Recollections-
The Life and Times
Of a First Generation Son
(The Transitional Generation)

PREFACE

Some people at times have asked, possibly in jest, why I haven't written a book, and lately it appears that that activity seems to be a popular thing to do. Usually in response, I would say that my writing a series of memories would be of limited interest to others, that I lacked writing qualification (limited to theses in college and the occasional letter thereafter), putting a lifetime of events in book form and so forth, However, with additional inquiries and upon reflection of some noteworthy and wondrous events that have taken place since my Day One- September 6, 1918, I figured what the heck, lets give it a try. This would not be a book as such but rather a compilation of recollection of events that occurred over the years.

It must be understood that the recollections are not all inclusive since memory tends to wane with the passage of time, one of the wages of advancing years. However, I'm confident that memories recalled at a given time would later be buttressed by additional recollections at a later date, as events come streaming back, which I would try to fit in as they are recalled.

So with the hope that presentation, use of proper grammar, tempering of wordiness, sentence structure and other forms needed to efficiently cover thoughts are tolerable, I will proceed and hope that the contents will come through.

A good part of what will be written our children will recognize (they all have heard my many stories a "time or two".) But also a substantial motivation for this effort is our grandchildren and possibly further down the line. I know that I, for one, feel that I should have inquired more about the lives of my parents, uncles, and aunts concerning what they experienced, so that I could better understand and appreciate what they went through. But at a younger age the thought never occurred until a point was reached where this no longer could be done.

Up front, a good part of this has to do with family life, particularly our children. I am confident that each of you has vivid memories of your growing years in which your mother and I are included. So if they are not included, please forgive this aging parent. The memories are there. It is just a matter of retrieving them from the memory bank at a given point in time.

Many years ago my mother (a.k.a. Grandma Babcia) indicated to me that she had told Sister Sophie that she loved all three of her children equally and that she felt blessed to have each of us. And it is precisely so with your mother and I. You children are five beautiful individuals who we feel blessed to have. There might be those who might say that it isn't possible to love children equally. But believe me, it is, and has been, thus in this family for at least two generations.

Part I

It seems as though my life span, to date, has been divided into general phases-- the day of my birth until my enlistment in the U.S. Army Air Corps in August of 1939, the military time period through year 1945, the time frame covering my marriage to the beautiful Ruth Johnson, and subsequent gifts of a beloved family up to my retirement in 1985, and finally the intervening years of retirement to date.and Stella (Klobuszewski) Krawczyk immigrated to the United States from Poland at an early age, my mother in her late teens. My place of birth was 217 Spring Street in the industrial city of Paterson, New Jersey. At that time, it was a world-leading center of silk manufacturing. Much later in life I learned that at the time of my birth, the city and a good part of the country, was swept by an influenza epidemic. The ravages of the disease was great causing an extensive number of deaths and illnesses. September 6th was just prior to the end of World War I (November). It is my understanding that, unlike the end of World War II when there was much jubilation and celebration by people pouring out into the streets, the end of World War I was subdued since fear of contagion kept the people off the streets.

Our family at that time consisted of father Stanley, mother Stella, sister Sophie, brother Henry, and myself. We moved from Paterson to Plainfield, New Jersey when I was yet an infant. My

earliest recollection of Plainfield is that we lived in a two story house on 4th Street, which we called a farm, although the land size probably didn't exceed one or two acres. Our family raised some crops, reflecting my mother's farming background in Poland during her early years.

Immigrants in those times settled in their new country in a penalized condition, since they, for the most part, could neither read or write English and spoke the language haltingly, if at all. Employment opportunities were limited for those other than skilled workers. They were limited to low paying jobs, but with their old world work ethic, the new arrivals industriously took hold of whatever opportunities were available to them and worked at improving their economic lot. Since the immigrants were strangers in a new society, it was not surprising that they lived together for mutual support in ethnic groups. I can recall that in Plainfield there were two Polish social clubs, one of which I believe, was the Falcons and the other the Sokol. I can remember setting up the pins in a one lane bowling alley on marked spots and manually returning the balls at one of the halls.

The Polish Catholic Church was not only a place of worship (roughly 90-95% of people in Poland practiced that faith) but also was a place of social activity. Many lively dances were held on Saturday night in the church basement where the Polkas and Mazurkas held sway and were thoroughly enjoyed in spite of the lack of air conditioning which was still years away. Another activity that I can recall being held at the church was Polish language lessons for public grade children. In our family, the Polish language was spoken at home, which sister Sophie and brother Henry quickly assimilated. However, when they started public school, it was the English language for them from then on. So, in effect, I missed out on naturally acquiring the Polish tongue, hence the Polish classes for me at the church. Priests of the time tended to be somewhat stern on occasion. In one class session, the priest questioned me as to why I was not doing my work. I mistakenly replied, "I don't feel like it" instead of saying, "I don't feel well". Evidently this was not well received as I was rewarded with a cuff alongside my head. From that point on I made it a point to express myself clearly as possible at all times.

I think that perhaps most of us have memories of an event that took place at an early age and, for some reason or other, stayed with us throughout the years. While we still lived on 4th street, either Sophie or Henry needed a tonsillectomy. Just what the practice was at the time (early 20s) I don't know, but the end result was that all three of us went into Muehlenberg Hospital and had our tonsils taken out. Perhaps there was a quantity discount. All that I could remember about that event was a dream I had in which I was very thirsty. I could see a sink and tap at the end of a long hall. When I reached the sink and turned the top handle, the faucet was dry. I guess that it shouldn't take a psychologist long to figure that one out. Soon after returning home from the hospital, a kindly Polish neighbor lady came over with a canned quart of chow –chow. (I thought that perhaps the term was outdated, or perhaps regional, but when I got out my trusty and battered American College Dictionary I did find chow-chow listed). At any rate, the contents of the quart container were ice cold which drew me to it. It tasted so good, and cooling that I was about three-quarters through the contents before they gently parted me from the container. That was some thirst.

