously (circumspectly?), and to never engage in sexual intercourse¹ with a stranger, and, not only that, never even kiss her! After all, V.D. stands for “venereal disease,” named after Venus is the goddess of love in Roman mythology. Isn’t that ironic? That covered a multitude of sins, since *everybody* is a “stranger” when you are away from home. Except that it did not. The prohibition went on. In the event you disregarded this bit of advice, they had failsafe measures to protect you.

Sailors Advisory: Wear a Condoms . . . And Use Disinfectant Soap

Sailors were advised: Always wear a condom, i.e., a rubber while engaged in “sexual intercourse.” In a spoof by Woody Allen, a man wears a body condom. I think there’s one in his hilarious movie “Everything You Ever Wanted to Know About Sex (But Were Afraid to Ask)”

In addition, afterwards, always soap down with surgical disinfectant soap, I suppose if you carried a gallon of that evil-smelling green stuff with you, you would not have to worry about using it—the girls would actually run away from you! In addition, they urged sailors to urinate frequently immediately afterwards. I have seen dogs urinate frequently, every ten paces or so, on every shrub or tree they passed, but I did not suppose that humans had that capacity reached old age.

The Unpleasant Venereal Symptoms

After “exposure” you were urged to get a blood test even if you failed to have the famous symptoms: green discharge, excruciating pain urinating (for gonorrhea), a

¹ We were told the story of a farmer with an ailing young bride for whom a doctor prescribed “sexual intercourse”, a prescription that he had to fill himself since the farmer did not know what the word meant. One day the farmer caught him filling the prescription, asked him what he was doing, and when he told the farmer, he responded, “Oh, that’s all right—there for a minute I thought you were diddling her.”

Poe had this to say about “diddling:” *A crow thieves; a weasel outwits; a man diddles. To diddle is his destiny*—quoted by Martin Arnold in “Making Books,” in the New York Times, p. E 3, June 6, 2002. According to Funk and Wagnalls, to diddle has several meanings: (1) as a transitive verb, to cheat, to pass time idly, i.e., to dawdle, and (2) to toddle (or toggle?), to jerk up and down. This last is closer to its pejorative meaning!

chancre or running sore a warning sign for syphilis (which when ignored becomes dormant, and reappears years late virulently infecting the brain, and other organs), swollen testicles, or blue balls (a painful condition experienced by boys from sub-orgasmic heavy petting, and itchy pubic hair from crabs (slang for infestation with crab lice.)

On shore leaves, I never saw anything more seductive than the hostesses at the USO in Chicago, who were there to pass out information to the thousands of boys in the military, or maybe to sign you up for an overnight bunk on a gymnasium floor shared with hundreds of others, or to dance with you. As I said in the preceding chapter (in case you missed it!), “*But Not For Me*” is a George Gershwin song in “Girl Crazy” (1930) that applied to me in 1945-46—I never had to worry about clap (gonorrhea) or any venereal disease. Sailors were given periodic “short arms,” the lingo for inspections of the penis for a telltale sign of VD, i.e., pus, or chancre.

Bad Girls?

Other girls were there to give you what books or magazines you would like, and maybe even dance with you in the record room, but I believe everybody was safe from V.D. in their impersonal dances. Even when I occasionally went into a bar for a soft drink, I could find nothing that I could classify as sinful beyond the drinking. Where were all these “bad” women that the Navy spent so much time and energy to educate their own to avoid? Regarding whom I remember a joke about a horny dude calling up the Salvation Army, and asked “Do you save bad girls?” When the response was “yes”, then he pleaded, “Save me two for a pal and me for Saturday night, wontcha?” Wishful thinking! “Sex was the *last thing* a girl gave to a man.”

We Caught Everything But VD! I concluded that it was just another attempt to degrade women and by inference to degrade us, so we would think of ourselves as needing guidance and be more obedient. In an entire year in the service, I never knew anybody that contracted a venereal disease. Many caught measles, mumps, scarlet fever, pneumonia, and other diseases that the Navy never bothered to warn us about, but none caught the Navy’s favorite.

Genius, Madness, and the Mysteries of Syphilis: In a 2003 book, “Pox”, with the subtitle above, Deborah Hayden presents the thesis that many eminent figures in history very likely suffered from syphilis, and that the disease may explain aspects of their behavior, and how they accomplished some of their feats.

Syphilitics in History: Hayden’s list includes: Beethoven, Nietzsche, Flaubert, van Gogh, Schubert, James Joyce, Goya, Mary Todd and Abraham Lincoln, Al Capone, Ivan the Terrible, and Hitler. Not only that, but almost every week or so a researcher uncovers irrefutable evidence of other syphilitics in history. She inexplicably left out

Gauguin, who picked it up in a visit to a brothel in France after returning from Tahiti, then took it back with him, and infected some of his Tahitian concubines. Some fictional characters are candidates in my book, e.g., Captain Ahab of “*Moby Dick*,” Captain Queeg, of “*The Caine Mutiny*”, Dr. Jekyll (i.e., Mr. Hyde in madness), and practically any character in Edgar Allen Poe’s fiction.

CHAPTER 55

COMPANY 1038

*God moves in a mysterious way / His wonders to perform;
He plants his footsteps in the sea / And rides upon the storm.*
From the Olney Poems, 1779, no. 35, William Cowper, 1731-1800

Navy mottoes: (1) "Shape up or ship out!";
(2) "Hurry up and wait!"

Navy Pals

“Whitey” Sweitzer, my new friend from Covington,¹ with whom I rode the train with from Cincinnati, and I were assigned to a company of 120 Radio Technicians (RTs) Company 1038, which, I suppose, was the 1038th company formed at Great Lakes that year, but I have no idea how many of them were RT companies.

This was my first glimpse of the bigger world outside. Company 1038 was comprised of men from 21 of 48 States, and one from Canada. From Northern Kentucky, Whitey and I were the only two who passed the Eddy Test (so named after Captain Eddy who devised it) out of 41 who attempted, but at Great Lakes we were just two out of 120 who had passed. I counted 22 from Ohio, 13 from California, 11 from New York, including 4 from New York City, 7 from Wisconsin, 6 from Tennessee, 4 from New Jersey, an equal number from Texas, and 3 from Kentucky, including guess which two from Covington. This was quite an education in the geography of the USA. (See “Getting to Know You . . .” on the next page). I can’t vouch for the accuracy of the count, nor explain why there were so many from Ohio, nor so few from New Jersey. Anyway, look at the Roster, and count for yourself.

¹ “Whitey” gave his Covington address on the Company 1038 Roster (see), but did not attend Holmes High School, at least, did not graduate with us in 1945. Maybe John G. Carlisle?

Company 1038 Roster and Photograph

Fortunately, Claude Lynch, Jr., who like Glenn Fitkin was from Toledo, persuaded everybody to write his name and address on the Company Roster (see), corresponding to their position in the Company Photograph (also see.) He is the first person (all positions from the left) in the first row. (Everybody in the first row is kneeling on one knee.) I am catty-corner, the last person in the last row.

Standing next to me is Randy Hudson of *Palo Alto*, appropriately meaning “high stick” in Spanish, since at 6ft. 2 in. I looked short beside him. Also standing tall on the back row Cecil Elby, Jr., of Charlestown, West Virginia, and Rod Berger, from Milwaukee. Morton Wooley, of Worthington, Ohio, was another one I looked up to. Glenn Fitkin, of Toledo, was shorter, but powerfully built. In the Company photograph, Glenn is 17 from the left in Row IV. In the last Row, Row VI, Jack Seifert of Massilon, Ohio, is 8 from the left, Rod is next to him on the right, Cecil is 14 from the left, while Mort is 9 from the left in Row II, right behind the Company flag. John Schinnel, is to Mort’s right, and “Red” Inskeep is second to his right. I think we called Schinnel “Skinner” for maybe homophonic reasons. Along with Mort, “Skinner” wielded his authority in the company with great kindness.

Miraculously it appeared that our company was born full-grown like Gargantua and Pantagruel (giant heroes in the book by François Rabelais.) Captain T. R. Harrison (note his initials are R. T. backwards!) was the company commander, the only experienced navy man in the company, and he appointed himself a number of lieutenants to carry out his orders, the most prominent of whom was Morton. Judging by his self-confidence, I guessed that Morton was either an Eagle Scout or an ROTC man, but whatever his credentials were, he proved to be an excellent choice for Harrison’s right-hand man.

Company 1038 Postman

Thanks to a tip from a friend whom I made while working for the Covington Post Office the previous summer, I applied for the job of company Postmaster. To my everlasting surprise and pleasure, I got the job! Either Harrison was impressed with my knowledge of postal regulations, which I recited to him chapter-and-verse, or he was overwhelmed to find a *Kentuckian who could read*, or, gave me the job out of shock, I know not which. Little did he know that in Covington, we played basketball, sorting packages by bouncing them off the wall into mail sacks hanging on racks.

The result of this *coup* (as Miss Rasch, my high school French teacher, would have pronounced *en Français* as “coo”—means a sudden telling stroke or masterstroke) was that I was excused from marching drills and other tiresome chores. Indeed, it did not take

long for me to discover that I had the most popular job in the company, for the obvious reason that while an army may march on its belly (as Napoleon claimed), it survives by its heart, and for the letter-hungry recruit this meant home.

Getting to Know You . . .

Furthermore, I got to know every single person in the company—first and last name, and serial number. For year afterwards, I used to astound friends by repeating verbatim the Company 1038 roll-call. Not only that but I handled mail from many parts of the country that I barely heard of before: Santa Ana, Santa Monica, Oakland, Palo Alto, Redwood City, Tulare, Visalia (all in California), El Paso, Richardson (Texas), Punxsutawney, Schwenksville (Pennsylvania), Mobile (Alabama), Brooklyn, Bronx, Elmira—a home of Mark Twain, Ames (Iowa), St. Albans, and some places closer to home: Berea, Kentucky I had heard of, but not Berea, Ohio, nor Berwyn, Illinois, or Shanesville, or Sugarcreek (Ohio), or Rye (New York), or Two Rivers (Wisconsin).

Is It Any Wonder that I Wander?

You might say I was interested in just about any and every place. A wonderful wanderlust seized me. Since then I have traveled to all 48 of the continuous United States, and more than 30 countries. In fact, through the auspices of the Navy, I was shipped to and through a goodly number of states, when we traveled from Great Lakes to Michigan City, Indiana, Dearborn Michigan, and thence to Texas via St. Louis, Texarkana, to Corpus Christi, Texas.

Getting To Know All About You

Aside from names and place, I became familiar with the personalities of each RT as he showed his pleasure, disgust, or sadness at the mail. I did all that I could to soften the blow when day after day someone received no mail, by giving the high-sign when it did arrive, or smuggling it to him before regulation mail-time.

Caviar and Pâté de Foie Gras

Being Company 1038 Postman was the most interesting job that I ever had up to that time, and also the one with the greatest ex-officio benefits. It happened that the metal mail cabinet was the only place to store food since it was impervious to rodents and was airtight, inhibiting insects. Harvey Saks of University Heights, Ohio, brought caviar and *pâté de foie gras* (literally, pate of fat (goose) liver) to me for safekeeping. I found out what it meant to trust someone. (Nobody ever trusted me with anything before!) At every

take-out, I was cut in for a piece, just to keep the trust secure. Not that I ever acquired a taste for caviar. I was strictly a “meat-and-potatoes man.”

Chief T. R. Harrison, Company Commander

Harrison guided us through the shoals and shallows of our ten-week “boot camp.” I remember him as a short, compact, energetic man who knew his job and therefore did not like any trouble from recruits. In fact, everybody in the Navy gave that impression—nobody asks for trouble anywhere, but authority figures express more outrage when they get it than the rank-and-file. Nobody in Company 1038 could challenge his authority, or even think of doing it.

The Yellow Rose of Texas and Deep In the Heart of Texas

There's a yellow rose in Texas that I am going to see, / No other soldier knows her, no soldier, only me. / She cried so when I left her, it like to broke my heart, / And if I ever find her, we never more will part.

*The stars at night are big and bright, / Deep in the heart of Texas,
They remind me of the one I love, / Deep in the heart of Texas.*

Aside from his penchant for having us sing *The Eyes of Texas* (sung to the tune of “I’ve Been Working on the Railroad”) followed by *The Yellow Rose of Texas*, and *Deep in the heart of Texas*, I do not recall any peculiarities about Harrison—certainly none of those of Captain Queeg in Herman Wouk’s *The Caine Mutiny*. But it sure made Charles “Tex” Rutledge (Company 1038 Photograph, Row II, 2nd from the left) delirious. I suppose that I retain kind feelings toward Harrison because of my enviable position as Company Postman. Otherwise there is no incident that could be used for a litmus-paper determination of his character, which I assume was as rugged as his deeply-tanned, square-jawed face indicated. He barked out orders that brooked no half-way compliance. His marching cadence was *you leap rahup!* Or *you leap, you leap, you leap, rahup!* “Leap” meant left, and “rahup” meant right; *tenhut!* meant attention! Another favorite song was Red River Valley we used to sing in Kentucky before we knew where the Red River was. N.B. We also marched to the tune of the theme-march of “The Bridge on the River Kwai”—an old WWI whistling tune, the “Colonel Bogey March,” which the soldiers whistled on the way to work on the bridge—only we made it into a pejorative instead:

Horseshit, which makes the grass grow green, / Horseshit, which smells so nice and clean. Another marching song was: “The Yellow Ribbon”:

Around her neck She wore a yellow ribbon, / She wore it in the springtime And in the month of May. / And if you asked her Why the heck she wore it / She wore it for her lover who is far, far away. / Far away, far away, she wore it for her lover who was far, far away.

On June 29, 2005, Jack Seibert, aka “JR,” e-mailed me this anecdote about Harrison: “There was a roly-poly guy named Hubbell with two left feet. Before our drill competition with the other companies, Harrison shrewdly pulled Hubbell aside handed him his coat and told him to stand on the sideline and hold his coat. When we won the competition, Harrison nonchalantly strolled over to Hubbell retrieved his coat, and marched to the reviewing stand to retrieve his prize.”

*From this valley they say you are going, / I will miss you bright eyes and your smile.
For they say you are taking the sunshine, / That has brighten our pathways a while.
Come and sit by my side if you love me, / Do not hasten to bid me adieu,
But remember the Red River Valley, / And the cowboy who loves you so true.*

Originally “In the Bright Mohawk Valley,” written by James Kerrigan about New York State, this simplified version, set in (and called) *Red River Valley*, has become standard. The Red River flows 1,018 miles between Arkansas and Texas to Texarkana, through Louisiana to the Mississippi River

Minorities in Company 1038: There were no blacks in Company 1038 that I recall and, now that I look back, surprisingly few Jews.² I am certain such a company today would 20-50 percent Jewish membership, and many more Blacks and Hispanics.³

A study by the American Mathematical Society published in the August 2004 Notices showed a larger discrepancy between the respective percentages of (a) Ethnic population and (b) Ph.D.’s granted in the years 1993-2002: Asian/Pacific Isl. (a) 3.8, (b) 15.4; Black (a) 12.2, (b) 1.9; Hispano/Latino (a) 11.9, (b) 2.6; White (a) 71.3, (b) 77.6; Native American (a) 0.7 (b) 0.3; BH/LN (a) 24.8 (b) 4.8, where BH/LN denotes the total for Blacks, Hispano/Latino, and Native Americans.

In retrospect, I wish I had been a better sociologist. I was traveling in pretty fast company, mentally, and it would have been interesting to make a note or two on the

² Blacks were called “Negroes” or “colored people” in those racist times. I based my estimate of the number of Jewish R.T.’s by the few observing the Jewish Sabbath on Saturday. On the other hand, I didn’t know how religiously tolerant the Navy was back then, nor what percentage of the Jews were observant.

³ I base this on the Jewish enrollments in several of the nation’s top schools—Harvard, Princeton, and Chicago. In Company 1038, there were no Blacks, and few, if any Hispanics.

ethnic constituencies represented in Company 1038, but I was far too busy writing, puerile though they might have been, love letters to Joy Deborah Kinsburg.

And a losing battle that was, too. I often thought of Ted Daffan's mournful song, "Born to Lose" with the catchy add-on, "And now I'm losing you," which came out two years earlier in 1943. At such times, I also think of the painter Toulouse Lautrec, who had been born with a painful deformity of his legs, and when I sing, I also sing, "Born Toulouse," in homage, and to share the sadness of his life and love. (Also see Glenda Jackson's take on her love life quoted at the head of Chapter 48) Another mournful song that comes to mind, "Careless Love," that sounds like a dirge: "Look what love has done to me," etc., was popularized by Mel Tormé in 1949.

Violence: American as Cherry Pie?

An article in the New York Times ventured that the Depression and World War II made the people more brotherly, and helped explained the decline in per-capita crimes of violence in that era. In other words, as Rap Brown, the Vietnam Anti-War leader said, violence has always been "as American as cherry pie," except in the period 1950-1960, and the rise in the crime rate in the "sixties and seventies" is just a return to the "good old" American way of violence. The author went on to say that the reason for the brotherly feelings back then was that the Depression and World War II made Americans feel related to one another as never before. I suppose ours has always been a country of isolation that our foreign policy up to 1914 reflected (and again from 1919 to 1939.)

"Some of My Best Friends Are Jewish"

This is a defensive and condescending declaration made to alleviate guilt felt by the exclusion of Jews in their everyday lives. Would you say the same about Christians? Women? Baptists? Catholics? Oops! I did myself—about Joy Kinsburg, who was my first Jewish friend (but see the Index at Elaine Seligman), and Jack Seibert, who is Catholic! *Mea Culpa!* However, they both were part of my everyday life, so I exonerate myself! (Doesn't everybody?)

CHAPTER 56

BELL-BOTTOM TROUSERS COAT OF NAVY BLUE

*Bell-bottom trousers, Coat of navy-blue,
Girls love the sailors, and the sailors love them too!
(Let him climb the rigging, Like his daddy used to do.)*

—from the Web: Louis Prima was composing original material, and in 1937 he completed a **song** called “Sing, Sing, Sing. . . .” “Bell Bottom Trousers” (sung by Lily Ann Carol in 1945)

*I left my heart at the Stage Door Canteen,
And every doughboy will know what that means.*

From the musical, Stage Door Canteen
Music by James Monaco & lyrics by Al Dubin, 1943.

Choice of Two Sizes: Too Large or Too Small

When you are mustered into the Navy you have two choices for sizes: too large or too small. Only a determined “gob” could count on a reasonable fit, although naval regulations required a perfect fit.

The main reason you did not get one at stores, the navy supply house, was supply and demand. If your size was too popular, then you would get the second-most-popular size. In this, the Navy is not decidedly different from real life since there are only a certain number of 32W-32Ls in stock in any store, and when they are gone, it usually is too late to re-order.

Gobs did what civilians did: take your duds to a tailor for alterations! Naturally, shoes were a bigger problem, though not insurmountable provided that you brought enough cork linings and cotton pads along. Ditto for hats and paper linings.

The biggest problem I had was that the sleeves of my shirts and jackets were too short and my hat was too big. (Photographs of me at Great Lakes give ample demonstration of the truth of this.)

Monkey Suits: Anachronistic Uniforms

Beside fit, the Navy presented you with their anachronistic uniforms. The shirt with the deep V neck and big square collar hanging down your back probably had a utilitarian function in history, but by World War II it had become quaint enough to be a part of a “monkey-suit”, an epithet frequently hurled by our brothers—and sisters-in-arms. (I think the collar was to protect you from the grease on the pigtail that ancient sailors were accustomed to wearing.)

Bell Bottoms

Then there were the inimitable bell-bottom trousers, reputedly for the ease in rolling up when swabbing the deck. (This customary occupation of sailors earned them the resounding salutation, “swabs”.) But what fiendish quirk of mind ever resulted in the square front flap secured by thirteen buttons, representing the original colonies.

Warning: Avoid Diarrhea

Sailors not able to button up in times of abdominal stress or diarrhea fastened their flaps with just the two corner buttons representing Maryland (the first colony to ratify the Constitution) and Pennsylvania (New Jersey, Georgia and Connecticut were next in that order).

Tight Pants

A favorite pastime of gobs is arguing the pros and cons of the navy uniform. Pros were the people who liked the distinction the uniform bestowed of wearing an (literally) outlandish garb. According to the pros, girls practically faint when they set their eyes on the buttocks revealed by the (regulation) tight-fitting bell-bottoms.

Carl: Too Skinny?

I was one of the cons. I was too skinny (at 155 pounds) to have any buttocks, and altogether too lanky for G.I. clothing. Since I sent Mama all but ten dollars of my monthly check (in an “allotment”), I did not have the money to spend on the splendid tailored uniforms that many pros wore. These invariably included a zippered front behind dummy colonial buttons, and zippered sides on the shirt. Besides that, it was *de rigueur* that every bulge in the body had to be revealed by the tight cloth. It was thus easy to know the vainest men in the company, especially when they stuffed bandanas down their

crotches! There were even tailored hats—ones that were permanently pressed into the traditional shape with the rolled rims. Although G.I. clothes were made of high-quality cotton or wool, there were prized Egyptian cotton and English woolen tailored uniforms. The blues particularly benefited from the blue serge suit material that went into the tailoreds, so when these peacocks strutted into town, anyone could distinguish the difference! The G.I.'s floundered in their wake.