Regressing a bit, I could only feel a great admiration for my mother, father, and other people eager to start a new life in the United States of America, that growing nation emerging on a course toward becoming the leading country in the world. My mother did not speak of the journey, arrival, and processing of the immigrants as they entered the "New World" (Novi Swiat), but later the reading of the experiences of the new arrivals made me aware of the patience, purpose, and determination exhibited by those immigrants entering a new life. The onslaught of arrivals from various European countries placed a burden on the personnel and facilities of the Immigration Department at Ellis Island. As is often the case, class prevailed with moneyed people being quickly processed, while the reverse held true of the individuals with limited, or practically no, resources. Heart rending was the situation of those unfortunates who showed any sign of physical problems, who, after surviving the cramped journey in steerage to their land of hope, were denied addmission .

Unfortunately, there is no information available on the Krawczyk side of our family. Evidently, father Stanley did not talk much about his side of the family and mother did not say much. It was my understanding that Stanley Krawczyk from the Krakow area. Sorry! back to Europe.

I recently reviewed the book Polish Americans by James S. Pula, which confirmed my early

recollections. As Pula indicated, Polish Americans (Polonia) has long been identified with three characteristics that early immigrants brought with them to America- “an affection and concern of their ancestral homeland, a deep religious faith, and a sense of shared cultural values. Prominent among these values are family loyalty, a desire for property ownership, and a pride in self-sufficiency.”

Most of the two million Poles estimated to have come to the United States amidst migration from Europe in the late 1880’s and the early 1900’s, settled in big cities such as Chicago, Detroit, Milwaukee, Cleveland, and Buffalo. Close-knit communities of Poles soon developed. Parishes, schools, newspapers, fraternal societies, and clubs offered everything from health insurance to home mortgages- all organized to serve the needs and preserve the Polish values.

The decades following W.W.II meant enormous changes for Polonia. Young people began to intermarry. The old neighborhoods began to deteriorate as urban areas slumped and people moved out to the suburbs. And the mainstay of Polonia, the fraternal organizations, began to lose their usefulness, as many Polish Americans became more assimilated into the mainstream culture.
Commitment to Catholicism- religious belief provided a means of coping with the challenges of everyday life particularly during the early during the periods of the partitions of Poland. Social life tended to be organized around the church with religious holidays, weddings, funerals, and other critical events forming the cornerstone of community life. In this setting, the church served as focal point for religious and social life.

In the 1900’s, according to one estimate, U.S. citizens descended from Poles number more than 8 million. Now more American then Polish, they are nevertheless heir to a rich cultural and historical legacy rooted in their ethnicity. “This book will help to preserve that legacy for the second, third, and fourth generation and beyond.”

Our family resided in Plainfield until 1930. We moved from the “farm” to Elm Place. Our parents ran a delicatessen on 3rd. Street for a while, then upgraded to a new building on Grant Avenue, a few blocks from Front Street and at that time a nice area. The best seller was Mom’s potato salad and coleslaw, which became well known in the area.

One of my memories of the Grant Avenue stay was going out with our Polish landlord who was an iceman by vocation, complete with horse and wagon. Upon order he would skillfully chop off small pieces of ice from the standard-size slab into ten, fifteen, and twenty-five cent pieces depending upon the size of the customer’s icebox. It was always a thrill when he turned over the reins and I would direct the plodding horse along the route. Other activities that come to mind are helping my brother Henry to deliver the Plainfield Corner-News, ice skating under strings of electric lights on a nearby pond (I believe in Bound Brook) when the weather was cooperative, listening to the Demsey-Tunney heavyweight championship fight on the radio which resulted in disappointment when Dempsey lost, and one other novel activity of the time, The baseball World Series was always a time of great excitement particularly when it involved the New York Yankees, N. Y. Giants or Brooklyn Dodgers. In front of the newspaper building in town, a huge sign was erected upon which a complete baseball field was superimposed, complete with starting lineups, scoreboard, etc. As the game unfolded on the radio, figures were moved around the board giving the attending crowd an excellent visual portrayal of the game as it progressed. This was in the early days of radio and was a forerunner of the sophisticated sports telecasts of today.

A summertime activity was trips to the Jersey shore, mostly to Asbury Park. These trips were made in my father’s Ford Model T on the two lane roads of the day. One of the features of the Model T was three pedals at the feet of the driver instead of the two on our modern vehicles. I must make an effort to determine the function of the third pedal. The trips back home on Sunday evenings were bumper-to-bumper, so in a sense things have not changed all that much in that regard concerning traffic.

Speaking of radio, as I did in the description of the World Series activity, I recall the pleasure of being allowed to operate my brothers crystal set, complete with headphones, If my memory serves me well, it was a hit or miss procedure in which the operator moved a thin feeler around on the top of the crystal until a radio wave was found. I was elated when my first contact was made, and I heard the station identify itself as WJZ New York City, a distance of roughly twenty-five miles away. Really great!

My brother Henry and I were both sports minded in our early years, and we organized a neighborhood baseball team called the “Defenders”. A young married neighbor, who once played for

Princeton University, seeing our great interest in the sport gave us parts of his uniform. I wound up with his stockings, which were almost as long as I was high. Nevertheless, the stockings became a prized possession.

A major economic event took place in 1929 when the stock market crashed. I can recall hearing of instances of disturbed heavy investors losing complete fortunes and ending it all by leaping from tall buildings in NYC. This was hard for an eleven-year-old to comprehend. In 1930 my parents evidently agreed to a separation, which years later ended in a divorce. Since my mother's relatives mostly lived in Paterson, we moved back to the city of my birth and rejoined our families. There were my mother's two sisters- Anna (Pavlak), Helen (Kozloski) and a brother John (Klobuszewski). Another brother, William, lived in nearby Newton.

A listing of the Klobuszewski families in the proper order other than Krawczyks.

(H) Pavlak, Frank	**(H) Kozloski, John**	**(H) Klobusweski, John**	**(H) Klobusweski, Wm.**
(W) Klobuszweski, Anna	**(W) Klobusweski, Helen**	**(W) Harmer, Alva**	**(W)Julia**
Jean`	**Genevieve**	**Frances**	**No children**
Alex	**Tony**		
Anne	**Sophie**		
Harriett	**Richard**		
Stella	**Helen**		
Alfred	**Freda**		
	Raymond		

The natural closeness of the Klobuszewski clan was compounded by the Great Depression, which took place in the 1930's. One would have to live through this period of time to appreciate the economic hardship that took place. Employment was scarce and income was limited. Some families doubled up to effect rental savings, as was the case with Uncle John, his wife Alva, and daughter Frances, who lived with us on E. 19th. Street. Sister Sophie dropped out of high school to help with family finances, which enabled me to complete my elementary education and then on to achieve a high school diploma. These were the times of families on relief, bread lines, soup lines, men selling apples and hot chestnuts to generate some money. Things got so tight that my family became a recipient of "relief assistance" tendered by the city. This was for a short period of time and was very helpful. Although appreciative, my independent-natured mother was glad when we could get off the program.

My mother was a skilled silk weaver. In my minds-eye, I can still see her operating the loom with the noisy shuttle being banged back and forth in the weaving process. Sophie's activity was quill winding, which was something I also worked at part-time after school, for a period of time.

I was Grandma Bachi's handy helper when she went food shopping at the open street market in the area of Main Street and West Broadway, which offered everything from carrots to live chickens. Sophie recalled, in later years, my pulling a wagon those several miles to load up a week's supply of food and hauling them home. We had no car and a great deal of traveling was done on the extensive bus transportation system. Fare was 5 cents.

The climate of depression in a sense resulted in the poorest of times and the best of times. Although we lived in extremely tight circumstances, some things could be considered a plus. Since so many of the people in the eastern industrial states were of like circumstances, they developed a greater spirit of cooperation, particularly among families, of pooling of some resources, and sharing was a way of life. As kids, we would, on occasion, share clothing, and whatever athletic equipment we had. Most importantly, we learned how to cope with adversity.

During those days people turned to the radio for entertainment and relief from the tedium of economic hardship. Eddie Cantor was a highly popular entertainer and, in effect, was a sort of "cheer leader". He tried to project hope through his comedy routines and weekly rendition of "Happy Days Are Here Again". While playing in the street in the evening, we could hear through the open windows (no air conditioning) the stirring strains of "God Bless America" as only could be sung by Kate Smith, a young singer making her mark on radio.

One of the entertainment sources in addition to the newspapers (extra, extra, read all about it") in the Paterson Morning Call and Evening News, NY Daily Mirror and New York Daily News (with rival columnists Walter Winchell and Mark Hellinger), there were the movies. In Paterson, we

had downtown on Main Street the Rivoli, Grand (three levels high, and not really grand), Daley's, and the Majestic, plus the Regent, Fabian at other locations The admission to the Daley's was five cents. I can recall the silent films, which at times were embellished by a honky-tonk piano player who sat under the screen. He would play at a frantic place during the Western horse chases and could display imagination. During the saloon gunfight scene when the lights had been shot out, he would coordinate the gunfire flashes in the darkness with the smack of a flat paddle against the pile of sheet music, thus simulating gunfire shots. Since there was no dialogue with the pictures, there was no need for complete silence, and it was not uncommon to hear the patrons (kids) talking back and forth while viewing the picture. If my memory serves me right, two of the theaters featured vaudeville, (a variety of acts) in addition to the regular movie fare- the Majestic and the Regent- presenting good entertainment value for 20-25 cents.

At the time W.C. Fields, comedian, was a big movie star with his unique brand of humor. For some reason or another Lou LaVecchia and I became W.C. fans. The Orpheum Theatre, a former vaudeville house, which was on its last legs, ran a lengthy series of W.C. pictures Lou and I saw just about all of them. Again, the admission was five cents.

It would seem that that above noted local movie houses afforded enough of a variety. However, at times Lou and I would hitchhike over to Times Square in New York City, which had a plethora of movie houses. I can recall seeing Janet Leigh and Hedy Lamar in European movies early in their careers. We were unanimous in declaring that the two actresses were "good lookers." Hedy Lamar went on to be a top star in the US. Janet Leigh was to develop into a superstar and have leading roles in several movie productions rated highly among the most notable movies of the past century—Gone With The Wind and Psycho among others. (Little did I know that within five years I would be talking to the Lamar beauty in Hollywood). The usual movie fare would be a news clip, sometimes a travelogue, a double feature, plus a weekly serial which would leave the leading man/lady "hanging over the edge of a cliff," or some other dire circumstance, a condition which was resolved the following week.

One thing that there was an abundance of during those times , it seems, was love, as cousin Genevieve pointed out while reminiscing in one of her Christmas letters. In essence, the division of the Klobuszewski clan was like one large family, as we cared about, and for, one another.

This is a leap into the future, an offshoot of my description of the Great Depression years. Last evening (6/20/1998), Ruth, Ashley, Steve, little Christian and I had dinner in Old Town Manassas in celebration of Ashley's birthday. The motif of the crowded City Grill was interesting to me, featuring framed posters of different eras (principally World War I and World War II). Ashley brought my attention to a poster labeled "Freedom From Want", which led to a discussion (mostly on my part) of the trying conditions of that period of time. Her interest in what took place at that point in history to me was encouraging, because it seems to me that the present generation, as a rule, does not display an interest in that period of time. Which can be understood since they have been reared in times of general prosperity and know no other economic circumstance. Hence, it would be difficult for them to understand and appreciate vastly different times and conditions. PBS ran a documentary on the Great Depression a while back, which I feel all should review, if possible. When the program ran old clips of conditions reflecting deprivation and a general feeling of hopelessness, I felt a sinking feeling to a point that I had to temporarily stop viewing the program.