Pea Jackets

The standard winter wear for seamen was a snug-fitting jacket, called a pea jacket, a double-breasted coat that draped to just below the buttocks. The word pea jacket always puzzled me, and I was surprised to find in the venerable American Heritage Dictionary that it is derived from the Dutch *pijekk*, from *pij*, a kind of course cloth. Like a lot of GI issue, it became fashion in the postwar world. Not only did GI's wear their fatigues to classes on college campuses, but also girls who begged them from their friends prized them. This accounted for the popularity of the ubiquitous Army-Navy stores that fed the public taste for khaki (from an Arab word for dusty), blue chambray shirts, blue serge or blue denim pants. Considering the popularity of denim in the USA, I was surprised to learn that denim isn't an American invention at all—it is derived from a cloth woven in Nîmes, France, and said to be “de Nîmes”, that is, from Nîmes. And together with the Pea coat, you might wear a “watch cap,” a warm navy-blue knitted cap for sailors, worn often for guard duty.

The Hong Kong Blues

*It's a story of a very unfortunate Memphis man,
Who got 'rrested down in old Hong Kong.
He got twenty years' privilege taken away from him,
When he kicked old Buddha's gong.
Now he's bobbin' the piano just to raise the price
Of a ticket to the land of the free.
Well, he says his home's in Frisco where they ship the rice,
But it's really in Tennessee. That's what they say.
I need somebody to love me. Need somebody to carry me home to San Francisco
And bury my body there.*

.

*That's the story of very unfortunate Memphis man,
Who got 'rrested down in old Hong Kong.
He got twenty years privilege taken away from him,
When he kicked out Buddha's gong.*

Hoagy Carmichael, wrote and sang this in “To Have and Have Not,” 1944

CHAPTER 57

LETTERS FROM HOME

Are you lonesome tonight?

Do you miss me tonight?

Are you sorry we drifted apart?

Does your memory stray

To the bright summer day,

When I kissed you and called you sweetheart?

Do the chairs in your parlor seem empty and bare?

Do you gaze at your doorstep and picture me there?

Is your heart filled with pain, shall I come back again?

Tell me dear, are you lonesome tonight?

1926 Song by Lou Handman (music) & Roy Turk (lyrics).

One of Elvis Presley's greatest hits *circa* 1972

Moral Boosters and Friendship

My own morale was sky-high because of the constant flow of letters from my family and friends. Even Dad found time to write, and Fred wrote me “I’m proud of you (sob)!”

Louise was the chronicler of family fortunes, and, more often than not, misfortunes. If I needed to know what was up with the family, she would tell me.

There was a lot of love in all this. I hardly recognized Mama’s personality in her writing, so intent was she in her task of morale-boosting. My leaving had left a gap in her life, and she showed the pain it caused her in spite of her efforts at concealment. In her letters she was the most loving that I had ever known her. And, Sister too, kept up a constant stream of morale boosters.

Careless Love?

I am ashamed to recall one letter Mama wrote imploring me to believe that she loved all her children equally. (I assumed that I had accused her of loving me less in a thoughtless letter (Cf. *Careless Love*.) Only after I recognized this as a common tactic in sibling rivalry did I manage to forgive myself the anguish this had caused her. Later I was to encounter the same rivalry with my daughters and sons. One episode at Christmas in which Heidi hit two-year-old Cindy on the head with a Playskool mallet was repeated exactly one year later when Cindy returned the favor.

Sibling rivalry played out with my sons, but before I adopted them. A charming example occurred when Malachi asked “Granny, Zeno is good at music, and Japheth is good at math, what am I good at?” “Bless his heart,” as Gertrude would say, he became good at many things, especially in languages—he teaches French and Spanish in high school, was a Court interpreter in Portuguese, and has studied Arabic, Latin, Russian and Bengali. He also has a yellow belt in the Afro-Brazilian martial arts called Capoeira. However, what Malachi was most envied for, and not just by his brothers, was his popularity with girls!

Joy’s Letters

Joy wrote warm letters once-, sometimes twice a week, but our kiss was consigned to oblivion from all indications, except for two of her last letters, postmarked May 7 and May 17, 1946, which I have included as Chapter 70. I never could bring myself to mention it in a letter, and neither could she. Then, the times I came home on leave I noticed a distinct coolness which puzzled me, but did not then cause me to despair, because I also dated Doris Rudy and Vernie Neville whenever I came home, both of whom wrote me. I have kept and reread all the letters, including ones from Vernie and Frank Duff. The happiness of receiving and writing letters was one of the biggest discoveries that I made in “Boot” camp.¹ I could never have imagined the emotion evoked by the written page by a familiar hand. Mama was the ever-loyal, ever-loving mother, Sis the dutiful, abundant correspondent, Fred the master of the light touch, and Eldridge was, well, Eldridge.

¹ Navy recruits are called “boots”. Parts of the dress uniform were the khaki leggings, which appeared to be boots, but I do not know whether this is the derivation of the term. See p.190 for other Navy lingo.

*Saturday night is the loneliest night in the week,
 Be cause that's when me and my sweetheart use to meet.
 They used to play those Jelly Roll Blues,
 Until we danced right out of our shoes,
 Oh, Saturday night is the loneliest night in the week.*

Jules Styne (music) and Sammy Cahn (Lyrics), 1944

Letter to Joy Posthumously.

*I have kept your letters divine;
 Why haven't you kept mine?*

A propos of this couplet: When will I ever grow up? Jokingly, I posed the same question in an E-mail to a friend about her husband on his seventy-fifth birthday, and she replied, "There's still plenty of time!" (March 2005)

*Love, O love, O careless love,
 Love, O love, O careless love,
 Love, O love. O careless love,
 Look what love has done to me!
 Are you lonesome tonight?*

W. C. Handy adapted this mountain folk song published in 1921,

See Ewen's "All the Years, pp. 30, 134, & 484.

"Careless Love" was 1947 hit sung by Mel Tormé

See e.g., Da Capo's Companion, p. 936

*Are you lonesome tonight?
 Do you miss me tonight?
 Are you sorry we drifted apart?
 Does your memory stray to a bright sunny day
 When I kissed you and called you sweetheart?
 Do the chairs in your parlor seem empty and bare?
 Do you gaze at your doorstep and picture me there?
 Is your heart filled with pain, shall I come back again?
 Tell me dear, are you lonesome tonight?*

By Lou Handman (music) & Roy Turk (lyrics).

The song was published in 1926 (Wikipedia)

Recorded by Elvis Presley (1976)—see Da Capo, p. 714.

CHAPTER 58

C.C.

*Angelina, waitress at the pizzeria,
If she'll be-a my ca-ra mi-a,
then I'll join in matrimony
with a girl who serves spumoni,
And Angelina will be mine.*

Radio pop song in Chicago, circa 1945

Kilroy was here!

Graffiti, WW II

Double Initials

We knew each other by the first two initials, first and middle. The Navy had a passion for initials, and middle ones especially. If you came into it unendowed, they gave you one NMI (no middle initial)!

CC Means Carbon Copy . . .

Not only were you roll-called by your initials, but every stitch of your clothing, sheets, and toweling had to be stenciled in jet-black ink with your initials and last name. Eventually I became “C.C.” to everybody, a name that I hated with such a passion that I never allowed anybody to know that I had a middle name thereafter.¹ To me, “C.C.” meant “carbon copy”, which is what I thought the Navy wanted me to be.

. . . Or Crew Cut?

Almost everybody finds serving in the armed services a humiliation, especially at first when your civilian identity is shorn from you as completely as they shear your golden

¹ Until some secretary hunted it up in my records because the university, or math journal, required it!

locks. Plop, your hair falls to the barbershop floor, and you have what the Navy gave the name to: a crew-cut. You are no longer an individual but a member of the crew.

A Make-Over . . .

So in every way they make over you in appearance: your hair, your clothes, and even your body! Yes, your body changes as you develop the muscles needed to navigate the obstacle course required of all “Boots.” (Joy particularly teased me about being “ninety-three percent stronger”, as a brochure bragged.)

. . . And a New ID

Even the food contributed to your new “identity”: you had to eat what the Navy wanted you to eat, or starve—period. Anybody who reflects on the emotions that some favorite food or dinner can create, not to mention mood or mellowness, will realize how depressed you can become when nothing you eat tastes the way you like it. When you add on the surroundings and noise of a mess hall, and the strange companions that Captain Eddy picked to be your breakfast, lunch, dinner, work, and bunk-mates, then you cease to wonder at the depths of despondency that recruits fall to.

More Navy Lingo

As I mentioned in Chapter 53, the names of things changed, too: a bed was a bunk (or hammock), a wall a bulkhead, a floor a deck; stairs became a ladder, a window became a porthole, “left” was port, “right” starboard, “aft” was behind, “fore” in front, and abeam was off to the port or starboard side. A “fart sack” covered your mattress, and you “stowed” your “gear” in a “sea bag” or duffel, which was always neatly secured (i.e., tied) at the end of your bunk.

When the smoking lamp was lit, you could smoke, and not when the smoking lamp was out. You peed in the “head” and you were thrown in the “brig” for an infraction of naval law or code. Moreover, Navy rules were enforced by “Shore Police”, or “SP”, the navy equivalent of the Army’s MP’s. A quartermaster on shipboard is a petty officer who assists in navigation; in the army he is in charge of functions of the Quartermaster Corps, that is, supplying food, clothing, and equipment.

Bos’un is short for Boatswain, a subordinate officer in charge of rigging, anchors, lifeboats, and the deck crew, but on a fighting ship he is a warrant officer in charge of seasoning recruits, and much to be feared like an army or marine drill sergeant;

Practically everything is different: living in a barracks, dining in a mess hall,² where you ate your “chow,” showered en masse, slept bunk-to-bunk³, wore monkey-suits, lost your hair (ditto beard and mustache), lost your family and friends, lived in a different climate (north of Chicago!), and on and on. But maybe the biggest difference of all was the language: hardly anyone, except Whitey, spoke my dialect. That alone made me homesick. *Every day I wanted to hear Mama call my name.*

To Pitch and Yaw

In winds or heavy seas a ship may pitch or yaw. To yaw is to swerve off course momentarily or temporarily. In projectiles, to yaw is to turn about the vertical axis, a description that also applies to a ship, when it turns about *its* axis, e.g., alternatively abeam port and abeam starboard. This happens in heavy winds or seas. To pitch is for the bow to fall forward and rise. This happens when heavy weather, or high tides, creates high waves.

Kilroy Was Here

Kilroy was a ubiquitous graffito that showed the top of a baldhead and four fingers one each side of the head, resting on a straight line with a long nose drawn downward and “Kilroy was here” written underneath. (This is a case of when a picture is worth a thousand words!) It was found wherever US troops traveled, and the October issue of Smithsonian contains an article on Vietnam Graffiti, and states that “the full story will be recounted in their (Art and Lee Beltrone’s) book, “Vietnam Graffiti; Messages from the Troopship.” Nobody ever discovered who “Kilroy” was, so he remained “The Unknown GI Joe, and probably the best memorial a serviceman ever got.

² A T.V. ad on Channel 2 (New York) brags that at Annapolis, there is no waiting in line at the mess hall—the entire college of some 4,000 sit down at the same time!

³ Or “bung-hole to bung-hole,” as they would say. We were advised never to bend over in the shower.

CHAPTER 59

G. L. AND J. R.

*I only want a buddy, not a sweetheart,
Sweethearts only make you blue . . .*

Navy Pals

My best friends, besides “Whitey” Sweitzer (who accompanied me on “shore leaves” to Covington), were J. R. (Jack Richard) Seibert and G. L. (Glenn) Fitkin. Both hailed from Ohio: J. R. from Massilon and G. L. from Toledo. Henceforth, I will write GL and JR for simplicity, although I am adopting what I condemned the Navy for, i.e., the use of depersonalized initials!

An Unlikely Triumvirate: GL., JR., and CC.

Nobody could have been more unlike than JR. and GL., but the differences never interfered with their (or our) friendship. JR. was taller than either of *us*—*maybe* 6' 3" or 4"—whereas GL topped off at 5' 8" or 9" (at most), but was a powerfully built former wrestler in high school; I was 6' 2" and skinny like JR.

What made JR. so different was that he was one of the few Catholics in the Company (judging by church attendance), and he went every Sunday—drunk or sober (usually the former, as I recall).

GL. was a study in contrast, from a comfortably off WASP family, which sent his 12-foot sailboat along with him when we moved to the Gulf of Mexico at Corpus Christi. This was a world apart for JR. and me, and when GL. invited us both to his home for one weekend leave, I was impressed with the family's luxuries that, until then, I had seen only in movies.

Glenn had a different view of his family, i.e., middle-class American. (See his Letter.) Of course, such things are relative, and in commenting on this, I did not intend to express

any jealousy. For years I have sailed on a lake in Princeton on my own 12-foot sailboat, but back then our family couldn't afford one.

E-Mails from Jack and Glenn

Jack reinforced me in my opinion about this: in an e-mail on July 5, 2005, he wrote: "I agree that GL's home life looked luxurious . . . (I came from a home that was heated with a coal stove in the dining room and no running hot water—we heated it on the kitchen stove.) However, to your credit, GL, you never acted superior not flaunted your "wealth."

In response to my e-mailing Chapter 5, "2439 Herman Street," to both of them, Glenn sent this humorous reply on July 7, 2005:

"Dear Jack and Carl, My god! What's going on here? After 60 years I find out that my friends had to live with coal stoves and rats. The only hardship this WASP had was to go down the basement and fire up the coal furnace so the rest of the family could get up to warmth. The interesting thing is for more than a year we all were the same. Same income. Same clothes. Same beds. Same food. Since we all seemed to have the same ideals, I assumed that we were alike, and I think we were. I know that if you had shared your early life that it would have made no difference to me, but it might have provided an interesting topic of discussion."

I couldn't agree with Glenn's sentiments more if I had written the e-mail myself! However, I doubt that we would have had much to discuss since I, and no doubt JR, wanted to put poverty and want behind us now that we had plenty of navy chow!

GL and JR—a Study in Contrasts

JR was a study in contrasts to GL. He was easy-going and smiled a lot. GL did too, but not as much out of pleasure as JR did. GL was good-natured, would bend over backwards to avoid giving offense, the opposite of JR, who was a wit, and did not mind giving rapier thrusts in any direction, especially at the Navy, and it's right-armed officers, that is, with their insignia on their right arms. They had rank of the left-armed officers that we became.

GL was charming, but JR never bothered with charm, more of a yawner, as I recall. JR was so much more at ease with himself than either GL or I was. One might think that JR's smoking and drinking made him more companionable than GL, except that our camaraderie was a rebuttal of this. Actually, GL was the more congenial, knew a lot about good food and wine, and steered us to some good eating places in our eternal search for them.

JR would get up for early Sunday mass despite his hangovers, while GL and I went to the later Protestant services (if and when). With JR, I had a relation unusual for a WASP since I knew more about Judaism than Catholicism. Despite the fact that Peaselsburg where I grew up, was largely Catholic, he was my first Catholic close friend, and if I

annoyed him by my persistent queries, it never showed, except through his boredom! I began to understand how formal Catholicism can be, leaving the essential person underneath unchanged by catechism since he did not enter into it existentially. How different from your born-again Christian who fed his faith by evangelical fire and conversions. (Think of Billy Graham, who has preached to 80,000,000 million over his lifetime). Of the two types of religion, evangelical or Catholic, I much preferred JR's benign indifference, to hell-fire evangelism. He was in Catholicism, but not of it. Or maybe he was of Catholicism but not into it? I tried to follow Christ's example, and tried to be a good person, not the "don't do as I do, but do as I say!" variety.

As for G.L., he practiced religion like everything else he did—with good taste, privately, but without overt passion.

I think that JR. and I were closer to each other than either were to GL, possibly because neither of us could match GL's competency in all things. Where we would fuss over a procedure or maneuver, delaying the inevitable, GL would simply do it, and then stand around waiting for us. He was neat in all things, and organized well enough to have led the entire company by his example. JR and I stood (when we were not sitting) in awe of G. For example, we went out in the Gulf of Mexico in his sailboat not knowing the first thing about sailing, because of our confidence in GL's competency, convinced that he knew what he was doing. (And he did.)

Our Triumvirate

Ours was the first triumvirate that I ever become part of, not counting a couple of what is called a *ménage à trois*, including Elwood Hunley, Rosemary Cook, and me at Southside Baptist Church. Elwood, a classmate at Holmes High School Class of 1945, was drafted in the Navy in 1943, and served most of his two years on Guam Atoll as a Radio Transmitter. When he came home from leave in 1945, his mother surprised him, presenting him with his diploma. I am puzzled why he is not listed in "Lest We Forget" as "Serving Our Country," while 16 others were. (From a telephone conversation on November 18, 2005)

As a coincidence, perhaps, our classmate Gus Berger served as a Radio Man in the Navy from 1946 to 1949. He was stationed on Adak Atoll in the Aleutians, and then on Kodiak. As a reservist, Gus was recalled for the Korean War, from 1951-1953. In 2005, he e-mailed me that while serving in the Philippines "the Korean War Peace Treaty was transmitted on my radio."

Going back to Elwood: he was a roommate on Limestone in Lexington for a brief period of a month or two while we were the University of Kentucky, and then he joined Lambda Chi Alpha Fraternity there. (I had pledged in fall 1946, and became active the same the spring semester. As I have remarked, Dick Macke also joined at UK, while Frank Duff joined at U. of Cincinnati while I was there.)

Elwood, Rosemary, and I sang in the choir at Southside, hung out together, and enjoyed trips to an ice-cream parlor on Madison Avenue that featured sundaes with a thick, syrupy nut topping. (Rosemary was from Holmes High School a year before us, in 1944.)

At Holmes High School, I palled around with Frank Duff, but our manic humor made it difficult for a third person to enter into. On the reverse side of the coin, Benny Craig and I were too low-keyed in our friendship to willingly subdivide. For this reason I was aware of the deep friendship we felt for each other that kept JR, GL, and me together, and made us feel incomplete when one of us was missing. In that event we simply went off looking for the spare part.

*In Loco Familiae*¹

If leaving home had any distinct benefits, at the head of the list I would place my friendship with JR. and GL. For me, we were *in loco familiae*, literally, in place of a, or a substitute, family, and it cut down on the heartache of separation from Mama. I suffered from *post partum* blues: at Great Lakes I cried myself to sleep every night the first two months, and then again when I was in the Infirmary with scarlet fever at the Armory in Michigan City, Indiana.

Like many friendships, our friendship proved to be a temporary relation, for as soon as we were mustered out of the Navy at Camp Wallace, Texas (with “Honorable Discharges”), we quickly lost track of each other after exchanging Christmas cards several years.² On the other hand, when we were serving together, we shared almost everything we could manage to share: meals, liberty, leisure, and intimacies (such as they were). On my part, I loved them very much—as brothers and beyond. However, Glenn and I kept in touch intermittently, and, then he found out where Jack was (in California), and after that we exchanged e-mails. Some of these are reported on below. See the Index for some other excerpts.

GL. and JR.: “The Brightest and the Best”

Being, in David Halberstam’s title “The Best and the Brightest,” G.L. and J.R. were easy to admire. They made thinking look easy. GL was idealistic and hardly ever complained, not that he loved Navy life. We all hated the “chicken shit” that was everywhere: make-work, insistence on form over function, show for substance, obedience over intelligence, and a full range of pettiness that demeaned us.²

¹ My Latinist wife, Molly, corrected me on this, as on all things; it means in place of a, or a substitute, family. My view is that I went from a “loco” family to *in loco familiarum*.

² Molly likes to quote this line of Gertrude Stein, *Before the flowers of friendship faced, friendship fade*.

Navy Chicken Shit: Discipline operated in cycles: first, there would be a crackdown on laxity of a specific kind, say guard-duty. This would lead to demerits and loss of liberty. Or if they cracked down on cleanliness, you had to work overtime to wax and shine, spit and polish. Then soon afterwards, things were permitted to get lax again, so the entire effort was wasted. It was a recurring show the top brass put on to show who was boss. The point is that we knew it was a waste, and we hated the brass wasting us to boost their authority and/or morale. Well, G.L. was perfectly deathly in his condemnation of “chicken shit”, and all the more effective coming from this broad-shouldered, mild-tempered young (eighteen years old) Christian.

GL sent me a blatant example of Navy C.S. on July 2, 2005, about “make work: right before being demobbed—see Chapter 68.

The Need for Love.

Love is a deep human need. That was one reason why I loved GL and JR, but I also loved them for their courage in standing up to, and condemning, stupidity, and in undercutting the authority that displayed it. It was the Yankee equivalent of the Spanish *duende* that GL and JR had, which captured my imagination, friendship, and love.

Excerpt from Glenn’s Autobiography

On p. 3, Glenn wrote: “At the time [summer of 1943, when you were sixteen years old] Ottawa hills was looked upon as the home of the very high, and people of the laboring class did not hold the residents in very high repute. I kept my origins hidden, and got along fairly well with my co-works. One person they did not like was John Biggers, who was a well-known glass company president. They were always mentioning him as the type of person that the community would be better off without. They did not know that I regularly swam in his pool, because one of my classmate’s mother was his wife’s sister. We also had to listen to certain union leader give us a weekly lecture on the importance of voting Democratic. As I said, I learned a lot about class hatred. “On October 27, 1943, my father purchased my first car, a 1931 Model A Ford. It cost \$100, and it ran fine . . .”