So this addendum to my previous description, which touched on the general conditions of the depression, is meant to bring out the spirit of that sad era. The chances are that there will not be a repeat of those times since I understand that certain safeguards have been positioned to forestall another occurrence of such depth. However, there is a need to be aware of what did happen since there is always at least a slim possibility of it taking place again. In a sense, I can draw somewhat of a parallel between the depression years and that of Pearl Harbor, despite disparate circumstances. Perhaps the above will provide a better understanding as to what may be characterized as a "frugal" nature of the older generation, which in essence is little more than an ingrained condition acquired in years of living with a depressed economic state. Doing with a little less (conservation), getting "full value" (a buzz phrase in today's business world), and being content in doing so, may be contrasted by years of sustained prosperity in an era of liberal spending, eased along by easy credit card purchasing, ATM availability, and, sadly, burgeoning bankruptcies, both personal and in business. An interesting study!

I was glad that the inquiry about the poster arose. First, because a successor generation showed an interest in our past history and, secondly, because it was a reminder of how blessed Ruth and I are with a fine family and a "freedom from want". And, the most delightful part of the evening was when Ashley and Steve confided to us that we could expect another grandchild to arrive in February. Wonderful news! Note: in researching I found that the freedom from want is one of the four great human freedoms, the others being freedom of speech and expression, freedom of worship, and freedom from fear, secured by limitation of armaments to prevent aggression, all improvised with tapered wooden baskets cut to allow passage of the ball. Which was not a regular basketball but any round ball that would serve the purpose. I can recall trying to be creative by introducing night basketball. Unfortunately, I was successful only in blowing out a fuse since the only wire I could find to use, as an extension was not compatible with regular house wire. Mom was not impressed. Further on basketball, I did not play high school basketball, but we organized , informally, a neighborhood team, which Lou LaVecchia dubbed the Blue Devils. We competed with other neighborhood and church teams, practicing and playing wherever we could find a facility. One church let us use a sub-basement hall, which unfortunately had several supporting posts throughout the court, and baskets, which were hung flush against the wall. In scoring a lay-up, we instinctively put out our hands to prevent slamming into the walls. In addition to five rival players, we had to contend with the posts. One unforgettable game took place up in Haledon. The hall had an electrical system, which was metered. A quarter's worth of coins in the slot produced electricity for one hour. We managed to come up with twenty-five cents and the game was on. It was a closely contested game with a two-point difference when the allotted time expired, and so did the lights, Since we couldn't raise another quarter between the two teams, there was little else to do but to go home.

Another development that took place was a growing interest in the game of tennis, which in those years was not the "in thing". My earliest recollection was chalking a line at net height on the back wall of the Paterson Armory, a few blocks from our house on 19th Street. Since the surrounding area from the building to the street was concrete, I had, in effect a half court to practice my strokes, and practice I did. Not in preparation for any match, but rather for the pure enjoyment of the activity. At the time the only tennis courts available were three or four clay courts in Eastside and Westside Parks. In order to use a court, a reservation for an hour of playing time had to be made by going down to the city parks department office in City Hall and obtaining a permit at the cost of ten cents. It wasn't until I was stationed at Hickman Field in Hawaii that I became acquainted with hard courts. At any rate, this was the beginning of a life-long attachment to the game, which endured up to a few years ago.

During my high school years, and for a few years thereafter, we were great fans of the game of baseball. These were the years of Hall of Fame players and other greats such as Babe Ruth, Lou Gehrig, Lefty "Goofy" Gomez, Red Ruffing, (a pitcher who at the times was used as a pinchhitter), Tony Lazzeri , Joe Di Maggio, and so on down the line. Still strapped for money, we devised a routine, which enabled us to attend games at the Yankee Stadium at minimal cost. We walked over to Route #4 and hitch-hiked (then a common and safe practice) to the George Washington Bridge. It cost ten cents to walk across the bridge, after which we would walk a few blocks cross-town to the subway line where we paid five cents for the short ride to the Yankee Stadium stop. A bleacher seat cost fifty-five cents, a hot dog or bag of peanuts and additional ten cents. After the game, we reversed the procedure for the trip back home. Thus for a total of Ninety five cents we were able to take in a top major league baseball game in New York City (a double header on major holidays).

One thing that I would like to comment on was the ethnic composition of two or three square blocks of our neighborhood. In thinking back, I can remember the following nationalities- Irish, Scotch, English, German, Jewish, Polish, Italian, Armenian, and possibly some others that I can't pinpoint at the moment. I feel that this circumstance was a definite plus since it was a good example of cooperative ethnic unity, perhaps helped along by common difficulties in times of economic stress. Also, I felt at ease in all the homes of my friends and developed an ear for foreign languages, pronunciations, and phrases. And, of course, among my young peers words and phrases better left unsaid, those acquired in the streets.

My high school days come to an end with graduation in February of 1937. It is of interest to note the difference in my prom of 1937 and the prom procedures of the present day. Then, if one

were to have access to a family car, the circumstances were pretty good. But for so many others, it was a bit more difficult. In my case, I was able to provide my prom date with a nice flower corsage. But as far as transportation was concerned, it was a matter of using the wide- spread bus system to get back and forth to the school gym where the event was held. My prom date, a popular and well-regarded young lady, who pleasantly surprised me by accepting my invitation, took it all in stride and with much grace. It was a "swell" and lively evening, enjoyed by all. Contrast the above with present day practices including in many cases formal attire, limousines, post prom parties, etc. The end result was a fun evening, but the circumstances were considerably different.

Thus we left the haven of high school, and were turned out into the world. For the most part, there were no aspirations regarding going on to the college level. The private schools were costly, state colleges, it seemed to me, were comparatively limited, and junior colleges were not in existence. What aspirations we had were in the area of finding some kind of employment. We had no school counselors to advise and guide us. Things were tight and jobs were not available to the graduates, who of course, lacked experience. We job hunted in Paterson, Newark, and the surrounding area, even New York City.

At the time, employment agencies for unskilled workers in New York City on Sixth Avenue with upstairs offices had a large blackboard at the street level entrance which listed the job "opportunities" of the day- dish washer, counter boys, etc. Invariably there was a line checking out what was available each morning. My friend Lou La Vecchia was able to land a counter job. I can recall seeing him off at the train station, which indicates the low cost of the Paterson-N.Y.C. railroad fare since he still wound up on the plus side after deducting the train fare. Many years later while working in N.Y.C. as the manager of credits and finance for a major corporation, I was the luncheon guest of one of the major banks in New York City. While eating oysters on the half shell in a well-appointed dining room in a skyscraper overlooking the city, I thought back to the depression job-hunting days in this same city and had to smile to myself.

With President Roosevelt at the helm, our country began to slowly work its way out of the Great Depression. While going through high school, I was aware of efforts being made to turn the economy around. I knew some of programs such as C.C.C.(Civil Conservation Corps), and had heard of the T.V.A. (Tennessee Valley Authority) further south. Close to home, my cousin Al Pavlak went into the C.C.C. program for about a year.

Since I'm touching on the subject, I decided to do some research on the N.R.A. (National Recovery Administration) which President Roosevelt spearheaded. Checking our encyclopedia, I found that the N.R.A. included reform programs in many areas. Agricultural Adjustment Administration (AAA), Tennessee Valley Authority (TVA), Works Administration (WPA), National Labor Relations Board (NLRB), and the Social Security Board. These sweeping programs were instrumental in "leading us out of the wilderness", so as to speak, and fulfilling the declaration made by FDR in accepting the democratic party nomination in July, 1932, "I pledge you, I pledge myself, to a new deal for the American people." He later stated that the government "had to deal with the problem of under-consumption, adjusting production to consumption, distributing wealth, and products, more equitably, and adapting existing economic organizations to the service of the people." These goals led to the various programs enacted in the first six years of FDR's presidency. Thus in a few minutes of research, some gaps were filled in my understanding of the events that took place in my early years.

Eventually I did get a job in a local rubber mill, which called for working three different shifts in each three-week period. The work was more manual than heady. During the next two years, I played softball and basketball when I could fit the activities into the work schedule. Also a fun activity was indoor roller-skating, which became big at the time. A number of large rinks came into being in the general area. There was a small roller rink in Patterson over the Sears Roebuck store, which was in the early years of its growth. The prime insult you could hurl at a driver who incurred your displeasure by some bonehead driving was "where did you get your drivers license, Sears Roebuck?")
The local rink put on a "costume" night, which we very much wanted to attend, but lacked any type of costume. Fortunately, sister Sophie solved my plight by whipping one up for me. For some reason or another, it was a devils outfit with long dyed cotton stockings, shorts, a shirt, cape, and a headdress complete with stuffed horns. Well, Sophie was very pleased to learn that her efforts won first prize at the affair. On the way home from the rink, we dropped in on a dance, still in costume, at St. Stephens

Church basement. As I crossed the dance floor, I spotted our pastor, Reverend Wreciono, who outlined in President Roosevelt's annual message to Congress on January 6, 1941.

Back in 1932, around the onset of the depression, tragedy struck our family. Brother Henry had just graduated from Paterson Central High School at age 17, when he fell ill that summer. Henry was a tall, likeable teenager who excelled in school and had a talent for music. He played the cornet and was a member of a local Polish band, which practiced in a large room in the back of a Polish bar, located on the corner of Washington and Plum streets. I can recall hanging around the hall listening and enjoying the music. I didn't have the talent to be a musician, (much to mother's disappointment), but I sure "listened good". Henry suffered from a severe case of sinus infection, which when finally diagnosed, could not be controlled. As I understand it, the built-up pressure resulting from the infection caused a rupture and subsequent brain infection and swift demise. It seems incongruous, in light of present day treatments (no antibiotics then) and medical skills, that a seventeen-year-old healthy young man would lose his life due to a condition that today could be treated successfully and routinely.

I still feel saddened recalling this development in our lives. It is interesting to bring to light what it was like in the early thirties when a family member died. It seemed to me that the deceased were accorded more honor (for lack of a better word), than is generally the case today. As was the custom then, the children were not only brought into this world at home, but were also buried from there. It was customary to display a black wreath on the front door to indicate a family in mourning. And during the mourning the family did not participate in any form of entertainment (then primarily the radio and movies). The eldest son of the family wore a black band on his suit coat sleeve indicating a lost member of the family .The funeral procession took place from St. Stephen's Catholic Church to the Catholic cemetery in nearby Totowa. The Polish band, which normally played "happy" music, then played funeral hymns (dirges) along the route. This strikingly different music was difficult for his thirteen-year-old brother to bear. As difficult as it was for sister Sophie and myself to cope with the loss of our brother, it was mother who was most devastated. This good, diminutive, resolute lady was proud of her "tall" and talented son, and his passing left a void in her life that never was overcome.

It is interesting that the aforementioned black wreath custom did not completely fall into disuse. Many years later while attending Washburn University in Topeka, Kansas, I was temporarily employed by the Post Office during Christmas break delivering packages to supplement our income. It was a good activity, inasmuch as the recipients, particularly children, were happy to get the packages. It was on Christmas morning making late deliveries that I passed a house displaying a black wreath. This instantly brought on a feeling of empathy, which went out to those people who, on a day of inner warmth and good cheer, were preoccupied with the loss of a loved one instead.

Thinking back, it undoubtedly would seem that present day funeral procedures are much more convenient, but from the standpoint of lovingly bidding goodbye, the pendulum may have swung a trifle too far. Interesting. I I

In looking back, one school activity I was engaged in during my eighth grade involved crossing guard duties, which were performed by selected students. In observing this activity currently on our street corner (Copeland and Sudley Manor Drive) in which trained adults direct traffic (very efficiently), I can not help but compare this with the situation as it was when I was thirteen years old. Instead of adults handling the traffic duties, students did the traffic monitoring. I attended Sandy Hill School (Public School #15) and my station was the nearby corner by the Armory on Market Street, a high traffic area. Complete with a large metal arm badge and standard police cap with badge and a whistle, I handled the morning and noon traffic during my eighth grade year. The cooperation of the drivers and students was excellent. In effect, the depression years caused school authorities to place the responsibilities with the selected students, which routinely was accepted and performed as a matter of course. It might be argued that the current traffic load is heavier, but in essence, the duties were the same. Here was a case of acceptance of responsibility at a comparatively young age, which, in my circumstance, served me well in later years.