My E-mail Response of August 4, 2005

Dear Glenn, don’t you think that your were being disingenuous [in your letter of May 20, 1988] when you told me that a propos of your father shipping you sailboat to Corpus Christi [from Toledo in 1946] that you were not rich but thought of your family as “middle-class”? Seriously though, I think that you may not have sufficiently understood how poor we were back then compared to your family. Another thing that I would like to

address: “class hatred’ isn’t necessarily what the many of the “laboring-class” feel toward richer families. It has been well documented in electing rich people to the highest offices, e.g., from George Washington, Thomas Jefferson, Franklin Delano Roosevelt, John Fitzgerald Kennedy, Jimmy Carter (who made his millions from peanuts), Ronald Reagan (who made his from selling land surrounding the major studios in Hollywood), both Bushes; and more recently, Mayor Bloomberg of New York City, Senator Jon Corzine of New Jersey, Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger of California, etc. that many voters are attracted to rich people as persons either whom they admire, or whose wealthy status they aspire to. Of course, most of these had other admirable characteristics!

Of course, one may always make comparisons, e.g., I bought my own first car when I was 28 years old, i.e., twelve years after your father gave you the Model A, but I didn’t feel any envy about that. I was just happy to stay out of the rain and pickup my laundry, or groceries, in a car instead having to ride my bike in inclement weather, or carry those loads on it. Nor was I envious of your sailboat, which you shared with Jack and me. As I have written elsewhere, I trusted your seamanship in the Gulf of Mexico and admired it. Your subsequent boat building activities and your sailing overseas in your own sailboat with your family proves me out on this assessment of your nautical skills. (This is a light revision of my e-mail.)

CHAPTER 60

VJ DAY AND OGU

In some sort of crude sense, which no vulgarity, no humor, no overstatement can quite extinguish, the physicists, have known sin, and this is a knowledge which they cannot lose.

J. Robert Oppenheimer, 1904-1967, Quoted in Time Magazine,

23 February and 8 November 1948

If the radiance of a thousand suns burst forth at once in the sky,

That would be like the splendor of the Mighty One.

From the Bhagavad-Gita (Sanskrit: The Lord Krishna's song.)

Quoted by J. Robert Oppenheimer when the first atom bomb exploded July 16, 1945 near Alamogordo, New Mexico.

Hiroshima and Nagasaki: The United States dropped the first A-bombs ever used in warfare on Hiroshima, August 6, 1945 and on Nagasaki, three days later on August 9, destroying both cities. (Also see p. 313.) As stated on p. 313, Truman announced that Japan surrendered unconditionally on August 14, and VJ Day was celebrated on August 15, while the Japanese formally surrendered on September 2 in Tokyo Bay aboard the U. S. Battleship Missouri (named after President Truman's home state). In the newsreels, General Douglas MacArthur, who signed in behalf of the United States, dwarfed Emperor Hirohito. After his defeat in the Philippines at Corregidor, in May 1942, MacArthur had vowed to return, and he did. However, US Paratroopers recaptured Corregidor only in March 1945. On August 17, US troops began landing in Japan for occupation.

VJ Day: The celebrations for VJ Day on August 15 were just as noisy, maybe even noisier, than the one for VE Day. For one thing, Japan had been considered impregnable. Considering the rocky, easily defended coast line of Japan, and the tenacious battles in the Pacific over Midway, Guam, Iwo Jima, Okinawa, and others, it had been estimated that it would cost over a million casualties to defeat Japan. (See the Horrors of War Chart in Chapter 50, and remarks preceding.) Yet in the strange world of atomic weapons, Japan had capitulated in just three days, and even at that, one wonders, *Why did it take them so long?*

Here I had a chance to celebrate the end of the bloodiest war in all history, but I stayed on base. The same reasons that I did not follow the Herman Street Gang applied here. I do not know why I did not follow the gang, either then, or later. Somehow I always managed to veer away from raw experience, although inadvertently I packed plenty of it in. As I have said, I'm fringy.

*Life is what happens to you while you are busy
making other plans.*

John Lennon, 1940-1980, wrote that in "Beautiful Boy, a song published posthumously. (This is attributed in essence to Allen Saunders in "Quotable Quotes," Readers Digest, January 1957; see Quotationary at Life, where "you" is replaced by "us", and "busy" is deleted.)

Lennon was only 5 years old when the A-bombs were dropped on Japan, and World War II ended; and sadly only 40 years old when he was assassinated on December 8, 1980 by a deranged fan, much the way the Mexican singer, Selena, was many years later. (Lennon's assassin envied his fame.) He, Paul McCartney, and the Beatles, did so much to further peace on earth by making so many people, countless millions, happy. Lennon and McCartney wrote the following in 1963:

*I'll tell you something / I think you'll understand,
Then I'll say that something, / I want to hold your hand.*

And Lennon's wife Yoko Ono wrote this in 1980, the year Lennon was murdered:

*Kiss, kiss, kiss, kiss me love, / Just one kiss kiss will do.
Kiss, kiss, kiss, kiss me love, / Just one kiss kiss will do.
Why death, why life? / Warm hearts, cold hearts, / Kiss, kiss, kiss, kiss me love.*

It is ineffably sad, but a beautiful tribute to their love.

On December 9, 2005, I saw a moving tribute to their love in a TV documentary shown on the Biography Channel, showing the grief stricken Yoko at the hospital unable to comprehend Lennon's death. Explored, *inter alia*, was the sick personality of his assassin, who in his own words wanted to be famous like Lennon, and who justified the killing by quoting the "hero," *Holden Caulfield* in J.D. Salinger's 1951 novel "Catcher in the Rye." The docudrama also explained the grotesque meaning of the title.

Going back to VJ Day, another reason was for the happiness that surged through my company was the hope that now *maybe* we did not have to go to the Pacific, especially not as fighters. And, since Japan was not going to be occupied by Allied troops, in all probability we would not have to go at all. Dad wrote this in one of his rare letters.

I was still too much of a straight-laced Baptist to enjoy the carousing that accompanied the war's end. I did not drink, and I *thought* that I had a girlfriend back home I planned to return to, so I missed out on the chance to partake of the most jubilant day and night in Chicago's history. In those days my idea of a good time was standing around a piano and singing my heart out—the more sentimental the better. In the rec room, there were always sailors hacking away at some little ditty, and you could hum along with them if you wanted to; nobody minded much, provided you sang on key. (I did not, but got by on enthusiasm.)

Angelina, The Waitress at the Pizza Mia

Every morning at 5 a.m. we were awakened by the damndest noise. Somebody played a record over the squawk-box, and the announcer shouted, “It’s a beautiful day in Chicago!” and then out poured

*Angelina, Angelina, waitress at the pizzeria / if you'll be-a my ca-ra mi-a / then I'll join in
matrimony with a girl who serves spumoni / and Angelina will be mine.*

And, as I reported in Chapter 53: *One Meat Ball! / You get no bread / With one meatball.* According to the Commander Harrison, these records had been selected by the observed scientific principle: *Nobody ever had managed to sleep through them.* Then, and only then, did the bugler blow reveille. (Who wants to play to an empty hall or sleeping barracks?)

Boot Camp Ends!

In the third week of September, we finished Boot Camp and were given a week's leave to return home as conquering heroes with our S1/c (Seaman First Class) single stripe on our sleeves. I was plenty shy walking the streets of Covington in my “dress blues,” which I had never even worn before. (I much preferred the white hat that went with our whites for one thing, and I hated blue suits for another.) However, nobody paid me any mind: the war was over, wasn't it? I was a lame duck.

Aside from my family, there was hardly anybody around to admire my splendor. The gang was either in reform school or the armed services, and the Holmes High class of '45 was scattered to the winds. Only a few escaped the draft—Frank Duff and Benny Craig were still around, and, *of course*, Joy Kinsburg. Frank served later.

Joy's Riddle

Joy was the “*a riddle wrapped in a mystery inside an enigma*” (to borrow Churchill's phrase about USSR.) She wrote me a letter every week, often two or three a week for

the first six months, and was my most faithful correspondent (no pun intended!) but neither of us could tell the other what we needed to know. Since I never got down on my knees to profess my undying love, I could not expect any affirmations from her either, yet her last two letters to me, postmarked May 7 and May 17, 1946, could be read as declarations of strong feelings, if not love. (See Ariela's afterword.) She was the same riddle: intellectually and morally beyond me, and emotionally ambivalent. See, for example, the Joy's letter of May 17, 1946 in Chapter 70, in which she appears to looking for an answer from me about our status, which had changed so much during the year past. Other letters from her also contain the same puzzlement, e.g., about meeting Benny Craig and Walter Waymeyer at the University of Cincinnati, where she was enrolled as a freshman. She marveled at the change in her relationships with them too.

Thinking back to the quote about Umberto D.: "human beings have this perennial, ancient fault of not understanding each other, of not communicating with each other." Certainly, as the cliché goes we had that fault in spades. But perhaps we are not entirely the blame, given our youth, my inability to start or support a family, and the vast gulf, the abyss, that divided us: Baptist and Zionist, in addition to the very strong bonds we had with our parents. What we needed was a machine like the one that broke the German code called the Enigma.

"The Self Withheld"

If you consider how much I loved her, you have to conclude that I was a paragon of self-control: *I never let on*. Only years later, when I heard Robert Frost read the inaugural poem *The Gift Outright* at the TV cast of President Kennedy's inauguration, did I consider what was lacking in my relations with Joy: *myself*. This "self withheld" has been my "tragic" flaw (in the Greek sense of character-defect). Like "K." in Kafka's *The Castle*: I might have been able to walk through the door that Joy hid behind, but I first had to open it. *It was not locked. Or was it?* As I said before, things might have been different if I had been able follow Matthew's advice, "Ask, and it shall be given you, seek, and ye shall find, knock and it shall be opened unto you" (Matthew 7:7).

Mama's Lovingest Letters

The royal reception during my leave from the Navy that Mama gave me made it all worthwhile. Mountains of ham, sliced beef, chicken with gravy and all the trimmings, biscuits, fruit pies and cobblers sated the royal hunger. If I were to die for my country, Mama was going to see to it that I died full of food. And love. She wrote me the lovingest

letters. A child never realizes how much love his mother has for him until he leaves and comes back. In one letter she painfully explains she loves all of us equally, saying we each were her “pride.” I had hurt her by writing that she loved Eldridge most. Yet now I am almost glad that I had, just for the beautiful reply she sent me. It is the most passionate of all her letters to me. Mama was nothing if not passionate. She always ended her letters with Os and Xs, indicating hugs and kisses.

Surprisingly, I was less than inconsolable about returning to Great Lakes, especially now that World War II was ended. It is frightful how much emotional energy that dreaded war drained us of—for over four years. I was beginning to recover from the global nightmare. Another reason for my optimism was the understandable pride I felt in my ability after having successfully met the rigors of boot camp. I dragged on my cigarettes openly now—to Mama’s distress, I might add. (She was afraid I would be like Dad in my other habits as well.)

Company 1038 Expires

Uncle Sam was going to a lot of trouble and expense to educate me, so naturally while in Covington I felt good about my loyal relative and my prospects. This feeling was short-lived, for when I got back I found that Company 1038 had expired, and we were assigned to OGU (short for Out-Going-Unit), where you were assigned the most tedious make-work projects imaginable. So instead of an education, I got to clean the officers’ “head” (or “toilet”, to landlubbers). So I was “promoted” to “Captain of the Head.” (Another Navy term with head in it is the *cathead*, or a projecting beam at the bow of the boat, a support to lift, or “cat,” the anchor.)

My Navy Addresses on Joy’s Letters

Letters from Joy addressed to me at as “Seaman 1/c, 986-25-34, OGU, Great Lakes, Illinois” began on October 10, and ended on October 25. (The 7-digit number was my ID number etched on my “Dog Tag” necklace worn at all times.) Before that all letters were addressed to me at “Co. 1038, United States Training Center (actually, U.S.N.T.C.), Great Lakes, Illinois”, but the address changed to “U.S.N.R., 986-25-34, Naval Armory, Michigan City, Indiana, on Lake Michigan on November 2, then to “Class 22-A3, Barracks D, Naval Training School, Dearborn Michigan”, on River Rouge, from December 16 through February 5. Then I was promoted to Aviation Technicians Mate, 3/c, and, starting February 25, 1946, she addressed me as “A.E.T.M 3/c, Class 9, Barracks 2, Ward Island, Corpus Christi, Texas”, on Corpus Christi Bay and Laguna Madre, and separated from the Gulf of Mexico by Mustang and Padre Island. (See Maps in Part IV.) Her last letter to me at Ward Island was on May 16.

Carl, Captain of the Head

At OGU, since Company 1038 no longer existed, the postman's job no longer existed, and the law of gravity exerted itself: I had a long fall—to the officers' urinals. It was this job that taught me a lesson, though, that no cushy P. O. job ever could: every job has its good side. You can make of it what you want—up to a point. Obviously you cannot be polishing urinals or swabbing its decks all day long—can you? And obviously, somebody has to be around all the time in order to pick a cigarette or cigar butt out of the urinals that some careless Lieutenant JG flipped in, despite my polite sign¹ asking them not to. Or, some gold-braid may have embibed a wee bit too much at the officers' club, and found his aim off a whole lot.² At last I had become a Swabby.

The Navy Is Caught With Its Plans Down

Nevertheless, the job—any job—becomes a routine after a while, and if you are unsupervised, then you can arrange time off for perks. In my summer job at the Covington PO, I literally ran around my route, so I could fool round downtown on the way back. The best part of an OGU was that weekend passes were easier to get, and the worst part was the uncertainty of not knowing what was going to happen to us. *It appeared that the Navy was prepared for anything except peace.* Japan's swift surrender caught the military with their plans down! *Peace broke out*, as the old joke goes. Congressmen were strenuously vying with each other to sponsor the bill "bring our boys home."³ My brother-in-law Charley Menefee got back at the end of August, and out of service by the first of October.

¹ That classic: *Please do not throw your cigarettes in the urinal—they get soggy and are hard to light!*

² Ignoring that other classic: *We aim to please—you aim too, please.*

³ The upshot was that the Navy sent us on through radio school lasting nine months only to discharge us without getting a penny's worth of benefit from our knowledge. However, the country benefited enormously from their RTs as first we filled its colleges and graduate schools as students, and later we taught in them as TAs and Profs, not to mention the high tech boost those who didn't teach gave American industry. Also, quite a few of us, myself included, enlisted in the Inactive Navy Reserves, much to our sorrow when the Korean War broke out in 1950. Many were called back while the rest of us sweated it out. This exemplifies George Steiner's quip, "The lunatic logic of bureaucracy."

CHAPTER 61

MICHIGAN CITY, INDIANA

*By the sea, by the sea, / You and me, you and me,
Oh, how happy we will be / By the beautiful sea!*

Recorded by the Heidelberg Quartet in 1914;

See The Da Capo Companion, p. 678.

OGU lasted six weeks, and Michigan City, Indiana, was the next step. We were assigned to the rather small naval armory there to attend radio school. It is located on Lake Michigan about 50 miles as the crow flies from Chicago. By now Lake Michigan had lost the romantic appeal of novelty. On the chilly December mornings and nights, the damp lake air came right through our thick Pea Jackets like they were cotton shirts. (Thus the nickname, “The Windy City.” Chicago is an Algonquian Indian name meaning “garlic field.” Our suffering was nothing compared to what the soldiers in overseas foxholes had to endure.) The water only intensified the gloom of the many sunless days despite the radio announcer’s boast “It’s a sunny day in Chicago.”

Nevertheless, I was totally unprepared for the shock of Michigan City in October. The last remnants of its summer-resort quaintness had long since been rolled, boarded, or folded up. As a city, it was neither here nor there—not big enough to offer Chicago’s or Cincinnati’s amenities, yet not small enough to allow you to enjoy the delicious sense of isolation that you would have gotten in, say, Nagshead, North Carolina (a place I did not know existed in those days. It’s been ruined by over-building and greed since I wrote those lines, but what coastal resort hasn’t?)

Another unhappiness was the cut-list posted every fortnight after exams—the list of those who flunked or who did not make a sufficiently high grade. Now that there was no war, they did not need us that much (to put it mildly. At OGU, Captain Eddy had addressed the RTs, promising that the Navy would “honor” its advertisements of a year in radio training, but as the old saying goes: “God gives and God takes away.” And more and more of us were being taken away weekly.). “They washed out about half the

class because they could not stand the strain,” according to Glenn Fitkin in his autobiography.

The USO (United Service Organization) was built to scale. Not large enough to offer a choice and not small enough to be cosy or homey. Naturally, Main Street paralleled the waterfront, and you could see the menacing black water at every intersection. I was never so miserable in my whole life, and never that miserable again. This was not to be compared to USOs that I visited earlier in Chicago, and later in Detroit and Cincinnati. The latter, in the YWCA building, was converted to a Young Peoples Coed Lounge after the war, and it was there I met my first wife, “Mickey” (Betty Compton), while I kibitzed a game of Bridge she was playing: I asked to see her hand, meaning the cards, and she held her own hand for me to examine, and act of flippancy that augured a beautiful friendship. She provocatively called the YWCA, the “Young Women’s Craving Association.”

Besides Mickey, who was the mother of my two daughters, Heidi and Cindy, I made some life-long friends there, including Jack Snyder, who owned a beautifully restored Reo in which we toured the city in looking for “chicks,” and Bill Moorhead (who introduced us to the fascinating card game Skat, which we played obsessively.) Bill, a veteran of World War II, had a lusty humor, which he enjoyed embarrassing us with, e.g., he lived in Newport, KY, and wrote his return-address on letters, as “Studville, KY.” (It would seem that the influence of horse breeding permeated Kentucky.) He also flaunted his availability with overtures to any girl that happened by, most often with Mickey. However, his leers were disarming, and good for laughs. He was bitter at a radio station in Cincinnati—WKRC?—when it wouldn’t hire him back after his years in the service. He believed that he was a gifted commentator, but as a veteran of WWII, he wouldn’t “kiss-ass,” or “brown-nose” to keep it, so lost out to someone who would and did.

Bill Moorfield introduced me to the “52-20 Club” that entitled veterans of WW II to 52 weeks of unemployment compensation of \$20 a week with the proviso that they actively seek work. Since his line of work was that of a radio announcer, he automatically qualified for the full term. Lying obviously appealed to many who wanted, or needed a post-service vacation, so we spent endless hours inventing novel occupations, e.g., dog-sitter, novelist, poet, or pimp, and other unneeded niches of life. Because of the GI bill being a student did not qualify. (The GI bill was signed by FDR on June 22, 1944, and was called the “Readjustment Act.” See the Index.)

Ray Dubin was another “Y” friend, who worked for the National Labor Relations Board in Cincinnati. We called him “Gucks” because of his penchant for “gucksing” in the Skat games. The Jester brothers were also habitués, and Marvin also met his wife, Joanne, there. It was a fun place to be, with Ping-pong and card games, blending in with dancers. I became fond of Latin American music played by a convivial

and vivacious group of Cubans: *rumba*, originally, a frenzied dance performed by Cuban Blacks, the modern rumba is a complex version, *salsa* consists of African-American rhythms, big Band Cuban dance melodies, and elements of Jazz and rock. (*Salsa* is also a hot, spicy sauce that accurately describes the dance!) *Samba*, is a Brazilian ballroom dance of African origin. La Cucaracha and Malagueña were two of their favorite music pieces. I did not know then that Cucaracha was the Spanish word for a cockroach. Nor what *malagueña* meant: according Federico García Lorca in a article translated in *Anteus on Music* (*Anteus Autumn* 1993, p.220), malagueñas, among others, are offshoots of *canto jondo*, a group of Andalusia songs, “the perfect prototype is the Gypsy Seguidilla.”

Penicillin: Many in our company came down with flu or scarlet fever, and I spent two weeks in the infirmary that winter coughing my head off. (Let me interject here that Primo Levi had it far worse in January 1945 at Buna, where he was treated with sulfa drugs. (See at Levi.) I was diagnosed with scarlet fever and injected with my first shots of penicillin, just three years after it was first used on a human in the USA. (In this connection, see p. 100.) Lying in bed, I listened for days to the rain on the pane of the overhead skylight, while a homesick sailor in the Rec room incessantly played some one-finger obsession on the piano.

As I mentioned in Chapter 31, my wife, Molly, received penicillin, after sulfa drugs proved ineffective. She was a very sick six-year old when Penicillin in 1945, discovered in 1928 by Sir Alexander Fleming, gave her back her life. Penicillin is one of the great boons for humanity in history, but up to 1943, it was produced in single doses in a time-consuming way, and not available to the general public. The first American patient to receive it was in 1943.

Dr. Jasper Herbert Kane's Deep-Tank Fermentation Process

This all changed in March 1943, when Dr. Jasper Herbert Kane, 1903-2004 a biochemist who graduated from Brooklyn Polytechnic University in 1928, working at the Brooklyn plant of Charles Pfizer & Co. developed a deep-tank fermentation process that used molasses rather than refined sugar. (In 1942, he got the idea that this deep-tank mold fermentation method could also make penicillin, streptomycin and other antibiotics in large quantities. His idea initially received a cool reception because of the risks that Pfizer was being asked to take. At the time, *hundreds of Allied soldiers were dying daily from infections* [not to mention civilians!], *and desperate measures were called for*. Pfizer bought an ice-making plant in Brooklyn, and Dr. Kane's idea was put to test in 1943 in a round-the-clock race against time. The plant opened in March 1943, and produced more than 45 million units of broad-spectrum antibiotics by the end of the year.)

CHAPTER 62

DEARBORN ON THE RIVER ROUGE

“In May 1920, the Dearborn Independent—a local weekly bought by Henry Ford printed the first of ninety-one articles devoted to exposing ‘The International Jew: The World’s Problem;’ in ensuing issues, serializes the text of the fraudulent ‘Protocols of the Learned Elders of Zion’ while claiming the document—and its revelation of a Jewish plan for world domination—to be authentic. Circulation rises to close to 300,00 as subscriptions . . . are forced on Ford dealers as a company product, and the strongly anti-Semitic articles are collected in a four-volume edition, *The International Jew*” *The World’s Foremost Problem*.” From the Postscript of “The Plot Against America,” p.378, by Philip Roth.

On the Whole I Prefer Detroit

The Radio Material School at Dearborn was a vast improvement to Michigan City. It was bigger, better equipped, and a completely serious electronics theory school. Furthermore, its location right across River Rouge from the Ford Plant afforded innumerable advantages by its proximity to Detroit, while Dearborn itself sported the Ford Automobile Museum.

Company 1038 had been further divided—once after Great Lakes, and now again after Michigan City. Some had been reassigned to regular navy duty because of low grades, while others were sent to other radio schools.

The only way to be immune to the vagaries of the weekly cut was to stay at or near the top of the weekly class rank list. That balancing act took a lot of nerve. Most of the R.T’s studied nightly to lights-out after attending classes all day. This habit was easy to maintain since there were virtually no distractions save the weekly movie.

After reading of the incredible rigors of Peter Freuchen (or Knut Admundsen) at the North Pole¹, I wonder how he would have survived the monotonous diet of radio theory,

¹ Freuchen wrote in one of his travel books that he loved Eskimo women because “they pushed back” in coitus.

radio theory, radio theory we were fed. Luckily the school maintained an exquisite reading room/library in a quonset hut. The library was stocked with adventure stories, mysteries, romance novels, and even classics, but its greatest attraction was the overstuffed furniture you could lounge around on. Who knows, I may have read “Forever Amber,” here.

Oddly enough, the library was almost always empty, and I began to use it as my retreat, preferable to the forays into Dearborn bars that the R.T.s made on slack nights after the exams.

The boredom of Michigan winter began to wear on my nerves. Kentucky weather, even northern Kentucky, was so much milder. It is amazing how much even two degrees can affect have you when applied throughout the day, especially when it’s two degrees above freezing. Kentucky the roads were “always” melted, while in Michigan they were “always” frozen!

As for the River Rouge, the Frenchman that named it was colorblind.

Arthur Guy

I suppose everybody has had the experience of meeting someone from the past but unable to pinpoint when or where. The first time this happened to me was in Graduate School in a graduate course in nuclear physics at Purdue University in West Lafayette during the fall term, 1952. After several weeks I began to notice a familiar nasal voice, with a Boston or New England accents, several seats to my left, but I could not place the speaker. After introducing myself, we went through the catalog of schools and universities that we had attended without success. Then, one afternoon, as I was shopping at an A & P grocery, I literally bumped into him as I turned from the shelves. After mutual apologies, we once again pondered our pasts with the same result. Then, as I turned to leave, I shouted out, “Were you at RT School at Dearborn?” And, he answered with an emphatic “Yes!”

Here’s The Weird Part

We actually never met each other at Dearborn. He was the instructor for our Aircraft Identification class, and while we were sitting in the classroom facing the screen, he would come into the room, switch off the lights, and begin the projector showing the airplanes that had to be identified in one-twentieth of a second, or less. After each ID, he would talk about the differences between the Japanese fighters and bombers, e.g., Zeroes, as the fighters were called, and our own. I would have recognized his New England nasal

voice anywhere.² Art was from Worchester, Massachusetts. We became quite good friends thereafter. He taught me things to increase the pleasure of food, for example, to decanter the wine to let it breathe and to enjoy the increased aroma, and to warm cheddar cheese between the palms of your hands for the same reason.

A Sequel

In June 1998, I was surprised to receive a telephone call from Art Guy's older daughter Jennifer. She was born in Lafayette, Indiana, while we still was at Purdue, and had been living in Princeton for years. She told me that in the fall she was going to play a cello in a concerto for nine cellos in Bristol Chapter at Westminster Choir College in Princeton. I attended with Molly who is an accomplished violinist and music-lover. (Jennifer's mother, Dorothy, was too, but she did not attend.) While waiting for the concerto to begin, since the concerto was to follow intermission, I tried to recognize Jennifer in the auditorium. Finally, sure that I had identified her, at Intermission I introduced myself to a young woman there, *only it wasn't Jennifer but her sister*. Jennifer's sister reminded me of Dorothy, although there also were family resemblances that I saw in Jennifer as she played the one of the nine cellos. The performances were excellent.

² In particular, the actor Ray Milland had a nasal quality peculiarly his own. I often wondered how he got the romantic roles he did, since he sounded so odd, as if he had chronic sinusitis.

CHAPTER 63

THE FATAL GLASS OF BEER¹

*We're poor little lambs, / who've gone astray, /Baa! Baa! Baa!
Just little black sheep, / who've lost their way, / Baa—aa—aa!
Gentleman songsters off on a spree, Damned from here to eternity, /
God ha mercy on such as we, / Baa! Yaa! Baa!*

Rudyard Kipling, "Ballads and Barrack, Room Ballads", 1892, 1893, Refrain

On which is based Yale's Whiffenpoof song.

I don't want to give you the impression that I'm a teetotaler—I've been known to take a drink or two!
W[illiam] C[laude] Fields, 1880-1946, who wasn't joking—he died of the stuff. Another quip by him
quoted in "Cassell's Movie Quotations," *Somebody stole the cork out of my lunch.*

I like liquor—its taste and its effects—and that is what I never drink it.

Thomas "Stonewall" Jackson, 1824-1863.

I don't drink liquor. I don't like the stuff. It makes me feel good.

Oscar Levant, 1906-1972, *Time*, 5 May 1958.

Although a number of people have tried, no one has yet found a way to drink for a living.

Jean Kerr, Playwright, and author of "Please Don't Eat the Daisies.

A Jug of Wine, a Loaf of Bread, and Thou

Omar Khayyám (died c.1123)

Candy Is Dandy /But liquor Is Quicker

Odgen Nash, 1902-1971, from "Hardlines, 1931.

It takes only one drink to make me drunk. The trouble is,

I can't remember whether it is the thirteenth or fourteenth—George Burns

*A woman drove me to drink . . . and I never
even had the courtesy to thank her—W.C. Fields*

Drink, and the world drinks with you.

Swear off, and you have to drink alone—anonymous.

¹ With thanks to W. C. Fields. See his hilarious short film with this title, now on DVD.

Baby Book:

In it Mama asks for me to pray to God to forgive me for my sins, and for me not to sin anymore. Already at birth she knew me so well. (Or maybe she believed that the sins of the father are visited on the sons?) Sadly her prayers went unanswered, and bound to, since in her personal book almost all of secular life was sinful in some way or another. I had promised Mama that I would never drink, but in that cold Michigan winter I took my first in a Dearborn bar. Yet, not before I had bragged in a Cincinnati fruit juice bar one year earlier “How could anybody like beer when he has orange juice to drink?” Ah, well, what does Youth know?

Cognac

Nobody in his or her right mind would be able to guess that my first drink was a cognac! And then they would not be able to guess “Why cognac?” Indirectly this had to do with the comfortable base library—I had taken to reading French novels! The main culprits, of course, were Alexandre Dumas’ “The Three Musketeers”, Honore de Balzac’s “The Human Comedy”, and Victor Hugo’s “Les Miserables”. In any case, I developed a thirst for cognac that everybody in those books threw down their throats like water. (And not fire-water! The bartender could not believe it when I sidled up to the bar in the company of my Navy buddy “Whitey” (who had enlisted with me), a veteran drinker, and whispered “A cognac, please” He was amused and said, “You won’t like it,” but I insisted.

The Hierarchy of Drinks: “Building a Base”

Whitey was right! I ought to have drunk it neat, but I made the mistake of tasting the God-awful stuff, and the fierce face I made showed what I thought of it. I have never seen such a happy barman. Here I stood, eighteen years old, never having had a drink, and thinking I could leap over the drinker’s hierarchy—beer, wine, sherry, and whiskey—to start at brandy! Much later in my drinking days, a professional drinker told me, “In order to hold your liquor it is necessary to build a base. Start with beer, then wine, and work up to whiskey, gin, and top it off with brandy.”

Advice to Drinkers

This advice despite the warning to drinkers given by “Wine on beer is drear, beer on wine is fine.”² The guy must have had a cast-iron stomach.

² “Lips that taste wine, will never taste mine,” is a variation on a stanza of a song by George W. Young, 1900.

“I’ll tell You What, Kid”

The bartender said with a twinkle in his eyes. “I’ll fix you up.” Whereupon he opened a bottle of 7-Up, poured it in a glass, and dumped the cognac in it. “You’ll like this,” he winked significantly. And you know, *he was right*. And twenty years were to pass before I had my second cognac.

Absinthe

Thereafter I drank only beer, and years later I developed a taste for wine, but not whiskey, brandy, and other hard liquor, although like tobacco, I tried everything, including absinthe, which has been blamed for bad judgment (what drug hasn’t?), poor health (ditto), and even madness. It was a drink enjoyed by 19th century Parisians, and especially writers and artists such as Baudelaire, Lautrec, Picasso, Degas and Manet. Manet’s “The Absinthe Drinker” portrayed the evils of absinthe in the form of a woman under the influence in café.

Oscar Wilde was of two minds about absinthe:

After the first glass, you see things as you wish they were. After the second you see things as they are not. Finally, you see things as they really are, and that is the most horrible thing in the world.

But, he also said, obviously after he had his second glass:

A glass of absinthe is as poetical as anything in the world. What difference is there between a glass of absinthe and a sunset?

Do you like puns? Here’s one of my wife’s, Molly Sullivan’s, “absinthe makes the heart grow fonder”. I think it was Bernard Shaw who said, “Puns are the lowest form of human wit, and people who engage in them ought to be punished”. And maybe be put into a “penitentiary”? Anyway, Molly likes to tell the story that her father, Denny, took her aside when she was sixteen, and taught her how to drink, so she would be able to hold her liquor when she started dating.

Here’s a ditty we used to sing in the Navy:

*Show me the way to go home,
I’m tired and I wanna go to bed.
I had a little drink about an hour ago,
And it went straight to my head!*

*Now wherever I may roam,
O'er land or sea, or foam,
You can always hear me singing this song:
"Show Me the Way To Go Home!"*

And here is a parody:

*Indicate the direction to my abode,
I'm fatigued and desire to retire.
I imbibed a libation 60 minutes ago,
And it traveled right to my cerebellum!
Now wherever I may perambulate,
O'er terra firma, oceans, or spume,
You will forever audit me chanting this ditty:
"Indicate the Direction To My Abode!"*

Yet another:

*What shall we do with the drunken sailor (repeat twice more)
Ear-leye in the morning?
Give him a drink to make him sober (repeat twice more)
Ear-leye in the morning!*

I fudged the second stanza, but it's something like that, and it goes on and on. Ladies and Gentlemen I present:

The Alabama Song

*Oh! Moon of Alabama,
We now must say goodbye
We've lost our good old mama
An must have whiskey
Oh, you know why!*

From "Rise and Fall of the City of Mahagonny", 1931

[Aufstieg und Fall der Stadt Mahagonny]

Bertold Brecht, lyrics; Kurt Weill, music.

*"Rye Whiskey, Rye Whiskey, Rye Whiskey I cry
I must have Rye Whiskey, or I think I will die!"*

—Anonymous

And this anonymous ballad:

Whiskey Johnny

*Whiskey is the life of man,
Whiskey, Johnny!
Oh, I'll drink whiskey while I can,
Whiskey for my Johnny!*

The all-time favorite drink song is “Sweet Adeline.” From memory, here goes:

*Sweet Adeline, for you I pine
In all my dreams
Your fair face beams
You're the flower of my heart
Sweet Adeline*

Or something like that. Here are two more drink songs:

*Drink drank drunk, Drunk last night, and drunk the night before
I'm going to get drunk tonight, like I never got drunk before!
Ninety-nine beers on the wall, ninety-nine bottles of beer
One beer fell off the wall, ninety-eight bottles of beer on the wall, etc.
Roll out the barrel, We'll have a barrel of fun,
Roll out the barrel, we've got the Huns on the run!*

And don't forget smoking:

*Smoke! Smoke! Smoke!
That cigarette,
Puff! Puff! Puff!
And if you smoke yourself to death,
Tell Saint Peter at the Golden Gate,
That you hate to make him wait,
But you just gotta have another cigarette!*

Devised for Tex Williams by Merle Travis, after “Bert Williams’ The Darktown Poker Club. His most enduring song [was] “Sixteen Tons,” . . . [an] archetypal coalfield protest song.” (Extract from Da Capo’s companion to Twentieth Century Popular Music, p. 940.)

*Night and day you are the one
Only you beneath the moon and under the sun.
Whether near you or far,
It's no matter, darling, where you are
I think of you, night and day!*

“Night and Day,” Cole Porter, from the *Gay Divorcee*, 1932

AN HONEST DESCRIPTION OF MYSELF WITH A GLASS OF WHISKEY AT A BAR, LET US SAY, IN MINNEAPOLIS

My ears catch less and less of conversations, and my eyes have weakened
though they are still insatiable.
I see their legs in miniskirts, slacks, wavy fabrics.
Peep at each one separately, at their buttocks and thighs, lulled by imaginings of porn.
Old lecher, it's time for you to the grave, not to the games and amusements of youth.

.

Czeslaw Milosz, 1911-2004; This is the first four lines of a poem published
in the *New York Review of Books*, November 21, 2001 when Milosz was 90 years old.

The Drunkard's Lament

*I got home the first night, as drunk as I can be. I spied a horse in the stable, where no horse
ought to be. I said to my wife, my pretty little wife, why's this horse in the stable, where no horse
ought to be.*

*You blind fool, you drunken old fool, can't you never see?
That's nothing but an old milk cow.*

*I've traveled the whole world over, but a saddle on a milk cow I never did see before.
Repeat replacing "first by second", "horse in the stable" by "head on the pillow," and "milk cow"
by "cabbage head." And finally replace "saddle on a milk cow" by "mustache on a cabbage
head."*

There are many more verses to this wonderful Pete Seeger song.

Winston Churchill's Drinking

“Winston Churchill, even at age sixty eight, works eighteen hours a day, including Sundays, drinks
a point of wind at lunch, several whiskeys and sodas at dinner, and a spot or two of brandy at night,
smokes strong cigars all day long, gets hardly any sleep, jumps hither and yon across the seas, and
yet seems to get things done pretty well,”—George Jean Nathan in Berman's “Proverb, Wit, &
Wisdom,” p.4. Also check Churchill in the Index/Glossary.

“My grandmother is over eighty and still doesn't need glasses—she drinks right out of the bottle!”
Henny Youngman

“I don’t drink because I want to know a good time”—Nancy Astor (See the Index/Glossary)
“I drink to your charm, your beauty, and your health—which gives an idea of how hard up I am for a drink”—Grouch Marx.

Upon the first goblet we read the inscription, *monkey wine*; upon the second, *lion wine*; upon the third *sheep wine*; upon the fourth, *swine wine*. The four inscriptions expressed the descending degrees of drunkenness: the first, that which *enlivens*; the second, that which *irritates*; the third, that which *stupefies*; finally the last, that which *brutalizes*—Victor Hugo, *Les Miserables*, *Cosette*, VI, 9; see Bartlett.

CHAPTER 64

DETROIT: MOTOR CITY

*I'll be down to get you in a taxi, Honey / You better be ready about half past eight,
Now Dearie don't be late / I want to be there when the band starts playing . . .*

The Darktown Strutters Ball—Shelton Books, 1917—see *Index*.

In 1945, Detroit¹ was at its zenith. It had equipped the Allies with trucks, tanks, and guns, and also supplied the home front with its quota of cars and trucks. When I first took it in, the bright lights, its shops, theatres, and buildings dazzled me: this city had power to burn, and burn it did!

In this respect, Detroit was like Chicago², with this difference: I liked Detroit. I think Chicago, with 3 million people activated my agoraphobia (fear of bigness or wide open space, and maybe claustrophobia, or fear of closed spaces, e.g., elevators, crowds, etc?), while Detroit's million souls was not that much bigger than Cincinnati's 500,000 which I had accustomed myself to. (I'm using modern population figures, since I don't know what they were back then.)

Cincinnati was a culturally respected place that sported several downtown theaters (one called "The Taft," after the influential family of Cincinnati affairs), a Hall of Music, an orchestra, a university, a zoo, and a summer opera company. True, Chicago had these in multiples—whence my phobia. Detroit was Cincinnati's twin practically within the same state.

¹ Detroit was founded in 1701 by the French explorer Antoine de la Mothe sieur de Cadillac, and was incorporated as a city in 1815. *Détroit*, is the French word meaning "strait."

² As reported, e.g., p. 189(347), Chicago is the Algonquian Indian term for "garlic field."

Katherine Cornell's and Cedric Hardwicke's *Antigone*: Euripides? Eumenides!"

I went to a number of plays (on Annie Oakley's from the USO). I can remember Katherine Cornell and Cedric Hardwicke starring in *Antigone* in Detroit as if it were yesterday. I seem to recall that the theater was called "The Shubert." (It may well have been—see, e.g., Shubert in the Index/Glossary.) How I would love to see a newspaper of that era. Imagine what I might have seen but did not. I was so green that I made the classical mispronunciation of "Antigone", but no one knew enough to correct me.

Two jokes on this subject are in order. In the first, a man walks into a tailor to have his trousers repaired. The tailor says, "Euripides?" and the man answers, "Yes, Eumenides!" In the second joke, the sports announcer incorrectly pronounces the winner of the third race, a horse with a Greek name, so in the next race he gives "Old Ironsides" a Greek pronunciation.

I Told the Biggest Fib! Surprise?

I remember a number of parties that Detroit girls threw for sailors. You signed up at the USO, and somebody picked you up there one half-hour before the party. I was flattered to be hosted by women for a change, since Kentucky women were shy about "Dutch treat" (except on Sadie Hawkins Day). I still have the book that was given as a prize in a contest for the telling the biggest lie contest. I can even remember the lie: "I'm too tired to tell a fib, just roll me over and put the prize in my pocket."

Of course, the book was way too big for my pocket. The book was *This is My Best*, a collection of short stories edited by Will Burnett, and it impressed me. These were perspicacious young ladies to offer real literature to sailors. At the time I was reading trash like the 1944 best-seller *Forever Amber* by Kathleen Winsor, but also the 1936 Best-Seller *Gone with the Wind* by Margaret Mitchell. I enthused about *Forever Amber* to Joy in a Letter, and she answered back puzzled, because the Cincinnati Public Library wouldn't loan her a copy because she wasn't quite 18 years old—It was considered too sexy for teenagers! The 1939 film GWTW starring Clark Gable and Vivien Leigh won a then record number of seven Academy Awards. (That cognac in Dearborn had burned me off French literature.)

I wonder what Joy would have thought of this anonymous rhyme.

*Would you like to sin / With Elinor Glyn
On a tiger skin? / Or err with her
On some other skin?*

This was written about Elinor Glyn's 1907 romantic novel with its episodes of explicit sex on a tiger skin. Rather kinky, isn't it?

Another nice thing about Detroit: as in Chicago, it was easy to get home on weekend passes because of the good train connection. I made it home both Thanksgiving and Christmas. The train made it in just under eight hours.

Jack Johnson, Joe Louis, the Brown Bomber, and Jackie Robinson

Joe Louis, born Joseph Louis Barrow, 1914-1981, held the heavyweight boxing title for 11 years and 8 months, the longest ever, 1937-1949. He had a phenomenal record of 23 knockouts out of the record 25 times he defended his title, often against fighters of low caliber. His bouts were derisively called "bum-a-month," although he did take the title from Max Baer, who was not bum, and lost a pre-title match to the German Max Schmeling in 1936. Schmeling, who was highly prized by Hitler shouted "Sieg Heil!" at the end of his bout with Louis, but in the 1938 return bout, Louis leveled him in the first round, so there was no Siegs Heils! (To make a pun, they gave him Schmeling salts to revive him.) See the Index and Glossary at Joe Louis.

The Radio announcer who broadcast his bouts referred to Louis as "a credit to his race," itself a racial epithet. No matter how well meaning, it was, however, condescension—he was a *credit to humanity*, and an important person. Still, he was known as the "Brown Bomber," and Barney Nagler wrote a 1972 biography of him with that title. (Louis wrote his autobiography in 1978.) Louis lost a decision to Ezzard Charles in 1951, and was knocked out by Rocky Marciano a year later. Billy Conn out-boxed him in one fight, was winning on points, but was knocked out when he tried to out-slug him. Louis was Boxing's second African-American champion, following after Jack Johnson's championship in 1910, and represented an important step for Black dignity inasmuch as many Blacks were denied the opportunity to compete with Whites. He did much to change that, as did Jack Roosevelt Robinson, better known as "Jackie," who became the first Black player ever to play in the major leagues. (The Negro Leagues, however, were full of great Black players who couldn't overcome the taboo against mixing the races.) He broke in with the Brooklyn Dodgers in 1947, brought in by Branch Rickey, the Dodgers' manager. The most important player in the Pennant for the Dodgers, he was voted the National League Rookie of the Year. His adjustment to the team was famously aided by "Peewee" Reese, who befriended him, and who forestalled a great deal of hostility by other Whites who thought they were superior to Blacks. But Reese was stalwart in his support of Jackie, and for the good of the team. Even other recalcitrant Southerners were won over by Jackie's skills at bat (his lifetime batting average was .311),

on the bases, and in the field. That, his fine fielding, and his fierce competitive nature, assured his induction into Baseball's Hall of Fame. Other blacks, e.g., the late Arthur Ashe and the late Althea Gibson, both in tennis, and Tiger Woods (whose father was Black American, and his mother was Thai) in golf, had made their statements convincingly as well. See Woods in the Index and Glossary.