As it developed, my street guard duties indirectly led to my meeting two young guys who were destined by become my lifelong friends. Upon graduation from Public School #15, our graduating class was transferred to Paterson Eastside High School which was located just a short distance away, situated between Market Street and Park Avenue, down the street from the Paterson Armory. While the graduating class reported to EHS, the Public School #15 students who served as

crossing guards were held over for another day to attend a party accorded us for “services rendered”. As a consequence, I missed the first day of orientation and was on hand at the school auditorium early on the second day, somewhat at a loss since I missed out on the orientation covered the previous day. With numerous questions in mind, I turned to two individuals nearby who appeared as though they would be of help. One was a strongly built guy, who my nephews Eddie and Stevie would later call “Uncle Harry with the tan hair”, and the other a slightly built blonde guy who answered to the name Otto. They were very obliging and brought me up to date on what had taken place. That was my introduction to Harry Monsaert and Otto Kienlie, who turned out to be my close friends to this day. Although we reside in different states, we still get together at least once a year at the Jersey shore to motor down to Atlantic City for the slots or go over to the racetrack at Monmouth to play the ponies. We keep in touch throughout the year by mail and, at times, the phone. Going a step further it is an interesting story as to how those two friends got together. Harry is the son of Medard Monseart, the former owner of a silk throwing factory in Paterson. Otto is the son of German immigrants who settled in the Paterson area. As it developed, Otto was assigned to Henry’s class in Public School #20, and was in need of a fellow student to help him in mastering the English language, acquaint him with our educational system, and to be a friend. Harry stepped forward and took Otto under his wing. Now both are in their early eighties and remain close friends, a result of one classmate’s willingness to help a student in need.

As a youngster, I developed a love of sports, which eventually lasted me a lifetime. This was a good development since during the depression parents were pretty much preoccupied with eking out a living for their families. The kids were pretty much on their on their own. few years back, I wrote to granddaughter Brynna Benefield, in response to her inquiry as to what our lives were like (grandparents) as youngsters, particularly during World War II. This was for a class project. I pointed out that since funds were limited during the depression in both public and private sectors, sports equipment was at a premium. A new baseball mitt was a prized possession. My cousin Tony Kozloski also athletically inclined, used my mitt as much as I did. (Years later I was to watch Tony as a catcher for the Fort Armstrong baseball team when were both stationed on the island of Oahu, Hawaii.)

I still correspond with my good lifetime buddy, Lou LaVecchia, who grew up with me since seventh grade in Public School #15 on Sandy Hill, and now is a retired Federal Judge in the Dallas, Texas, area. We often reminisce in correspondence and one of his recollections is of my patiently re-sewing, with a large need and strong thread, the cover of a softball, which had become unstitched many times due to extensive use. It must have paid off since we later we teammates on the Armory Clowns, city softball champions, in our age group. Although equipment was limited, this did not dim our love and enthusiasm for sports. We made do with what was available to us and the use of considerable imagination. The streets and backyard were our playgrounds. I can recall play8ing touch football in our street with the curbs as sidelines and strategically placed parked cars as end zones.

One activity that I dearly loved, along with my sidekick Lou LaVecchia, was running. As for as formal running was concerned, I ran the half-mile on the Eastside High School track team. Lou was a cross-country runner, also for EHS. Neither of us were world-beaters in high school competition, although Lou did letter, and I qualified for the Passaic Country meet. But boy, did we love to run Informally. We would run the streets toward Eastside Park, where traffic was light. Since our enthusiasm at times exceeded our physical capabilities, we would wind up with extremely stiff leg muscles. To a point that I would have to descend the stairs at Eastside High School sidewise. Normal descent was impossible-too painful. To counter the above situation, Lou and I formulated a concoction to alleviate leg muscle stiffness. As I recall, it was a mixture of mainly olive oil and undetermined, but liberal, amounts of liniment and wintergreen. Not only was it a good aid for our problem, but we also smelled nice. But shake well! Don’t believe it was ever patented. Governing all this activity was my mother’s puzzlement. Being practical minded, Bachi could not understand why we expended so much energy without any useful benefit Note: Our hero was Glenn Cunningham, a Kansan, who overcame substantial leg burn damage as a youngster to become world record holder in the mile event.

Another street game we played was “Peggie” (relating to a peg), which was fashioned after baseball. To describe all of the rules would take some time and space. It suffices to say that the

equipment was fashioned from a broom handle, which were heavier at the time, A six inch length of the handle sharpened to a a point at each end, was the ball. The remainder of the broom handle was the bat. The home plate was a manhole cover in the middle of the street. The pitcher (curbside) tried to toss the peg onto the manhole cover. If he succeeded, the batter was out. If not, the batter struck one end of the sharpened peg causing it to spin up into the air at which point he tried to wallop the peg as far down the street as possible. He had three trials (strikes) at the procedure, etc. The game had all of the elements of baseball, but the catching and was an excellent way to develop hand-eye coordination. (For the remainder of the rules governing this game, please contact Stephen S. Krawczyk, Sr.) Another simple game involved a solid rubber ball and the front steps of a porch. All of the houses on the block had some form of porch. From a distance of about six feet, the player tried to hit the point of a step and achieve a rebound with a bounce. I saw the game being played in an old Hells Angels movie on AMC just the other day. (The time frame was the same). Another was single wall handball, which was played at any place we could find a suitable wall with a flat area facing the wall.

All these games had in common the development of manual dexterity and coordination. And later, I was to learn where I inherited that type of skill. When Grandma Bachi (my mother) visited us in Midwest City, Oklahoma .in later years .She watched daughters Kathy and Mary play the game of Jacks with interest. She then showed the children how she played the game as a child in Poland. Gathering a number of small stones and one larger one, she then, at her advanced age, played her brand of Jacks, using the larger stone as the ball and the smaller stones as the jacks, The principle was the same, but there was one variation. She gathered the small stones while the larger stone was in the air. **There was no bounce!** I was quite amazed at her hand-eye coordination my mother displayed.

Basketball was perhaps the most enjoyed sport of all. We put up a backboard in my backyard with lumber scrounged in the neighbor's yards. Which had no regulation rim or net so we improvised with tapered wooden baskets cut to allow passage of the ball . We had no regulation balls (out of the question) but used any other ball which would serve the purpose. I can recall trying to be creative by introducing night basketball, since the daylight activity was not enough for us. Unfortunately I was successful enough only to the extent of blowing out a fuse. Evidently the only wire I could find to use for an extension was not compatible with regulation house wire. Mom was not impressed!!

Further on basketball, I didn't play high school basketball. However, we organized a neighborhood team which Lou LaVecchia dubbed the Blue Devils, long before we became aware of Duke University. We competed with other neighborhood and church teams, practicing and playing wherever we could find anything that resembled a court. One church kindly let us use a sub-basement hall which unfortunately had several supporting poles throughout the court. The baskets (regulation) were hung flush again the ball. In scoring a lay-up, we had to instinctively throw up our hands to prevent slamming into the wall. In addition to the opposition, we had to contend with the posts.

One unforgettable game took place up in Haledon. The hall had an electrical system which was metered. A quarter's worth of coins supplied an hour of electricity We managed to come up with the necessary twenty five cen ts and the game was on. It was a closely contested game with two points difference when the allotted time expired, and so did the lights. Since we couldn't raise another twenty-five cents between both teams there was little to do but to go home. (Walk, that is).

Another development that took place was a growing interest in the game of tennis .which in those days was not the" in thing". My earliest recollection was chalking a line at net height on the back wall of the Paterson Armory, a few blocks from our house on 19th street. Since the area between t he Armory wall and street curb was concrete, I had in effect a half- court to practice my strokes, and practice I did by the hour. Not in preparation for any match, but rather for the pure enjoyment of the activity. At the time the only tennis courts available for public use were three or four clay courts in Eastside and Westside parks. In order to gain use of the courts, a reservation for an hour of playing time had to be made by going down to the Parks Department in City Hall to reserve an hour playing time at the cost of ten cents. It wasn't until I was stationed at Hickam Field that I became

acquainted with hard courts. At any rate this was the beginning of a life-long attachment to the game of tennis. which endured up to a few years go. Note: Little did I know that in later years I would resume playing tennis in the senior program for years, the highlight of which was winning the Virginia State Championship in doubles in our age group, playing down with a partner from Hyattsville, Maryland.

During my high school years, and for a few years thereafter, we were great fans of baseball. These were the years of hall of fame players, Yankee greats like Babe Ruth, Lou Gehrig, Lefty ”Goofy” Gomez, Red Ruffing, who doubled as a pinchhitter, Tony Lazzeri, Joe DiMaggio and so on down he line.

Still strapped for money, we devised a routine which enable us to attend professional baseball games at the Yankee Stadium, (Polo Grounds (Gianrs) or Ebbets Field (Dodgers) with minor variations) at minimal costs. We walked over to Route 4, hitch-hiked (then a common practice) to the George Washington Bridge which we crossed at the expense of 10 cents. We then walked a few blocks to the subway line where we paid five cents for a short ride to the Yankee Stadium stop. A bleacher seat cost 55 cents, a hot dog or bag of peanuts an additional ten cents. After the game we back-tracked the route .for the trip back home. Thus for a total of 95 cents we were able to take in a top major league baseball game (a double header on major holidays).

In addition to basketball, softball and rink roller-skating, my friend Charlie Bedford, a co-worker at the rubber mill, and I were interested in cowboy music, despite the fact that we were easterners. Cowboy music must be differentiated from the present country or western music. (I am an owner of a tape by Michael M. Murphy singing genuine cowboy music of yesteryear which was given to me by daughter Kathy). Part of cowboy music was yodeling. In that department Charlie was a cut above my talent. But since we were both relatively young, we had to strain to hit some of the necessary notes. Permanently stuck in my mind is a practice session that took place in our living room on Spring Street. The decibels became higher and apparently onerous because out of the kitchen came a piercing cry of “shaddap” emanating from my dear gentle mother who apparently had all she could stand. The yodeling session came to a “screeching” halt and developed into a gale of laughter by the yodelers.

Somehow, out of the 25 cent an hour wage I initially earned at the mill, I was able, later, to buy my first car- a 1930 Model A Ford roadster. Although the car ran sufficiently well, the convertible top was badly worn. In an effort to improve the appearance of the vehicle, I went to work with a tarp Midwest City, Oklahoma, in early years she watched daughters Kathy, Mary and Marg play jacks with interest. She then showed the children how she played the game as a youngster in Poland. Gathering a number of small stones and one larger one, she then at her advanced age, played her brand of jacks, using the larger stone as the ball and the smaller stones as the jacks. The principle was the same but here was one variation. She gathered the small stones while the larger stone was in the air. There was no bounce! It was quite amazed at the hand-eye coordination my mother displayed.

Basketball was perhaps the most enjoyed sport of all. We put up a backboard in the back yard with lumber scrounged in the neighborhood yards. We had no regulation rims or net, so we normally gave the impression of being somewhat stern. We sized each other up, after which I threw my hands in defeat and turned as if to bolt out the door. This brought a broad smile from the good reverend, much to the amusement of the dancers. This was the first indication that Father Wrecino had a fun side. I felt I owed him an explanation of the outfit, so we chatted amiably for a while. It must purchased in 1937. As I recall, I sold it a couple of years later to a friend I grew up with in my early years in Plainfield (Stan Gabruk), just prior to going into the service. Strangely enough, the number 32 was significant since it was exactly at the speed that my good car ran most smoothly. Under and over that speed, it was a bit noisier. And the selling price also turned out to be- you guessed it- thirty-two dollars.