See Ken Burns's video, "American Stories: Baseball: The National Pastime (1950-1960)," for much more about Jackie Robinson, and, e.g., the legendary Satchel Paige who broke into the Big Leagues with the Cleveland Indians the very next year. (The text of Burns' video may come out in a book as his video "Mark Twain" has.)

CHAPTER 65

CORPUS CHRISTI, TEXAS

In my adobe hacienda, / There's a touch of Mexico

Line from a Song Gene Autry Sang

Oh give me land, lots of land, under starry skies above, / Don't fence me in. Let me ride through the wide open country that I love, / Don't fence me in. / Let me be by myself in the evening breeze, listen to the murmur of the cottonwood trees, / Send me off forever but I ask you please, don't fence me in. / Let me ride to the ridge where the West commences / Gaze up at the sky until I lose my senses. / I can't stand cobbles and I can't stand fences. /

Don't fence me in! Oh, no, don't fence me in.

—"Don't Fence Me In," Cole Porter, 1944 (from memory.)

The Spanish Heritage of Texas: I could not believe that there could be a city named "The Body of Christ," but there it was, right smack dab on the Gulf of Mexico. It was an exotic experience to see palms growing on the main street, and to wear your summer whites in January!

The Spanish left an indelible heritage in southern Texas, and many Spanish words are still part of every day Texan speech. In spite of this, there is a love-hate attitude for the Spanish heritage, a legacy of the wars that were waged by the Texas revolt that gave birth to the Texas Republic.

Unfortunately, I studied the wrong language. French was no good here, nor did Latin come in handy. If I had been sent to New Orleans, I could have *parlez-voood* with the Cajuns, but as it was, I could not even *Como se dice?* with anyone.

Charles Rutledge, Texan: Of the remnants of Company 1038, one, Charles Rutledge, was a Texan from Richardson who had praised Texas so extravagantly in Great Lakes, Michigan City, and Dearborn that we never let him forget it during our tour of duty there, by asking him to show us all those wonders he had been talking about. On the train down from Detroit he had grown quieter and quieter as we got nearer and nearer to Texas, so that by the time we actually arrived there, he was stone silent! East Texas is not

the Wild Texas, or West Texas. We certainly didn't see anything to talk about not even steers, never mind Longhorns. As Mark Twain once said, "*Be silent, and people will think you a fool. Speak up and they will be sure of it!*"

As we passed through Texarkana, the story was told about a politician referring to Arkansas as an "outlying" province of Texas, whereupon somebody in the audience denounced him with "That's a lie, suh, nothing and nobody can out-lie Texans!"

I saw so many John Wayne films at the Navy base that I never went to see another for almost thirty years. There is irony in the fact that I disliked the most popular film actor ever. What somebody said about one of the Hepburns (probably Audrey, because Katherine won four Oscars, and had a range) fitted Wayne himself: "Her emotions ran the gamut from A to B." Wayne's frowning in every speech got to me, but I did admire his grit in his fatal bout with cancer. (He won his Oscar for "True Grit," 1969.) He also starred in "She Wore a Yellow Ribbon."

On the whole, life was so much more relaxed on Main Base. We were now veterans of six months' standing, and as sailors like to say, "I tied more sea bags than you've tied shoelaces." Or, "Why, I've got more salt on my shoulder than you've got dandruff."

Glenn (G.L.) Fitkin had his twelve-foot sailboat shipped from Toledo, and took us out on the Gulf. I had never sailed before, and I was thrilled, especially when G.L. spotted a shark. (Sharks are common in the Gulf, as the Winslow Homer painting attests to, yet years later, a friend hooted at this, and said we probably encountered porpoises.)

Conquistador of Mexico: The chief attraction to sailors at Corpus Christi was Mexico whose closest city was Matamoros 160 miles away crossing the vast area that formed King's Ranch, 17 miles from the Gulf of Mexico, and across the Rio Grande from Brownsville. Both cities had name changes: in 1846 a Texas fort there was renamed for Major Jacob Brown, and the city grew up around it, while its sister city, was renamed in 1851 after Mariano Matamoros, the leader of Mexican Independence. The later was a "wide-open" city according to my more adventurous buddies. But G. L., J. R. and C. C. (me) mainly stayed put in town, except for an occasional foray into (staid) San Antonio or (polluted) Houston.¹ (According to the Democratic Presidential Candidate 2000, Senator Al Gore, Houston is the USA's most polluted city. He lost Texas in the election, which cost him the presidency. He would have won anyway if he had won his home state of Tennessee, or President Clinton's home state of Arkansas.) Miss Rasch made me a visit, when she, and several Holmes High School language teachers, stopped by Corpus Christi en route to Mexico. Imagine my surprise and happiness.

Oily Houston: The great city named after Sam Houston reminded me of Covington, as did so many cities. It seems that I keep dragging my native city with me—never to part—wherever I go, like a shadow. But, of course, Covington has no monopoly

¹ See the letter of G. L. (Glenn) Fitkin in four pages before Chapter 53.

on the forces that created it in its unalloyed mediocrity. So many crassly commercial towns shape out the same way with an abundance of saloons, cocktail lounges, greasy-spoon eating emporia, and fake-front stores, and a dearth of art, music, theaters, bookstores, and poetry-readings. Many of these cities are different now, and I was pleasantly surprised by my visit to a gentrified Covington in May 2003. People claim that modern Houston now reeks not with gas and oil fumes, but culture, but I never had the temerity to go back. Once W. C. Fields was asked which he would prefer, Philadelphia, or Hell, and he famously replied, "On the whole, I prefer Philadelphia." I feel that way about Houston. Yes, it does have a great Museum of Modern Art, and other amenities, but then there's the pollution, and the miles of freeways crowded with gas-guzzling Sports Utility Vehicles (SUVs).

Corpus Christi: No Dogs or Sailors Allowed

Corpus Christi—No Dogs or Sailors Allowed—was one of those Navy towns, i.e., dogs and sailors not allowed. At church one Sunday, I told a Texas girl a white lie, "I've been in the Navy almost a year and have never even been kissed." Whereupon she reached up and kissed me on the lips, and said, "There, you can't say that now!" *A life is well lived that has such poetry as this*. Nevertheless that unexpected kiss was the sweetest thing that happened to me in Texas. It inspired a poem "Kissing Flowers." (See my book of poems, the "Seduction of Hummingbirds.") From then on I went around telling the same lie, which was now a double lie. As the Hitler and his propagandist Goebbels, 1897-1945, taught the world, "*the bigger the lie, the more people believe it.*"² And Goering, 1893-1946, the first and only Field Marshall of the Third Reich, said, "*All you have to do is to tell them they are being attacked and denounce the pacifists for lack of patriotism and exposing the country to danger. It works in every country*" (quoted in "Losing America," by Robert C. Byrd, and the NY Times Review of Aug. 9, 2004.) But, alas, *my well of poetry ran dry*.

² "The Great masses of people will more easily fall victim to a big lie than to a small one"—Hitler in "Mein Kampf," I, 10.

CHAPTER 66

YOU MUST REMEMBER THIS: A KISS IS JUST A KISS

*You must remember this,
A kiss is just a kiss, / A sigh is just a sigh;
The fundamental things apply, / As time goes by.*
By Herman Upfield, 1931, St. 1, sung by Dooley
Wilson in the film “Casablanca”, 1942;
See “Reading Lyrics,” pp. 156-157

*I beg your pardon, / I never promised you a rose garden
Along with the sunshine, / There's gotta be a little rain sometime.*
1970 song by Joe South, vocalized by Lynn Anderson, 1971¹

*If I broke your heart, / Beg your pardon.
But if some sunny day, / you'll let me have my way, /
Then I won't have to say / Beg your pardon.*
Francis Craig, 1948

*I only want a buddy, not a sweetheart,
Sweethearts only make you blue . . .* Pop song

*Kiss me once, and kiss me twice,
And kiss me once again, it's been a long, long time.*
Victor Herbert, 1910

¹ Anderson's recording won an Emmy, for which she received a gold record. Fourteen other gold records of this song were cut worldwide. I suppose that meant a lot of people were dying of broken hearts. Sob. But hearts mend, don't they?

Mama's Gallbladder Operation . . .

Mama was suddenly operated on for gallbladder early summer, 1945, and I was called home by the family. Her rapid recovery pleased but puzzled me until Sis told me that they wanted me to get a leave out of it!

I was an ignoramus about medicine and did not even know what a gall bladder was or did. However, as often happens, the operation did not spare Mama of the painful attacks that had precipitated the operation.

. . . And Joy's Goodbye

In High School, Joy lived only a block or two from the hospital—St. Elizabeth's—before she moved to Cincinnati (I still remember the address—328 Erkenbrecker), where she attended the University. Naturally, I thought of her as soon as my anxiety about Mama was allayed. Joy was her mysterious self when I called her, and said it was to be an “important” evening. This overjoyed (!) me, as I wanted my pure shining love to be reciprocated.

Joy appeared more beautiful than ever—tall, long lustrous dark hair shining in the moonlight, her lips slightly moist, and a white flower in her hair. We walked to the park nearby—appropriately named Eden Park—and Joy *once again expressed her wish that our love be “eternal.” But we were to make that possible by parting at once and forever.* According to her, this would guarantee that we would live in each other's hearts and minds, and greatly improve our lives thereby. She proved prophetic.

This, however, was contrary to the strong feelings she conveyed in her letters of May 7, and May 17 (see Chapter 70.) As much as anything else that happened, or did not happen, between us in our lifetimes (remember, she was just seventeen the preceding December, and I had just turned 19 on April 28), this illustrates the airy never-never-land fantasy of our relationship. *There was nothing real about it, and, as we always knew, or feared, nothing would come of us as a couple.* This reminded me of the character in Ford Madox Ford's “The Good Soldier,” who wished to marry his sweetheart so they could continue their conversations uninterrupted.

La Belle Dame San Merci?

Nevertheless, I couldn't believe my ears. Here was a “Dear John,” coming straight from Joy's lips. For me, she was still that dazzling “enigma within a riddle”, tall, statuesque, and, until I die, like Keats' *La Belle Dame Sans Merci*, / *Hath thee in thrall!* Perhaps there is that bit of cruelty in every human being, like a cat who plays with its prey before the kill. (Why is this? To make sure it's still alive?)

Sure, the moon was shining just as bright. Sure, the other lovers were still embracing and kissing throughout the night. But Joy had just given me her last kiss.

“So we’ll go no more a-roving/ So late into the night/ Though the heart be still as loving,/ And the moon be still as bright./ For the sword outwears the sheath,/ And the soul wears out the breast,/ And the heart must pause to breathe,/ And love itself have rest.” “So we’ll Go No More A-Roving,” 1817 by George Noel Gordon, Lord Byron, 1788-1824.

Compare us with the couple in D. H. Lawrence’s kiss in “The Rainbow, Ch. XI, 1915:

D. H. Lawrence’s “The Kiss” . . .

Still she waited, in her swoon and her drifting waited, like the Sleeping Beauty in the story. She waited and again his face was bent to hers, his lips came warm to her face, their footsteps lingered and ceased, they stood still under the trees, whilst his lips waited on her face, waited like a butterfly that does not move on a flower. She pressed her breast a little nearer to him, he moved, put both his arms round her, and drew her close.

And then, in the darkness he bent to her mouth, softly, and touched her mouth. She was afraid, she lay still in his arm, feeling his lips on her lips. She kept still, helpless. Then, his mouth drew near, pressing open her mouth, a hot drenching surge rose within her, she opened her lips to him, in pained, poignant eddies she drew him nearer, she let him come further, his lips came and surging, surging, soft, oh soft, yet, oh, like the powerful surge of water, irresistible, till with a little blind cry, she broke away.²

. . . And Rodin’s “The Kiss”

Lawrence’s words illustrate the power of literature, and also the function of literature as wish fulfillment, don’t you think? But not just literature, all the arts fulfill human desires and needs. Think of that personification of a kiss in Rodin’s greatest sculpture, “The Kiss.” An artist has to have unrealized passion to etch a desire in marble. When does one ever get to see anything like that in real life? Or even to experience it?

To go back to my story, stunned, I walked in a daze the four (?) miles home, arriving a little after dawn. Mama was worried sick, but instantly realized that I was suffering from much worse than fatigue or lack of sleep, and for once did not scold me. I could not tell her that Joy had kissed me goodbye. She never interfered with my love for Joy in any way, although, as I intimated earlier, she exhibited an ingrained bigotry against Catholics.

² This is a good example of pure male fantasy, isn’t it? If only life were like this! I wonder what “she” (in Lawrence’s “The Kiss,”) would have to say.

(Not that they ever harmed her in any way! Which reminds me of a daffy definition of a paranoid person as one who has *real* enemies.)

Reverse Anti-Semitism?

A Jewish friend told me some twenty years later that I had been a victim of “reverse Anti-Semitism,” but I didn’t agree. There was no way that Joy could not defy her parents’ wishes and marry “a Faith out of her faith.” (Well, at least I got a pun out of it.) Joy’s Zionism was something that had to be shared with another Zionist, while I was a devout Baptist. I am reminded of the quip by Rita Rudner (quoted in “Wit”, by Des MacHale, p. 127), “What part of ‘No’ don’t you understand?” Me? Obviously all of it. Ha-Ha.

The Case of Soren Kierkegaard and Regina Olsen

Later when I read Kierkegaard’s reason for breaking off his engagement with Regina Olsen, although Joy and I were not engaged, I wondered if she did not renounce our obvious love for each other, perhaps for similar reasons. See the commentary on p. 116 to the excerpt from “Fear and Trembling: A Dialectic Lyric by Johannes De Silentio (1843)” in “A Kierkegaard Anthology”, Robert Bretall, Ed., Walter Lowrie, transl., Princeton U., 1946: “S.K. leaves us in no doubt of the fact that all his pseudonymous works were written ‘for Regina’ . . . Just as Abraham was called upon to sacrifice Isaac, his most dearly beloved, so S.K. was impelled to give up Regina. The parallel is clear enough . . . But nobody would be likely to think of it who did not know S.K.’s tragedy from the inside. This was just the sort of situation that appealed to S.K.’s love of mystification, and he made the most of it in the name of the ‘author’ Johannes de Silentio and in the motto . . . for the title page, a quotation from Hamman: ‘What Tarquinius Superbus spoke in his garden with the poppies was understood by his son, but not by the messenger, alluding to the old Roman story in which Tarquinius, not wishing to trust the messenger . . . struck off the heads of the tallest poppies—meaning that his son was bring about the deaths of the most imminent men in the city.’ When I read of Kierkegaard’s account of his breaking off his engagement to Regina Olsen, I realized that although Joy and I were not engaged, Joy was making a renunciation and expected me to understand this the way that Kierkegaard expected Regina Olsen to. I have already alluded to the “mystification,” or “enigma,” aspect of Joy several times; again not unlike Kierkegaard. I have never understood him either, except as an example of the hysteria that some males experience when about to lose their freedom. For others, as a line of a song goes, it’s “just like leading lambs to slaughter.” Cf. Isaiah, 53:7: *he is brought as a lamb to slaughter*. This is a common feeling among men.

On Top of Old Smokey

*On top of Old Smokey, all covered with snow
 I lost my true lover, for courting too slow.
 For courting is a pleasure, and parting is grief,
 And a false—hearted lover, if worse than a thief.
 For a thief, he will rob you, and take what you have,
 But a false-hearted lover will lead you to the grave.
 And the grave will decay you, and turn you to dust,
 Not one girl in a hundred a poor boy can trust.*

Traditional Ballad

Auf Wiedersehn Sweetheart³

Auf Wiedersehn,

We'll kiss again, like this again,

Don't let the teardrops start.

With love that's true, I'll wait for you,

Auf Wiedersehn, sweetheart!

1952 German tune with English Lyrics by Jimmy Phillips and Geoffrey Parsons

Auf Liebe Eingestellt

*Ich bin vom Kopf bis Fuss / Auf Liebe eingestellt,
 Und dass ist meine Welt / Sonnst anders gar nicht.⁴*

I'm Falling in Love

I'm falling in love

With someone, someone who

Could make me feel happy,

Could make me feel blue,

I'm falling in love, with you.⁵

³ German for “Goodbye”, literally, “until again (we’re) seeing.” German singers sang this song, and the following one, with much feeling, including Marlene Dietrich and Lotte Lenya.

⁴ This footnote is for the next page! Literal translation: “I have fallen (or been put) in love from head to foot, and that is my world, there is no other.” An idiomatic rendering might be: “I’m head over heels in love; otherwise I am nothing.”

⁵ This was listed in Da Capo’s Companion to 20th Century Popular Music, p. 789, as a “million –selling single” by the trio “Hamilton, Frank, and Reynolds,” 1975

Lili Marlene⁶

*Underneath the lanterns,
By the Barracks Square,
I used to meet Marlene
And she was young and fair . . .*

Norbert Schultze and Hans Leip, 1938

Based on a WW I song by Leip.

When you're smiling / Have no regrets,

It isn't raining rain, you know / It's raining violets . . .

Sung by Billie Holiday, accompanied by Lest Young, circa 1936.

Oh innocent victim of Cupid,

Remember this little verse,

To let a fool kiss you is stupid,

To let a kiss fool you is worse—Yip Harburg

Fools rush in where angels fear to tread—Alexander Pope, 1711

Somewhere over the rainbow

Bluebirds fly,

Birds fly over the rainbow—

Why then, oh why can't I?

(Edgar) "Yip" Harburg, 1898-1981, with music by Harold Arlen;

Purple Haze are in my brain,

Lately things don't seem the same,

Actin' funny, but I don't know why,

'scuse me while I kiss the sky

—1967 by Jim Hendrix, 1942-1970,

⁶ According to John Steinbeck in "America and the Americans," this is the only good thing to come out of Nazi Germany. There is much more to the story. In the song, Lille Marlene, as Steinbeck spelled it, started offering love to the German troops at the bottom and working up to the level of Brigadier General. When the British took German prisoners, "Lille" came with them and swept through the British Eighth Army and through the American Forces in North Africa. Steinbeck remarks, "War songs need not be about the war . . . indeed they rarely are." The song was rewritten by the British, and the Americans. According to Da Capo (see footnote 5), the song was popularized (Electrola 1939) by, and partly based on the life of, Lale Andersen, a husky voiced Dane, born in 1910, died in 1972 in Vienna. (Steinbeck spelled her name Lala, *ib.*) Da Capo notes Rainer Fassbinder's 1982 film, "Lili Marleen." Also see the campaign song devised by US soldiers in Italy, on p. 231.

CHAPTER 67

WARD ISLAND, TEXAS

Secondary School

Beginning about February 26, 1946, I was enrolled in what was called “Secondary School” on Ward Island, Corpus Christi, Texas. (See Maps.) The school at Dearborn, Michigan had been Primary, and Michigan City, Indiana, had been “Pre-Radio” School. There many of these scattered around the country. Ward Island was a peninsula rather than an island (see maps) cut off from Corpus Christi (another “CC”!). It was east of CC, south of CC Bay, and cut off from Padre and Mustang Islands, by Laguna Madre (or Mother Laguna), and measured two miles from its base to the tip where the Naval Air Station is located, called “Main Base.” The airplanes either were amphibian, patrol craft, or fighter planes for aircraft carriers, and we had to learn the electronic gear: radio, radar, loran, and IFF that they were equipped with.

Radar, Sonar, Loran and IFF

IFF is an acronym for “identification friend or foe,” while radar is an acronym for “radio detecting and ranging,” a system that sends out radio signals and measuring returning blips on the radar screen of reflected objects. Sonar, which is used in submarines, or to detect submarines, is an acronym for “sound navigation and ranging,” using transmitted and reflected underwater sound waves to locate submerged objects, and to measure distances. Loran is an acronym for “long range navigational system”, and involves computing the time intervals between pulses from two or more pairs of fixed ground stations.

Radar Tracked and Help Sink The Bismarck and Prinz Eugen

Unknown to the Germans, England had developed radar, which enabled them to track and sink Germany’s (and the world’s) most powerful battleship, The Bismarck, on May

27, 1941, after the Bismarck had sunk the British cruiser, Hood, on May 24. Had the Germans known that Britain had radar, they would not have allowed the Bismarck into such dangerous waters. In addition to the Bismarck, the new heavy German cruiser, Prinz Eugen with a speed of 32 knots, or about 32 mph, itself equipped with long-range radar, escaped for a time, but was torpedoed, and put out of action by a British submarine, The Trident, in 1942. (See, for example, the Reader's Digest's "Illustrated History of World War II", pp. 66-69.)

On the very same day the Bismarck was sunk, with a loss of 2300 lives, FDR declared a state of "Unlimited National Emergency."

How Radar Was Developed

Radar was developed independently in several countries between 1935 and 1940 besides Britain and the Germans. Radar developed in Britain between in 1935-1936 by Sir Robert Watson-Watt, a Scots physicist. When I was at Corpus Christi Navy Air in 1946, radar searched for German subs, or U-Boots. (Das Boot is German for (the) boat, and U stands for Unten, or under.) Everybody asked if radar could make us impotent. Sailors thought that navy chow was laced with "saltpeter" (potassium nitrate) allegedly to render us less lusty. I had always supposed that saltpeter was a euphemism for the condition, "soft peter" to be explicit¹, it was supposed to produce in us, but no, it turns out that there is no limit to my ignorance. I would guess that saltpeter was just about as effective as the aphrodisiacs were in the opposite direction, that is, nil. The reason we felt sex-less was simple. No girls. Of course gays might have had been happy with that. One gob at Great Lakes told me that I had legs like a girl's. *That* flustered me no end. I didn't understand what he meant. Was he "hitting" on me, or what? I learned much later that men crowded together, or in places where heterosexual love is forbidden or suppressed, say, in prison, or in puritanical countries, often pair off.

Secondary School

Secondary School was more competitive than ever, with buddies being shipped out weekly to serve in the fleet stationed at Treasure Island in San Pablo Bay joining San Francisco, Oakland, Berkeley and other bay towns, and bounded by the Golden Gate on the West. "Solomon" Navy Base was another destination in Oregon, and there was (and still is) a huge Naval Airbase at San Diego.

¹ Like the nursery rhyme I came across in 2003: *Though his little was small/ Yet she had his little all*. However the meaning in the rhyme is a double-entendre. It can be read as his being poor.

Gulf Heat and Humidity Before Air Conditioning

The Gulf is noted for its terrible heat and humidity, and towards the end of my service, August 1945, it moved into our training base on Ward Island. Air conditioning was unknown then, anywhere. The playwright, Arthur Miller, wrote an Op Ed article for the New York Times in summer of '99, complaining of the lack of air conditioning in New York City in the 60's.²

Carl's Caught Napping During Retreat!

One steamy afternoon after a couple of beers in the PX, I flaked out on the grass and went to sleep in the cooling offshore breezes about the time for Retreat, that is, when they lower the flag for the day. Did I hear the bugler blaring its sad notes over the loudspeaker? No, I did not. A buddy ("GL"?) nudged me awake and said "For God's sake, Carl, get on your feet and salute!" Having saluted the flag throughout elementary schools, junior high and high school, and having followed the flag in innumerable Boy Scout parades on Memorial and Independence Days, I would never knowingly show disrespect to the flag, so I groggily got on my feet, prepared to salute old Glory. As I did so the last strains of Retreat died down. My buddy said "Carl, you'd better beat it, two 'bird-dogs' spotted you and are getting into a Jeep." I ducked into my favorite place in the Navy, the library (see Glenn Fitkin's letter in Documents for Part III.), and started reading a book, but to no avail. The officers came into the library and asked the librarian who had just entered, and *there I stood red-faced*. They treated me roughly, rougher than if I had committed a crime, and put me on report. I was to be tried in a Navy Court, and possibly court-martialed for not respecting the flag, an example or "Chicken shit" in Navy lingo.

But that was never to be. There really were no witnesses, no proof of intent and eventually the brass dropped the charge. But not before I suffered the fear of a falsely accused innocent, a fear that after 13 months of exemplary behavior, and highest academic achievements, I might be given a less than honorable discharge, but my Karma saved the day. I owe her a lot.

I Get a Nose-Job

While the demands of Congress to release non-essential personnel had increased in

² Gail Cooper's "Air-conditioning in America, is the first full-length treatment of the evolution and sociology of AC between 1902 and 1955, while Marsha Ackermann's "America's Romance with Air Conditioning", (Smithsonian, 2001), also deals with the slow growth of AC in the USA, including its best known inventor and promoter-W. H. Carrier.

shrillness, what saved me was my nose. The humidity had severely aggravated my sinuses, and I had been scheduled for a nose job for a deviated septum the previous month (June). When my turn came, I was whisked off to the hospital, and had the operation.

The surgeon was one of the best medicos I ever encountered before or since. Like most of us, he too was a draftee, and probably could have made a mint in private practice. He not only straightened my deviated septum, but pulled some nose bones back in place that my brother Fred had bashed in in that stupid struggle we had over who was to hold Sister's little Billy. I remain grateful to this day to this excellent surgeon. (I also recommend nose jobs!) On the other hand, for a short while my nose had a Homeric shape. It still has the Foster profile though.

Lee Allen

Dr. Leland ("Lee") Allen, a neighbor of mine, and an emeritus professor at Princeton University, who lives several short blocks from my house on Mac Lean Circle, was an R. T. at Ward Island arriving there two months before me, in November 1945, and staying on to be an instructor until August 1946. At a party at his, and his wife's, Carol's, house sometime about 1994 he told me about a huge fire at the Navy base destroyed a warehouse containing a huge quantity of Kellogg's Cornflakes that raged throughout the night sometime in March 1946. (For more on Kellogg, see the Index/Glossary.) He told of the delicious aroma of scorching cereal that permeated the base for days, but I don't remember a thing about it! When I asked him if it interfered with our supply of breakfast cereal, he told me "No, that was just the storehouse, and our daily supplies were untouched." Impressed with his almost total recall, I urged him to write the story of the R. T. Program, and the effect that it had on lives of us RTs. I hope he will.

Captain Eddy Again

Allen also told me that Captain Eddy, the man who devised the R. T. Program, and the "Eddy Test" we all had to pass to qualify, was an electrical engineer from Chicago. Moreover, Lee told me that he himself grew up in Cincinnati, that is close to my native city, and after the war received his degree at the U. of Cincinnati in Electrical Engineering, a field that I started out in at the U. of Kentucky, and then for two quarters at the U. of Cincinnati, only to find that my talent lay in the field of mathematics. But that's another story—see, e.g., my "Rings and Things," Part II, "Snapshots of Mathematical People and Places."

Lille Marlene Again

On June 6, the Allies landed in Normandy, and Italy became yesterday's news. The troops there became a forgotten army, heading once more for the harsh mountains (after the

capture of Rome on June 4.) They gave vent to their bitterness in their own campaign song to the tune of Lilli Marlene.³

*We're the D-Day Dodgers out in Italy,
Always drinking vino, always on the spree.
Eighth Army shivers and their tanks,
We live in Rome, among the Yanks,
For we're the D-Day Dodgers, in sunny Italy.
Looking round the mountains in the mud and rain,
There are lots of little crosses, some which bear no name.
Blood, tears, sweat and toil are gone.
The boys beneath them slumber on.
These are your D-Day Dodgers, who'll stay in Italy.*

Breaking The Enigma Code

Another important technical triumph by the Allies, especially the British was the copying of the German Enigma code by decoders at Bletchley Park.⁴ This enabled them to make a copy of the machine, facilitating the deciphering of German coded messages.

The Enigma machine had 26 combinations on each of three rotor wheels. There were 1.5 million, million, million ways to arrange a code, depending on which rotors, and in what order. During the first year of the war the allies didn't know much about the Enigma. To prevent the Allies from getting the code of the day, the Germans sent it out using the Enigma machine. They got careless about security, and often sent it out twice, when the receiver asked them to. Repetition in cryptography is revealing.

The Enigma code first was broken by the three Polish mathematicians who shared their discovery with the decoders at Bletchley. When the Germans surmised that their Enigma was no longer an enigma to the Allies, they made it more complicated by adding a fourth rotor. This too was broken by the British team headed by Alan Turing who devised a programmable computer that could read off the messages at a very high speed, looking for the needed repetitions in the messages. When the German navy switched to another machine, this too was replicated by a Brit of no special training but handy with electrical circuits.

³ This paragraph was lightly edited from p.288 of Reader's Digest Illustrated History of World War II, where the campaign song "We're the D-Day Dodgers" was also taken.

⁴ Bletchley is about 45 miles northwest of London in Buckingham.

A good book on the subject is “Code Breakers: The Inside Story of Bletchley Park” (see Bibliography.) Also, this subject is an English movie “Enigma” based on a novel by Robert Harris, and a TV program on Nova entitled “Breaking the Code.”

Flaws in the Code and the German Character

The code represented a flaw in the machine itself, since the code was chosen from a list of so-called “random” numbers and letters, and there is no such thing as “pure randomness.”

Another fatal flaw was the German character, the German slavish devotion to follow orders. Once when a German submarine was abandoned, the Enigma encoder left the codebook on board either because he was ordered to, or because he wasn’t, although neither option made sense. *The Allies were sure to find it.*

Another example of this was their using the Enigma machine to send the day’s code. Then, when a station didn’t understand it, they *resented it!* This was a fatal mistake since repetition in cryptography is revealing. The decoding of the Enigma greatly aided the Allies at D-Day. If the Germans had known the exact spot for the D-Day landings in Normandy, they would have revealed this fact in coded messages. *This gave the Allies greater confidence that their biggest secret of WW II was safe.*

In other instances, the Allies knew when and where Germany was planning counter-offences, and were able to deploy their forces most effectively, including massive bombings of the German columns and supply lines.

CHAPTER 68

ANCHORS DOWN AT CAMP WALLACE

*When Johnny comes marching home again, hurrah, hurrah,
We'll give him a hearty welcome then, hurrah, hurrah. /
The men will cheer and the boys will shout, / The ladies they will all turn out,
And we'll all feel gay when Johnny comes marching home.*
Patrick S. Gilmore, Union Army Bandmaster, based on an Irish tune, 1863

Hiroshima and Nagasaki

I entered the service on July 27, 1945, two and a half months after VE Day, May 8, 1945, and spent a year in Boot Camp, Pre-Radio, Primary and Secondary Schools. Nobody in the Navy knew that A-bombs were going to be dropped on Japan on August 6 and August 9, 1945, devastating Hiroshima and Nagasaki, respectively. (The code names for the bombs were Fat Boy and Little Boy.) The Allies proclaimed August 15 as VJ Day after Japan agreed to unconditional surrender, but nobody at the time knew what to do with us RTs. We had enlisted to go to these schools, and they decided to continue our education in radio technology and applications for an entire year just in case.

The Training Given Us Was Not Wasted

But it wasn't wasted on the thousands of RT's who went on to finish their educations, often in science and mathematics. There is an untold story here, and I for one am at loss for the reason why. It's a bit like the gag: Do you want to because "those who matter, don't care, and those who don't care, don't matter." In other words, "Those who should, don't care, and those care shouldn't!" (You can make up your own. Ha-ha.) In 1945, more than 12,000,000 US service men and women became citizens again, and some 7,800,000 to back to school under the GI Bill—from of "Word War II Remembered, 1945: Victory at Last," p. 9. (This is volume 5 of a 5 volume set.) In 1946, most of the rest of the 16,000,000 US service people were "demobbed," i.e., demobilized.

Demobbed

In February 1946, I had been promoted to Aviation Electrician's Mate Third Class (AETM 3/c) and demobbed at Camp Wallace, Texas on August 14, 1946. This entitled me to the GI Bill of Rights which would provided me with tuition and living expenses for 25 months of college, in addition 14 college credits—8 for ROTC from which I was thereby exempt and 6 for "Radio Lab". I think that there should have been more credits given, e.g., for radio and electro-magnetism theory, but compared to the deal that millions of others who had faced combat, this was surely icing on the cake.

Glenn Fitkin Remembers

"Another word about Corpus Christi. After we had completed our electronics course, but were awaiting our discharge (a period of two or three weeks), they did not know what to do with us. They had us and other companies doing all sort of busy work. I remember that we were digging holes and someone else was later filling them up and subsequently we were filling up holes that they had dug. The three of us decided to spend our time in the library where they could not use the PA system to page us. We spent many days there and read books that we then discussed. I remember that Freud was one of them. We only joined with our company in order to eat, go the movies, and sleep. I consider this one of our finest acts." (E-mail from Glenn on July 2, 2005.)

"1946 Was the Best Time of the Century—the War Was Over"

That quote appears on p. 7 of Anatole Broyard's memoir "Kafka Was the Rage," to that Broyard added, "The Depression was over." I am sorry to disagree. I think that 1945-1946 was the best year, starting with VJ-Day. And not only that, the Depression has been long gone by then, due to Roosevelt's economic efforts in the Thirties and to the wartime economy.

My Gratitude To Captain Eddy and the RT Program

I have nothing but gratitude for Captain Eddy, and the Navy RT program. But I got a lot more out of it than the GI Bill and the 14 college credits. *I had survived the rigors of Secondary School, and was convinced that I could be anything I wanted to be.* Well, not exactly *everything* (N.B.)

I Was Still a Virgin After a Year in the U.S. Navy, 1945-46.

If anyone asked me how I manage *that* while attending USOs for a year and dancing with the pretty hostesses, I would say, "Aw, shucks, it was easy!" This may seem like something

of no great importance in the scale of things measured against WW II, but for better or for worse, one's personal life looms large in one's one mind. For examples: George Bernard Shaw lost his virginity at age 29, and with someone *not* his wife. (Cf. p.161 of Michael Holroyd's "Bernard Shaw, The Search for Love.") And on p.44 of an issue on Einstein in September 2004 Discovery magazine, it is stated that Newton was a virgin—*all his life*.

Baptist Date Maxim: "You Don't Have to Smoke and Drink to Have a Good Time"

The lady was a Southern Baptist who attended services and taught Sunday school every week. On one Sunday, an out of town acquaintance, a gentleman, was in the pew right behind her. He noted what a fine looking woman she was.

While they were taking up the collection, the man leaned forward and said, "Hey, how about you and me having dinner on Tuesday?" "Why yes, that would be nice," the lady responded.

Well, the gentleman couldn't believe his luck. On Tuesday he picked the lady up and took her to a fine restaurant. When they sat down, the gentleman looked over at her and suggested, "Would you like a cocktail before dinner?" "Oh, no," said our circumspect fine example of Southern Womanhood, "What ever would I tell my Sunday School class?"

Well, our gentleman was taken aback a bit, so he didn't say much until after dinner. When he pulled out a pack of cigarettes and asked, "Would you like a smoke?" Oh my, goodness no," said the woman "I couldn't face my Sunday School class if I did?"

Well, our boy felt pretty low after that, so they left, got in his car and as he was driving the lady home, they passed the local Holiday Inn. He'd been morally rebuffed twice already, so he figured he had nothing to lose so he ventured forth with, "Ahhh . . . Mmmm . . . how would you like to stop at this motel?" "Sure, that would be nice," she said in anticipation.

The gentleman couldn't believe his ears, and did a fast U-turn right then and there and drove back to the motel and checked in. The next morning, after a wild and passionate night of the most incredible sex imaginable, the gentleman awoke first. He looked at the lovely Dixie darling lying there in the bed and with remorse thought, "What the hell have I done? He shook her awake and pleaded, "I've got to ask you one thing, whatever are you going to tell your Sunday school class?"

The lady said, "The same thing I always tell them. *'You don't have to smoke and drink to have a good time.'*"

CHAPTER 69

WHERE ARE THE SNOWS OF YESTERYEAR?

What does not kill you, makes you stronger.

Friedrich Nietzsche (1844-1900)

Elle est née sans raison . . . pour mourir; et elle meurt sans raison.

Maurice Maeterlinck (1862-1949), “Pelléas et Mélisande”. Literally:

“She is born without reason . . . to die; and she dies without reason”—said about Mélisande.

“Of all the words of tongue or pen, / The saddest are these,/

“It might have been!”—John Greenleaf Whittier, Maude Muller, 1856, St. 33

“I remember things the way they should have been.”—Truman Capote, Remark

*What is life? It is the flash of a firefly in the night. It is the breath of a
buffalo in the wintertime.*

It is the little shadow, which runs across the grass and loses itself in the sunset—

“Last Words,” 1890, Crowfoot, Blackfoot warrior and orator, 1821-1890

What’s past is prologue—William Shakespeare,” The Tempest”, II, I, 261

Yesterday, all my troubles seemed far away.

Now it seems they’re here to stay. Oh, I believe in yesterday.

John Lennon and Paul McCartney, “Yesterday,” 1965

Mais où sont les neiges d’antan?

(But where are the snows of yesteryear?)—François Villon, 1431-1465)

Surely the present sports craze had its origins in “The Affluent society,” a term coined by John Kenneth Galbraith for the title of his 1955 book, by the fact that even the minor sports of my youth may be seen on TV almost daily during their season. Still, the majority of us are “couch potatoes,” and takes in more calories than expended. When production of goods is once again a human product, then people will not need to run to the gym, or spa, or jog, in order to take off excess calories. *They will work them off.* But, alas, this will never happen. When a person needs an electric toothbrush what hope is there?

The USA, which occupies 6% of the world's landmass, has 6% of the world's population, and accounts for nearly a third of the world's gross domestic product, in 2004, according to J.S. Gordon in his book, "An Empire of Wealth." In a short time we have gone from the denials of the Great Depression and those of rationing in World War II to the "Affluent Society", which gobbles a large percentage of the world's goods, and, as a by-product, we have become the Obese Society. (See below, and also Prices in the Thirties at the end of this chapter.)

Obesity Anyone? According to Gina Kolata in an articles in the New York Times in The Week in Review for November 20, 2004, and a follow-up article on the front page on April 20, 2005, 65 percent of Americans are either overweight or obese, and so were about half of US Presidents from George W. Bush (2001-?) with a Body Mass Index (BMI) of 26.3, Bill Clinton (1992-2001) at 28.3, who underwent a coronary artery bypass graft (or CABG) in October 2004, Chester Arthur (1881-1885) at 28.7, Teddy Roosevelt (1901-1909) at 30.2, with William Howard Taft (1909-1913) topping them all at 42.3. George Washington (1789-1797) at 25.5, where $BMI = 703 \text{ times (wt. in lbs) divided by (height in inches) squared}$. A BMI of 25.0 is ideal, underweight below 18.4, normal 18.5-24.9, overweight 25-29.9, obese 30-34.9, and extremely obese over 36. The mortality curve is U-shaped with death rates ascending for BMI's above 30, or below 18.5. "The meaning of BMI has to be modified by other factors, including age, gender, physical activity, race and central fat distribution," according to Dr. George Bray an obesity researcher quoted by Kolata in her article in the Week in Review Nov. 20, 2004, where the stuff about the presidents appeared, together with the BMIs of some other US Presidents, e.g., Abe Lincoln's 6ft. 4 in. gave him 21.7—see the Index/Glossary at Body Mass Index.

My BMI is 25.22—I am glad to be normal at something! When I entered the Navy I weighed 155 lb. was 73.5 inches tall, which gives a MBI of a mite over 20. I have since gained of 31 lb. and lost 1.5 inches!

One result of the energy crunch will be a physically tougher life for us, and eventually for our children. Unfortunately, obesity has health problems associated with it: the heart, stroke arteriosclerosis, high blood pressure, diabetes, pancreatic cancer, etc. etc. The present LA Laker basketball all-star, Shaquille ("Shaq") ONeal, is a mountain of a man, 300 pounds muscle with less than 4% of his body weight fat, and a good example for us all. (Maybe he ought to weigh less though?)

¹ In 2004, newspapers, e.g., the New York Times on July 18, reported that, several medical advisories have categorized obesity as a medical, as opposed to a personal, problem, and consequently, obese people can qualify for Medicare and Insurance Benefits, despite the warnings of experts on obesity that most of the current "cures" for obesity, including diet, and surgical removal of a portion of stomach, are only temporary—and on or about October 20, 2005, the NY Times published stats that indicated the latter was dangerous as well!.

*More than any other time in history, mankind faces a crossroads. One path leads to despair and utter hopelessness. The other, to total extinction. Let us pray that we have the wisdom to choose correctly—*Woodie Allen in his 1980 film “Stardust Memories”.

*Life is full of misery, loneliness, and suffering—and it’s all over much too soon—*Woodie Allen

JFK’s Heroism

In his short tenure in office (1000 days), John Fitzgerald Kennedy inaugurated the fifty-mile swim (hike) per annum in order to publicize physical fitness exemplified in his own life. As Lt. (j. g.) and commander of PT 109, a torpedo boat that was rammed by the Japanese destroyer Amagiri on August 2, 1943 off the Solomon Islands in World War II—he was able to save himself by swimming miles to an Island dragging a wounded crewmember to safety. He was awarded the Navy and Marine Corps Medal for heroism, and a Purple Heart for back injuries, which plagued him all his life. A 1963 video “PT 109” starring Cliff Robertson as JFK documents his exploits, and a book (by his doctor?) in the late 90’s documented the enormous amounts of barbiturates and pain-killers JFK took in order to live a normal life, and to appear “presidential”, much the way FDR disguised the degree he was crippled by polio. Presidential candidate Hubert Humphrey eschewed surgery on his bladder, which was recommended after a test discovered a defective gene associated with bladder cancer. He thought that carrying an artificial bladder would hurt his chances to win the election against Nixon, and that cost him his life. It did, but not right away. He died of bladder cancer in 1978.

Atle Selberg on the Need for Human Energy

Atle Selberg, a professor at the Institute for Advanced Study, computed that human expenditure of energy in work always would be more efficient because the cost of doing *everything* mechanically is astronomical. This should augur well for our waistlines, but no! At last count, in 2004, some 30 percent of Americans are obese, no doubt because lack of exercise and the plentiful table. Some wag said, “the best exercise for losing weight is to place both hands firmly against the edge of the table at mealtimes and straighten the arms pushing oneself away.” Ha-ha. *If wishes were wings, then beggars could fly.*

Dad

My father made his living at age sixteen by manual labor, while I started at eighteen as an R.T. studying radio theory; and went on to undergraduate, then graduate, and post-

graduate school lifting nothing heavier than a very heavy backpack. (And that only for relatively short distances.) Will society remain affluent enough to maintain the long years of education its technology requires?

Dad rode motorcycles, with detachable sidecars to pile the family in. He had an automobile only briefly, late in life, while I had one beginning my twenty-eighth year, and my daughter, Heidi, received a used Rambler Convertible, a gift from me, in her twentieth year, as a sophomore at Rutgers, and later in her senior year, age 22, a Ford Torino station wagon. (It never made up for the horse and its upkeep we promised her but couldn't afford.) High school students today, at least in Princeton where I live, drive to school, and not only that, have their own parking lot. What will "hot-rodders" do for fuel when it costs \$2.50 a gallon, or more, as it does in the Europe? Ironically the craze for gas-guzzling SUV's and RVs (sports utility vans and recreation vans) peaked at a time when gas prices climbed. Will people get used to walking again? Will we grow back our legs as newts do when they lose them?

Deferring to the Aged

When I was a boy, I was taught to give up my seat on the trolley to older people and to women, a custom that became yet another victim of World War II through the egalitarianism fostered by the war effort. I was forcibly reminded of this fossilized custom the other day on a metropolitan New York bus (up Madison/down Fifty), when a grammar-school girl from the Alliance Française captured a seat. Had I been one tenth as rude as she, then I would have won the seat by returning her shove, but I was taught not to fight, and above all to defer to women. "Look, but don't touch!"

A lady seated next to the seat-grabber and man-pusher remarked, "You cannot win—you have lost both ways!"

I did not understand. "How both ways?"

"Oh, you gave up your seat when *you* were young, and now you give it up when *they* are young!"

I smiled and thanked her for this bit of sympathy, but several hours later when I reflected on it, I decided, "I have *won* both ways." In both instances I had the pleasure of my own strength (to forego comfort): in youth it was for the benefit of the aged, the infirm, or the weaker; and later it was for the benefit of a softer, flabbier youth than was mine. *He/she who laughs last, laughs best.*

Anne Bernays and Justin Kaplan

I read a fascinating dual-autobiography of Anne Bernays and Justin Kaplan, entitled, "Back Then: Two Lives in 1950's New York" (Morrow, 2002). The privileged lives that

they lived as children of wealthy parents in Manhattan, New York was in stark contrast to mine, e.g., Justin's parents owned the Arrow Shirt Company, which were *the* shirts to wear when I was growing up, just as Hathaway shirts were when I grew up. And Anne's parents were perhaps even wealthier—they lived on Park Avenue. Nevertheless, they are enormously gifted. Anne Bernays has written a number of novels, including "Professor Romeo" and "Growing Up Rich", and together they wrote "The Language of Names", another book I greatly enjoyed reading. Justin won a Pulitzer prize *and* the National Book Award for his biography, "Mr. Clemens and Mark Twain", has written "Walt Whitman: A Life", and *inter alia* is the general editor of the Sixteenth and Seventeen Editions of Bartlett's "Familiar Quotations." Not since Dashiell Hammett² and Lillian Hellman has a couple been so hugely successful. (I'm not ignoring the Brownings, Elizabeth Barrett and Robert, nor the Woolfs, Virginia and Leonard.) So partly in jest, and partly seriously, I wrote to Justin and Anne that *while I had severe poverty to overcome as I grew up, they had to overcome wealth*. They kindly ignored my jest, but, *of course*, there were much greater perils than that. Read "Back Then" to find out what.) I know anyone reading this will think that I am crazy, and no doubt would like to have the chance to overcome wealth. But Geoffrey Thurley evidently agrees with me on this. See his remark on Esenin's childhood, on the Title Pages to Parts I and II.

Thucydides said it better in this excerpt from his Funeral Oration of Pericles taken from his "The History of the Peloponnesian War, 431-413 B.C. quoted in Bartlett's:

We are lovers of beauty without extravagance, and lovers of wisdom with unmanliness. Wealth to us is not mere material for vainglory but an opportunity for achievement; and poverty we think it no disgrace to acknowledge but a real degradation to make not effort to overcome—Thucydides

George F. Kennan

George F. Kennan, in "A Personal Note" in Volume 1 of his "Memoirs" writes on his Milwaukee poverty and youth, and his Princeton Days, 1921-1925:

... forbidden participation in spots, too poor to share the most common avocations . . . I remained therefore, an oddball on campus, not eccentric, not ridiculed, just imperfectly visible to the naked eye . . . In these circumstances, Princeton was for me not the sort of place reflected in [F. Scott Fitzgerald's] "This side of Paradise".

² I read recently, in a book of mysteries edited by Tony Hillerman, a story that Hammett wrote for "Black Mask", a pulp fiction magazine of the kind that Dad used to have scattered around the house. Now I wonder if he did not indeed read some of Hammett's other works, e.g. "The Thin Man".

Ironically, Kennan, who turned 100 in February 2004, is a former ambassador to the USSR. He was the architect of the “Policy of Containment” that was effective in limiting the spread of Marxism, ultimately leading to Gorbachev’s Policy of “Glasnost” and the dissolution of the USSR. Kennan’s policy of Containment emphasized Western values of liberty, freedom, independence, and ethnic nationalism (as opposed to the supra-nationalism of the USSR.)

For those who worry about their children’s lack of career aspirations, will take heart in Kennan’s confession:

My decision to try for entry [in the Foreign Service] was dictated mainly . . . by the feeling that I did not know what else to do. (Ibid.) (My emphasis, here and above.)

Youthful doubts about career choices and role models were identified by the noted late psychologist, Erik Erikson, in his book, “Youth, Anxiety, and Crisis.” Now Popeye’s philosophy on identity was expressed in his immortal words, “I yam what I yam and that is all I yam!” *If it were only that simple.* Read a novel about the impossibility of changing identity in society, “I’m Not Stiller,” by Max Frisch. According to Frisch, “society” will not let you. So we have birth certificates, names, passports, social security numbers, photo driver’s licenses, dog tags, etc., which we cannot escape, even if we wanted to. Since the bombing of the World Trade Center on September 11, 2001, and the passage of the Patriot Act, obviously, President Bush and the Republican-controlled Congress think that the question of identity has become vital to the security of the country. Sadly, Popeye’s proud assertion has become: “I yam what society says I yam!”

But isn’t Kennan’s above statement beautiful? And by the man whose policy of “Containment” against USSR imperialism that emphasized liberty, freedom, independence, and ethnic nationalism, instead of relying solely on weapons, and the military. Kennan has emerged as the savior of the West, and our foremost champion of the ideals on which the USA was founded, and embodied in the Constitution. Little acorns grow into great oaks.

In the 1960’s the phrase “Different folks, different strokes” was commonly used to express individuality, and how to approach people (or other people’s pets?). Regarding what one has to overcome, think of the analogy with steel. Even steel has to be tempered to obtain the right degree of hardness or flexibility. In this regard I think of another contemporary phrase: what ever it takes. But Nietzsche said it better in a quote heading this chapter.

*Tomorrow, and tomorrow, and tomorrow
 Creeps in this petty pace from day to day,
 To the last syllable of record time;
 And all our yesterdays have lighted fools
 The way to dusty death. Out, out brief candle!*

*Life's but a walking shadow, a poor player,
 That struts and frets his hour upon the stage,
 And then is heard no more: it is a tale
 Told by an idiot, full of sound and fury,
 Signifying nothing.*

William Shakespeare, *Macbeth*, V, v, 17

Envoi To Writing

If you want to get rich from writing, write the sort of thing that's read by persons who move their lips when they're reading to themselves—Don Marquis.

Writing is the hardest work in the world not involving heavy lifting—Pete Hamill

Writing is manual labor of the mind: a job like laying pipe—John Gregory Dunne

The above quotations, and Churchill's below, are from "The Writer's Quotation Book", by James Charlton, 1991.

The next is a provocative remark by Truman Capote which I found in "Wit", an anthology by Des Mac Hale (Andrews McMeel, 2003), but which few, including myself, agree with:

Finishing a book is just like you took a child out in the yard and shot it.

Compare this with the justly famous comment of Francis Bacon:

Some books are to be tasted, others to be swallowed, and some few to be chewed and digested.

—Francis Bacon, 1561-1626, in "Of Studies", from his *Essays*, 1621.

Publishing (a volume of poems) today is like throwing a rose petal down the Grand Canyon and waiting for the echo,"—Don Marquis, 1878—1937. See *The Quotationary* at Poetry.

Do Books Deserve to Be Read?

Books deserve to be read as deliberately as they are written—Henry David Thoreau, “Walden,” Reading, 3.

Life . . .

Life is full of surprises, Ralph Waldo Emerson, quoted in “Zen Soup,” p. 120

There is no cure for birth and death save to enjoy the interval—ibid. p. 121

Live if only to satisfy your curiosity—Yiddish Proverb

While there’s life, there’s hope (Dum anima est, spes est)—Cicero, 106-43 BC and Terence, c. 190-159 BC, who said it somewhat differently. See Bartlett.

Life has its limit . . . people die young, fail at love, fail of their ambitions—Robert Hass.

In a poem, “Privilege of Being.” See the Norton Introduction to Poetry.

. . . And the Mysterious

The most beautiful thing we can experience is the mysterious. It is the source of all true art and all science. He to whom this emotion is a stranger . . . is as good as dead: his eyes are closed—

Albert Einstein in “What I believe,” partially quoted in Barlett’s.

The Hardest Years

The hardest years are those between 10 and 70—Helen Hayes (née Brown), 1900-1993, when she was 82. (Thus, the voice of experience!)

“When you get to the end of your rope, tie a knot and hang on,” Thomas Jefferson

At Fifty

At 50, everyone has the face he deserves—George Orwell, April 17, 1949, see Faces in The Quotationary.

Maybe it is true that life begins at fifty . . . but everything else starts to wear out, fall out, or spread out—Anonymous

At Sixty

I have developed an inflammation of the sentence structure, and definite hardening of the paragraphs as Sixty was staring me in the face—James Thurber, quoted in the New York Post, June 30, 1955

At Seventy

Being over 70 is like being engaged in a war. All our friends are going or gone and we survive amongst the dead and the dying as on a battlefield—Miss Taylor in “Memento Mori” (1959, ch. 4) by Muriel Spark; see the New Penguin Dictionary of Modern Quotations

At Eighty

By the time you are eighty years old, you've learned everything, you only have to remember it—George Burns

At Ninety

AN HONEST DESCRIPTION OF MYSELF WITH A GLASS OF WHISKEY AT A BAR, LET US SAY, IN MINNEAPOLIS

*My ears catch less and less of conversations, and my eyes have weakened
though they are still insatiable.*

I see their legs in miniskirts, slacks, wavy fabrics.

Peep at each one separately, at their buttocks and thighs, lulled by imaginings of porn.

Old lecher, it's time for you to the grave, not to the games and amusements of youth.

.

Czeslaw Milosz, 1911-2004; This is the first four lines of a poem published
in the New York Review of Books, November 21, 2001 when Milosz was 90 years old.

The First Hundred Years

Life is a tough proposition, and the first hundred years are the hardest.

—Wilson Mizner, quoted in the Penguin Dictionary of Humorous Quotations.

It's not how long you live, but how you live your life that's important—Saying

Youth Versus Old Age

*Youth is when you think you'll live forever. Old age is when you wonder how you've
lived so long—Anonymous*

Youth is a blunder; manhood a struggle; old age is a regret—Benjamin Disraeli, 1844

*You know that you are growing old, when your friends ask you if you are "getting
enough" and they mean sleep—Comic Birthday Card Greeting*

Age is an issue of mind over matter; if you don't mind, it doesn't matter—Mark Twain

Those whom the gods love grow young, Oscar Wilde, 1894; see Quotationary, 960

I'm not young enough to know everything—Oscar Wilde

Immortality

I don't want to achieve immortality through my work . . . I want to achieve it through not dying.

—Woodie Allen quoted in "Woodie Allen and His Comedy," 1975, Ch. 12, by Eric Lax

Life

Oh, isn't life a terrible thing, thank God?—Dylan Thomas in "Under Milkwood," 1954

Life without music would be unthinkable—Anonymous

What is life? It is the flash of a firefly in the night. It is the breath of a buffalo in the wintertime. It is the little shadow which runs across the grass and loses itself in the sunset—"Last Words," 1890, Crowfoot, Blackfoot warrior and orator, 1821-1890 (also quoted at the head of this Chap.)

What is your Life? You are a mist which appears for a little time and then disappears, James 4:14

Life is not what one lived, but what one remembers . . . Gabriel García Márquez. Epigraph to "Living To Tell the Tale."

Life, if unexamined, is not worth living—Socrates

The unlived life is not worth examining—Malachi Tarquin Cyrus Wood in chiasmus of Socrates's famous quotation.

There are but three events in a man's life: birth, life, and death. He is not conscious of being born, he dies in pain, and he forgets to live—Jean de La Bruyère, 1645-1696, see Bartlett.

There's no cure for birth and death, save to enjoy the interval—George Santayana, 1922, See The Quotationary.

Life and Love

Life is a sharing, and life is love, and the love of sharing. Nothing is more beautiful than the love one has for one another, for God, or the Supreme Being, and the reverence for life—from an e-mail to my brother, Fred, New Year's Eve, 2005

Ars Longa, Vita Brevis

What you don't understand (but will . . .) is the artist's terrific affinity for the difficult, the thing he cannot do—Shelby Foote, Letter

Loneliness

To be adult is to be alone—Jean Rostand, 1894-1977 (*Être adulte, c'est être seul*)—see Oxford Dictionary of Quotations,

Nothing has ever been created without loneliness. I have created loneliness for myself which nobody can see. It is difficult nowadays to be on your own, because there are clocks and watches. Have you ever seen a saint with a watch? I have never been able to find any, not even among those saints who are regarded as patron saints of the watchmakers—Picasso, in "Picasso" by Ingo F. Walther (see Bibliography.)

I am the loneliest man in the world;" quoted in Lincoln. History Channel, Jan. 16, 2005, & the NY Times Rev. on that day.

. . . And Writing

Writing is a form of disappearance—Simon Armitage, quoted by Michael Holroyd in "Basil Street Blues."

Quotations, Anyone?

One original thought is worth a thousand mindless quotings—Diogenes, the Cynic

When Shakespeare is charged with debts to his authors, Landor replies, "Yet he was more original than the originals. He breathed upon dead bodies and brought them into life."—Ralph Waldo Emerson, *Quotation and Originality*, in *Letters and Social Aims*, 1875. (See Bartlett's)

By necessity, by proclivity, and by delight, we all quote—*Ibid.*

If you steal from one author, that is plagiarism; if you steal from many, that's research—Wilson Mizner, 1876-1933 in the *Penguin Dictionary of Humorous Quotations*

What is originality? Undetected plagiarism—Dean William R. Inge, 1860-1954

Originality usually amounts to plagiarizing something unfamiliar—Katherine Fullerton Gerould, 1829-1944. (See *Quotationary at Originality.*)

Churchill on America

America and Britain are divided by a common language—paraphrased from memory;

Churchill's mother was American and his father English. When asked which he was, he responded: "Half and half"—the first "half" is pronounced the American way, and the second with the English or Bostonian long "a."

Churchill: On Writing a Book

Writing is an adventure. To begin with, it is a toy and an amusement. Then it becomes an amusement. Then it becomes a mistress, then it becomes a master, then it becomes a tyrant. The last phase is that just as you are about to be reconciled to your servitude, you kill the monster and fling him to the public—Winston Churchill quoted in "The Writer's Quotation Book."

Churchill and Lady Astor

Churchill was notorious for his wit, and I give an example to whet your appetite: Nancy Astor was a Virginian who became Britain's first woman in the House of Commons. In the 1930's she headed a clique in the House that found something to admire about Hitler's Germany. Churchill describe an Astorite as an appeaser "who feeds the crocodile hoping that it will eat him last." Shortly thereafter, Churchill found himself at Cliveden, the Astor mansion. After dinner Lady Astor poured coffee. When Churchill came by, she glared and said, "Winston, if I were your wife, I'd put poison in your coffee." "Nancy," Churchill replied, "If I were your husband, I would drink it." (*Ibid.* p. 163.)

Another example of Churchill's wit: Churchill had imbibed heavily as was his wont on occasions. Trading insults with a woman, he said, "Madame, you are ugly." She

replied, "Winston, you are drunk." Churchill responded, "Yes, Madam, but in the morning I shall be sober, but you will still be ugly."

Ghosts of Yesteryear

Friends who died

Visit me at night.

Dad is his quiet self—

Chain-smoking leaves him breathless—

Reading what Mama called "trashy novels."

She was right: I checked them out

And now I read them

In your place, Dad.

"Even talks like a gangster;"

She complained,

To Dad's secret satisfaction. Why else

Read Whodunits and Shoot-Em-Ups?

Mama reads recipes and the Bible, period.

And couldn't know.

Frankie Haake's red hair

Flames out in the water—

They found him in the Licking River

That Saturday Mama said, "No

You can't go swimming there

It's too dangerous." And she was right

About that, even if she was wrong about "trashy novels."

Mama also walks at night now

Carrying her hospital toga

Looking very much the Roman

Matron and complains

"They wake me up at 5a.m.

And give me pills

So I can sleep!"

I mutter something about

The immutability of things,

And she weeps.

*"I want to go home-
I miss my own things,"
She cried.*

*Mama's toga becomes a white, white shroud.
Once more the good Doctor parts us,
But this time, Mama,
Your sly promises
Impossible
Are left unkept
For time alone to keep,
And I weep.*

*I am wept awake
Gasping for air-
Saying
"Want out of here—
Frankie's blue eyes
Have a fishy stare!"*

*I race down the corridor
For one last look at Dad:
A bright orange glow
Flares up in his oxygen tent,
As he puffs his last cig.
Like the neon lights
Of the Pastime Café,
He hung out in, the tip
Glowing on and off-
On and off,
And, finally,
Off.*

*They are lying side-by-side
Now in Perpetual Care—
The Forest Lawn Home-
Not what Dad wanted
Nor Mama who liked
To stay at home.*

The nurse wept when Dad died,

*And hundred of friends
Walked around his casket
To admire his handsome
Remains, while Fred and I
Wept inconsolably
In the Family Room.*

*Surfacing for Air
I strive to breathe,
As Frankie strove,
My head sunk deep
Deep in the valleys
Of your soft, white flesh,
Except now an organdy blue
Pillow cradles my face,
Mama,
In your place.*

—2005 revision of a poem of the
author in *The Seduction of Hummingbirds*, 2004

What I Owe My Mother.

1. My mother taught me TO APPRECIATE A JOB WELL DONE: "If you're going to kill each other, do it outside. I just finished cleaning."
2. My mother taught me RELIGION: "You better pray that comes out of the carpet."
3. My mother taught me TIME TRAVEL: "If you don't straighten up, I'm going to knock you into the middle of next week!"
4. My mother taught me LOGIC: "Because I said so, that's why."
5. My mother taught me MORE LOGIC: "If you fall out of that swing and break your neck, you're not going to the store with me."
6. My mother taught me FORESIGHT: "Make sure you wear clean underwear, in case you're in an accident."
7. My mother taught me IRONY: "Keep crying and I'll give you something to cry about."
8. My mother taught me about the science of OSMOSIS: "Shut your mouth and eat your supper."
9. My mother taught me about CONTORTIONISM: "Will you look at the dirt on the back of your neck!"

10. My mother taught me about STAMINA: “You’ll sit there until all that spinach is gone.”
11. My mother taught me about WEATHER: “This room of yours looks as if a tornado went through it.”
12. My mother taught me about HYPOCRISY: “If I told you once, I’ve told you a million times. Don’t exaggerate!”
13. My mother taught me the CIRCLE OF LIFE: “I brought you into this world, and I can take you out:” or, “I brought you into this world for you to make something of yourself!”
14. My mother taught me about BEHAVIOR MODIFICATION: “Stop acting like your father!”
15. My mother taught me about ENVY: “There are millions of less fortunate children in this world who don’t have wonderful parents like you do.”
16. My mother taught me about ANTICIPATION: “Just wait until we get home.”
17. My mother taught me about RECEIVING: “You are going to get it when you get home!”
18. My mother taught me MEDICAL SCIENCE: “If you don’t stop crossing your eyes, they are going to get stuck that way;” Or, “If you keep cracking your knuckles, they will become gnarled;”
19. My mother taught me ESP: “Put your sweater on; do you think I don’t know when you are cold?”
20. My mother taught me HUMOR: “When that lawn mower cuts off your toes, don’t come running to me.”
21. My mother taught me HOW TO BECOME AN ADULT: “If you don’t eat your vegetables, you’ll never grow up.”
22. My mother taught me GENETICS: “You’re just like your father.”
23. My mother taught me about my ROOTS: Shut that door behind you. Do you think you were born in a barn?”
24. My mother taught me WISDOM: “When you get to be my age, you’ll understand.”
25. My mother taught me about JUSTICE: “One day you’ll have kids—I hope they turn out just like you.”!

Thanks to a friend who e-mailed this to me, I can throw my Bio out the window knowing with confidence that everything’s been said already, *except*, perhaps, this:

Prices in the Thirties and Now: A Comparison

A New York Times article on August 3 of this year claimed that the heat wave this summer was nothing compared to that of 1936, and printed a wonderful photograph of

people crowded around Nathan's at Coney Island on July 9, 1936. It also displayed a big sign advertising beer and ale for 5c and 10c (using "c" for the cent sign), hot Frankfurters, hamburgers, roast beef 5c, fresh fruit (orange, pineapple and grape) 5c, and all soft drinks 5c.

Soft drinks now sell for \$1 (or more!) in coin-operated machines, or 20 times that in 1936. Hot dogs are \$1 minimum off the streets of New York, and The New York Times itself sold on the streets for 5c then and \$1 now.

Movie theaters charged 10c then, and \$7.50 at the Garden Theater in Princeton, NJ, by no means the priciest of movie houses, and New York City movies cost \$10. These prices are 75 and a 100, respectively, times those in the 30s.

Let's get to the nitty-gritty: ice cream was 5c a scoop and 10c for three scoops in the 30s. I called two Princeton ice-cream parlors, to use an old fashion term: Thomas Sweet ("The Emperor of Ice Cream," to use Wallace Steven's title of a poem, in which it is declared: *The only emperor is the emperor of ice cream*) charges \$2.50 for one scoop, \$3.50 for two scoops, and does not price out three scoops; and Halo Pub's ice-cream goes for \$1.50 for one scoop, \$2.75 for two, and a bargain \$3.80 for three scoops. Taking Halo Pub's prices, we have a factor of 50 for one scoop, and 38 for three scoops times the prices paid in the 30s.

A new car of the former "Big Three" (Chevrolet or "Chevy", Ford, and Plymouth) cost \$500 in the 30s. The cheapest car available now costs \$10,000, while most models, e.g., the Chevy's Manufacturer's Suggested Retail Prices start at \$16,000, according to an advertisement in the local newspaper, plus \$960 NJ state tax! (But see below.) A used 2003 six cylinder V-8 Toyota Camry LE cost Molly and me \$18,000 in late 2004, including tax and "wrap-around insurance." These prices are multiples of 20, 32, and 36, respectively, times the prices in the 30s. It was the first foreign car we had.

Plymouth no longer makes cars, but AOL on October 22, 2005 listed several Chevys (the Calvalier and the Cobalt Compact Sedans) and Fords (e.g., the Ford Focus) for under \$15,000, and the Chevy Aveo Compact Sedan was listed between \$9,455 and \$13, 215. By paying between \$5000 and \$6000 cash for ten-year-old Cadillac and Lincoln V-8s, Molly and I calculated that over a 30-year period we saved \$250,000, or about \$8, 333 per year by avoiding depreciation and interest costs. In response to our query on October 22, 2005, the Ford dealer, Nassau-Conover, where we previously had bought several Lincolns, reported that the Ford Montego Sedan was priced "in the low 20s," i.e., upwards of \$20,000.

CHAPTER 70

SELECTED LETTERS FROM JOY DEBORAH KINSBURG¹

With an Afterword by her daughter, Ariela Marks

Joy's Letter
May 7, 1946

Carl Faith AETM 3c

Class 9—Brks 2

NattC

Ward Island

Corpus Christi, Texas

Postmark: May 7, 6 PM, 1946

(UC) Campus Sta.

Aviation Electronics Technician

Mate 3rd class

Or more gently known to me as

Dear Carl,

This is a letter that I have been writing daily to you since April 21. I'm not sure that it will be precisely the original but I shall try. First, I must paint a setting. The words will have to be mundane because I'm trying to relate facts.

¹ These letters have been typed by the author, and published here with the permission of Joy's daughter, Ariela Marks. The (UC) Campus is the U. of Cincinnati Campus, where Joy was a student.

A Debate Tournament was held in Fredericksburg, Virginia. Four debaters from U.D. participated. We son. On the way home, we spent Sunday in Washington, D.C. We spent an hour in the Library of Congress. We spent five hours everywhere else.—

That was distasteful, but I suppose when I can't see you, I really don't know what you are actually doing much as I imagine it. Well, that is the outline of one of the most interesting events of my existence.

But an even more wonderful part about it was your appearance in Washington. I don't know why or how but I'm sure you were there. Carl, I have never been to an entire city which seems made for any individual, but I know that Washington is yours if such things may be apportioned so freely. It was exhilarating to sense your presence, address thoughts to you—but yet disappearing to receive no audible response. It has been several weeks since I was aware of these things, but I want you to realize these sensations, supernatural or no—of which you are capable. I know—perhaps the stripes on your arm give you untold power. Oh—I can almost shout with distraction. I would like so very much to exchange oral words with you on myriads of subjects and I cannot. It's hard, because these things I feel are not surface enough to write truly and yet they are thoughts I want terribly to transmit.

I'll try again—

Riding on the train at 3:00 in the morning—waking up in the dim light of a passenger coach, I pictured you in your numerous journeys [a]cross country. It can be a very sad procedure—but destinations, no matter whether they are home or not—are always welcome.

Carl, for a letter that's been weeks in formulation, I feel this is most insufficient.

All I can say is that it most satisfying in many occasions to reflect up on you, upon what you represent, upon your ideas and upon the combined incidents of our lives. More than this—I cannot write.

With love—

*Drenched by waterfalls flowing with torrents
of thought & emotion—*

*I doubt that it is but
You know that I be*

§ o y

Joy's Letter of May 17, 1946

*Same address**Postmark: May 17, 2 PM**Cincinnati, Ohio 3**Dear Carl,*

I have seldom been in a state of being more appropriate for thought of you. I frequently find myself filled with unexplainable desires, many of which are concerned with being in sight of you. At such times, sight of recently composed writings from you often are most welcome although as a substitute for a living, breathing presence—well, it's impossible. I realized this week, with somewhat of a start, that you are older since last I knew you. Happy Birthday doesn't nearly complete the wishes I feel on the occasion. I remember that my first written word to you were upon the fact of your eighteenth year. It seems impossible that these things are of another day—the impossibility lies in their vividness. It's very hard to write to you, Carl of things I would like to be able to say. It's hard because I have little idea of your response. I wonder have I ever really engaged in oral conversation with you. Oh I know I have. It's just that it's a process which easily bears repetition.

Granting the fact that these thoughts will of necessity have to be written ones, I'll cease talking to myself and write them down.

Tomorrow will be the final day of the college semester. Exams and then I will have completed a year of so-called higher education. The routine itself was different from Holmes' routine: Faculty, buildings, campus were strange and unfamiliar. The people were equally strange and this was the most complete change of all. I am too close to the events to know the influence of all this on me. I can only begin to judge the influences of the people and events of previous years. I know that the happiness which sprung from this of the past has not been exceeded. Your part in the happiness of my life still makes me marvel and be glad therein.

I don't know what it would have been like if I could have known you continuously during this year. As it was, your leaving makes complete in itself my knowing you. It's almost like seeing a story-book filled with pictures and recounting a tale from the "once upon a time" to the "happily every after". I rather think I would prefer sacrificing the good story qualities of abrupt endings for the much more pleasurable [sic] idea of continuation.

Carl—I have to repeat your name to convince myself that these things I'm writing will eventually be read by an honest-to-goodness real, live being. Is it part of growing-up to be faced by the growing complexity of simple, every day things? For example, it seems impossible

that now, just on impulse, I could go and look for violets on a hill together with young people of similar bent. It would have to be in the guise of a pre-arranged, stable expedition with purpose and clarity. I protest if this must be a part of maturity. I should like to modify the definition so as to include these frivolities, which are such a lovely part of living.

I would be most inclined to continue writing for an hour or more, but I cannot. I would also like this opportunity to come more frequently than it does, and I am always glad when I find you, even though you are wrapped in white envelopes.

You're nineteen, Carl. You're doing work for yourself and as dictated to you. You're thinking thought of many kinds. I want very much to be able to know this young man, being formed by and forming his country. I want very much to be able to read and understand what he writes. And most of all, I am happy because of him, for him, and with him.

It is not sentimentalism, an expression scored by the realist of our day. It's my spirit as stirred by your own.

Good night-
A night relaxed by the
Softness of damp breezes.

L o v e ,
J o y

These things I am writing are not the impersonal creations of a novelist. If I write in that vein, it may be because I've been reading Dickens. But what I have written has been of a most meaningful circumstance—the circumstance of your friendship.²

AFTERWORD BY ARIELA MARKS

. . . how beautiful the letters look . . . with the italics and the honorific title which announces them and the romantic vision you had of her; even today, no?

When I read these letters, it is easy for me to understand why she had been so admired, why you felt so powerfully about her, as well as your impact on her . . .

I suppose that you and I are the 2 (sic!) people alive who have loved her best . . .

*Excerpt from a letter of July 7-8, 2004,
from Joy's daughter, Ariela Marks*

² This is a postscript to Joy's letter.

Carl,

In the way you depict my mother so beautifully and lyrically, you light up this same dimension of her, previously hidden from me—except for fleeting glimpses—until the last years of her life. And as I wrote, were it not for this, I doubt whether I could understand her life as I feel I do now.

This is the gift of our storybook after-Joy knowledge one of the other. Even at the very beginning, I seem to remember writing to—back when I still used ink and paper—the phrase: “my mother’s tragic and exalted life”. The motifs of her youth that you capture precisely when you write of her “ephemeral world high above the planes of others” which she has drawn around us and that “she was an exponent of the impractical, the pure, and the unattainable”—both represent the exalted; her suffering words that I quoted below [these appear elsewhere]—the tragic.

As when you have quoted me before, I am very honored and rewarded by the fact that you are inspired to do so.

The poem “The Hill” conveys a feeling [that] I remembered from reading your chapter. The “Hill” of Covington was such a hill, it seemed to me too when I read your chapter, perhaps the same hill [where] you went to pick violets . . .

*Breathless we flung us on the windy hill,
Laughed in the sun, and we kissed the lovely grass.
You said through glory and ecstasy we pass,
Wind, sun, and earth remained, the birds sing still.
“And when we are old, are old, . . . And when we die
All’s over that is ours; and life burns on
Through other lovers, other lips,” said I—
“Heart of my heart, our heaven is now, is won!”*

Elinor Hoyt Wylie, 1885-1928, “The Hill”, st. 1

Those other fairies, Edna St. Vincent Millay and Emily Dickinson, are very much kindred spirits as well. Who but a fairy could close her letters the way my mother did? Anyway, back for the time being on this plane,

Ariela (slightly edited E-mail of January 7, 200; e.g., I included several more lines of Elinor Wylie’s poem)

P.S. When I reread them the [letters] recently, I too saw the resemblance you spoke of though I don’t think these two that you sent me specifically have a ‘fond goodnight’ in them. It’s quite uncanny, isn’t it, to take after her in this way. I would never have known that I do, had you not only sent me the letters, but also made it possible for me to

see the young girl she was, from whom later the young woman also grew, so I now believe.

Another reaction to the letters that I had this time: in both of them it's apparent that you are always on her mind. Whatever she's doing refers to you and is about you. If she and I are alike in this as well, and I suspect that we are, this is how she—loved.

Dear Ariela, I think your Afterword is a wonderful coda to Joy's letters, and to my little memoir. Thanks for your generosity and your contributions, Carl (excerpt from an e-mail of January 10, 2006.)

PART IV

PHOTOGRAPHS, MAPS, AND DOCUMENTS

(See Table of Contents)

To laugh often and much, to win the respect of intelligent people and the affection of children, to earn the appreciation of honest critics and endure the betrayal of false friends, to appreciate beauty, to find the best in others, to leave the world a bit better; whether by a healthy child, a garden patch . . . to know even one life has breathed easier because you have lived. This is to have succeeded!

—Ralph Waldo Emerson

*He who knows and knows that he knows is a wise man. Follow him.
He who knows not and knows not that he know not is a fool. Shun him.
He who knows not and knows that he knows not is a child. Teach him.
He who knows and knows not that he knows is asleep. Wake him.*

—Arab Proverb

*Solomon Grundy,
Born on Monday,
Christened on Tuesday,
Married on Wednesday,
Took ill on Thursday,
Worse on Friday,
Died on Saturday,
Buried on Sunday:
This is the end
Of Solomon Grundy.*

—Anonymous Nursery Rhyme

*When Johnny Comes March home again, hurrah, hurrah,
We'll give him a hearty welcome then, hurrah, hurrah.
The men will cheer and the boys will shout,
The ladies they will all turn out,
And we'll all feel gay when Johnny comes marching home.*

—Patrick S. Gilmore, Union Army Bandmaster,

Based on an Irish tune, 1863

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¹ I wonder: Vas *he* effer in Zinnzinnati? See at "Vas You Effer in Zinnzinnati?"

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

*I met a traveler from an antique land
Who said: "Two vast and trunkless legs of stone
Stand in the desert. Near them, on the sand,
Half sunk, a shattered visage lies, whose frown,
And wrinkled lip, and sneer of cold command,
Tell that its sculptor well those passions read."
"My name is Ozymandias, king of kings,
Look upon my works ye mighty, and despair!"
Nothing beside remains. Round the decay
Of that colossal wreck, boundless and bare,
The lone and level sands stretch far away.*

Percy Bysshe Shelley, 1817, Ozymandias

I am an Emeritus Professor of Mathematics at Rutgers University, New Brunswick, Brunswick, and an Associate Member of the Institute for Advanced Study, Princeton, both in New Jersey. After serving in the Navy as Radio Technician (RT) and Aviation Electronics Technicians Mate, 1945-1946, I enrolled in the University of Kentucky (UK), Lexington, on the G.I. Bill, graduating Cum Laude with Honors in Mathematics in 1951. I was inducted into Keys, the sophomore-year honors society in 1947, into Lances, the junior-year honor society in 1949, and in my senior-year at UK in 1950 I served as the President of Lambda Chi Alpha Fraternity

After graduation, I enrolled in the graduate school of Purdue University, West Lafayette, Indiana, and was hired as a Teaching Assistant from 1951-1955. I completed all the requirements of the Ph.D. in mathematics from Purdue in summer 1955 but the doctorate was not officially awarded until the following year, although I was permitted to use the title. I won a Fulbright post-doctoral fellow at Heidelberg University in 1959-1960. Besides Purdue, I have taught at several major academic institutions: Michigan State University, in East Lansing, Pennsylvania State University, in State College, now University Park, and Rutgers University, in New Brunswick, New Jersey.

At Heidelberg, I met Professor Marston Morse of the Institute for Advanced Study in Princeton after a lecture he gave. At a party afterwards, he invited me to apply for

membership in the Institute, and to apply for a National Science Foundation Postdoctoral Fellowship. He also invited me list him for recommendations. I was astonished, and said “Me? Go to the Institute?” Well, with his support and that of Professor Friedrich Kasch, who had invited me to come to Heidelberg, I won the fellowship, and became a member of the Institute for Advanced Study in 1960. Then in spring 1961, Professor Hassler Whitney of the Institute invited me to apply for a grant-in-aid for the following year, 1961-1962, because, as he told me, young mathematicians does not do their best work under pressure of a single year at the Institute!

This extra year at the Institute meant that I was *persona non grata* at Penn State, but a UK undergraduate friend, Wilson Zaring, an assistant professor at Rutgers in nearby New Brunswick, urged to apply there. Zaring said, “Rutgers is looking and so are you.” I did, and was appointed to a full professorship in 1962.

At Rutgers I gave “Lectures on Injective Modules and Quotient Rings” that were published in 1967 in Springer-Verlag’s Lecture Notes in Mathematics.) In 1965, after two years of work on the paper, Yuzo Utumi and I published what is now called “The Faith-Utumi” theorem in a paper entitled, “Noetherian Prime Rings.” (Yuzo and I went on to co-author four more papers.) In 1967, Elbert A. Walker and I published “Direct Sum Representations of Injective Modules,” the outgrowth of solving a problem posed by Frank W. Anderson while they were at the Institute for Advanced Study in 1963-1964

In 1965—1966 I was a visiting scholar at the University of California at Berkeley with the support of a Rutgers Faculty Fellowship. In fall 1970, I attended a portion of Tulane University’s Algebra Year in New Orleans and gave lectures there, which were published in Springer Verlag’s Lecture Notes as part of the proceedings of the conference.

In addition I have lectured extensively in India, including New Delhi, Jaipur, Bombay (Calaba), Madras, and Calcutta, while visiting lecturer in 1968 under the auspices of the Government of India, the National Science Foundation, and the United States Agency for International Development.

I was a guest of the Centre Recerca Matematica at the Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona in 1986, and again in 1989, helping my friend, the late Professor Pere Menal, and his colleague Dr. Jaume Moncasi, organize conferences on rings and modules. I co-authored three papers with Pere appearing in for the Proceedings of the American Mathematical Society in 1992, 1994, and 1995. I also wrote a paper, appearing in 1997, with one of Pere’s Ph.D. students, Dolors Herbera, who visited Rutgers University on a Postdoctoral fellowship in 1993-1994, and fall semester 1994-1995. During that time, Herbera and another visitor, Ahmad Shamsuddin, of American University of Beirut, wrote a famous paper that solved a problem posed by me. The solution was based on the work of two other colleagues at the University of Barcelona, Professor Warren Dicks, and Dr. Rosa Camps, who was a student of Pere’s. (After Pere died, Warren guided her thesis.)

I have authored numerous publications, including a number of books: a 1967 Springer-Verlag Lecture Notes in Mathematics entitled “Injective Modules and Quotient Rings”; two books, “Simple Noetherian Rings”, and “FPF Ring Theory”, were published by Cambridge U. Press in 1975 and 1984 respectively, co-authored respectively by J. H. Cozzens and S. S. Page; “Algebra,” a book in two volumes published in Germany and USA in 1972 and 1976 by Springer-Verlag; and translated into Russian by Mir Publishers (Moscow). With Professor Poobhalan Pillay of the University of Durban-Westville, S. Africa, I co-authored “Commutative FPF Ring Theory, published in 1990 by Murcia University in Spain.

My most recent books are: (1) “Rings and Things and A Fine Array of Twentieth Century Associative Algebra” published in 1999 as a Surveys of the American Mathematical Society, Volume 68, and, with the cooperation and technical assistance of my son, Dr. Japheth Wood, a thoroughly revised and enlarged second edition appeared in spring 2004. Part II of this book is Entitled “Snapshots of Mathematical Friends and Places,” and contains personal remarks about my mathematical life, starting at the University Kentucky, through Purdue University’s Graduate School, continuing through many other places and the people I met there (some of whom I mentioned above, or in the text); (2) a book of poetry, “The Seduction of Hummingbirds,” in December 2004; and of course, (3) this book. (The latter two books are published by Xlibris. (See my website at carlfaith.com)

My main mathematical research interests are: ring theory, module theory, linear and multi-linear algebra, Galois theory, and the history of mathematics. I am a member of the American Mathematical Society, the Mathematical Association of American, the Canadian Mathematical Society, and, as mentioned, the Association of Members of the Institute for Advanced Study (AMIAS). In addition, I am a member of The Sierra Club, The National and International Wilderness Society, Defenders of Wildlife, the World Wildlife Fund, SPCA, Habitats for Humanity, The Smithsonian, Friends of the Princeton Public Library, and other humane and conservation organizations, as well as a number of cultural organizations, including the Museum of Modern Art, The Metropolitan Museum of Art, and the Jewish Museum. I previously had been a member of the London and the German Mathematical Societies.

Born in Covington, Kentucky on April 28, 1927, on Fifth Street, close to the mighty Ohio River, I attended Fifth District elementary school there, and graduated June 1945 from Covington’s Holmes High School with school honors, and was inducted in the National Honor Society in 1944. In May 2003, I was inducted in Holmes High School’s Hall of Distinction. (See the Preface in this connection.)

Justin Kaplan, the General Editor of the Seventeenth Edition of “Bartlett’s Familiar Quotations”, gave me a much-esteemed honor. In acknowledging contributions in the

Preface, he listed me along with a long list of literary lions, including Anne Bernays (see Chapter 69), James Gleick, who wrote “Genius,” about the life of Richard Feynmann, Cynthia Ozick, a prolific writer and essayist, Robert Pinsky, a Princeton poet, and John Updike, another prolific author. Needless to say I do not belong on the same page as these illustrious authors, so this honor says more about Mr. Kaplan’s generosity than it does about me. (I have written about Justin Kaplan and his wife Anne Bernays, and their nostalgic book, “Back Then.” in Chapter 69. Consult the Index.)

As the reader of this book will quickly note, this book is sprinkled throughout with quotations found in Bartlett *and* the author’s readings. A mathematical colleague, Professor Irving Kaplansky, a former President of the American Mathematical Society and a Director Emeritus of the Mathematics Science Research Institute of the University of California, Berkeley, said, in a different context while he was a professor at the University of Chicago visiting us at Rutgers University: “It pays to know more than one field.” I have tried to follow his advice.

Some of my other hobbies include multi-media art, photography, travel, and a voluminous diary. In the seventh grade, I won a year’s scholarship to the Baker-Hunt Foundation for art studies, and later studied art at the Princeton Art Association circa 1970, and at the University of California at Berkeley in 1965-1966. In 1966, two of my works were selected for a juried show at the McArter Theater in Princeton.

I am married to Molly Kathleen Sullivan, have two daughters, Heidi and Cindy from a first marriage, and four adopted sons of Molly’s: Zeno Denny Solomon Wood, Japheth Leo Merlin Wood, Malachi Tarquin Cyrus Wood, and Ezra Cornelius Deucalion Wood. (See the Preface and Acknowledgments.)

Molly and I live in Princeton, New Jersey, and have a semi-feral cat, Kitty Lee (aka “Flash” for the speed of her entrances and exits!) We live in a forest on Lake Carnegie formed by the dam on the north border with Kingston and the confluence of the Millstone River and Stony Brook. A vigorous bird and wild life surround us. From our yard we often see a pair great blue herons floating by, ospreys diving for fish, and a majestic pair of bald eagles searching for food for their two eaglets that hatched out in spring 2005. This by no mean exhausts the list: kingfishers perch on the boat dock looking for minnows, gulls, ducks, mergansers, anhingas also dive into the lake; and there are numerous song birds: robins, jays, myriad warblers, to name a few, and many, way too many, honking Canadian geese. (They are by far the most numerous!) Added to this: moles, mice, and woodchucks burrow; rats ply the lake and gnaw in the garage, raccoons rattle the garbage lids, and deer keep the grass and shrubs shorn.