Back then there were no government regulations concerning cleansing of air in the mills of solvent pollutants. My first job was working over an open vat of solvents, dipping forms. The effect of the fumes at times were sufficiently strong to a point where I was mentally composing the

most beautiful musical scores. It was a pity that I was not musically inclined and able to remember the fume- inspired music and write up the score. After a time, I was fortunately transferred to another department away from the solvent area. To this day I am sensitive to strong scents and odors. A visit to a perfumed candle outlet would give me a headache, in a short period of time.

Time was passing by swiftly, and it became apparent that I was stuck in a dead-end job. Additionally, Otto Kienlie, my high school friend, often later recalled that the effects of the impure mill air caused my complexion to change from a healthy one to one of pallor. It appeared that I needed a change, one for the better. But where?

Even after leaving high school, we would go back and attend some of the sporting events. And, invariably, we would run into Mr. Zimmerman, my stenography teacher, which reminds me of another story. STEN. I, under Mr. Zimmerman, was not one of my better subjects. The hieroglyphics were a puzzle, and I wasn't doing very well. With the final coming up, I decided to give it a good shot and started to thoroughly review the entire textbook, page by page. At test time, Mr. Zimmerman looked up in surprise when I was one of the first to turn in my paper. The upshot of it all was that I came up with a high score. In a later class, one of the students was telling us that Zimmerman told them of the complete surprise he had experienced in an earlier class. It seemed he was considering failing one of his student due to sub-par work during the semester and an anticipated failing final grade. Out of nowhere, the student in question scored high on the test and earned a final passing grade. There must be a moral to the story somewhere. At any rate I went on the Sten. II and had no difficulty passing it. In the meantime Mr. Zimmerman and I became friends.

Knowing of my non- employment problems, while talking at a track meet, he strongly advised enlisting in the Navy since it afforded opportunities to obtain f work skills. Eventually, I took his advice to heart and decided to go that route. It was necessary that I go over to NYC to the Navy enlistment office to talk to the district enlisting officer. I took the written and physical tests and passed. It looked like I was destined to be a sailor, that is until talking to the Paterson Navy enlistment officer and learning that there was a six months waiting period before anything would open up. I wasn't inclined to wait another six months, so I went down the hall of the post office building and applied at the Army Air Corps enlistment office. The Army Air Corps enlistment officer, upon learning that I passed the Navy admissions test, waived the Air Corps testing procedure. He indicated that there were immediate openings for duty in Panama and Hawaii. Now that wasn't a difficult choice. For years I regularly tuned in on the live "Hawaii Calls" radio program. In ones mind that famous musical program allowed you to visualize a world of strumming ukuleles and guitars enhanced by the voices of Alfred Apoka and Al Kealoka Perry. With that background, Webley Edwards, described the sunny weather, and even took the microphone down to the shoreline at Waikiki beach to record the roar of the surf and would enhance the effects by announcing the water temperature. It sure sounded wonderful and unreachable to me back in Paterson, New Jersey. When the Army Air Corps offered a chance to serve in Hawaii, it provided what seemed to be an opportunity of a lifetime.

Enlistment in the service was a forward step in my life. It meant that for the first time I would be on my own, leaving the stabilizing and comforting influence of my close family. It perhaps was the hardest on my mother, since she had lost a young son six years earlier. However, she realized that going into the service was something I wanted to do, something that would better my life, particularly in view of the limited work opportunity in Paterson. or elsewhere. So she gave me her blessing.

One other formality, which had to be accomplished, was parental consent by my father. This called for a trip to Dunellen where my father resided with the family of a business partner. When Henry Monsaert's father learned of the planned trip, he was kind enough to offer the use of his car, a late model Mercury (thus sparing me making the journey in my old Model A). Though no explanation of the offer was made, I could figure out that if his son's friend was going to visit his estranged father, he would do so in style. It was a generous offer, one I long remembered.

It had been ten years since my father and I had seen each other. None-the-less the visit went well, a pleasant afternoon and evening. The necessary papers were signed. This was the last time I would see my father We did correspond until the time of his demise while Ruth and I were in Alaska.

Part II

It was while walking into town on Peach Street, carrying my cardboard suitcase filled with a few belongings, that leaving home hit me. My eyes suddenly blurred, and I had to stop and recover

before continuing on to the post office. From that point on, I began to feel the sense of excitement of entering into the new phase of my life. From Paterson we were transported to the Newark area office where we were formally sworn in and became enlisted men in the service of our country. The next step was transportation to Fort Slocum in Long Island. There we were issued uniforms and other gear, and the busy day finally came to a close. While lying in my bunk going over the events of the day, I suddenly heard "Taps," whose plaintive notes caused a pronounced feeling of loneliness.

For the next couple of weeks we were instructed in military etiquette with emphasis on physical training. During that time I received a visit from Mom, Sophie, and brother-in-law Ed Anderson, as well as one from Harry and Barbara Monsaert and Otto, which aided in the transition from civilian to military life.

Orders to sail to Hawaii came through. We were transported to Brooklyn and sailed for the Islands in the latter part of August 1939. Our ship was the U.S.A.T. Republic, a huge liner that was captured from the Germans in World War I. Outside of some initial motion sickness (this was my first experience at sea) the leg of the trip down to Panama went well. Unfortunately I was unable to view the journey through the Panama Canal since I pulled K.P. duty at that time. Once through the canal, we headed north for San Francisco and put into port to replenish fuel and food supplies.

While in San Francisco, we were quartered at Fort Mc Dowell on Angels Island which was located in the bay. We were given leave time, and I spent my 21st birthday taking in the San Francisco exposition which was taking place concurrently with the New York Worlds Fair. Thus I had a chance to see both, since I got out to the New York Fair before enlisting. One of the shows of the fair was Jack Benny, who was big in radio at the time. He performed to packed audiences.

The transportation between Angel's Island and the S.F. dock was a motor launch. Enroute each way, a stop was made at Devil's Island to pick up and discharge passengers. The famed prison on Devil's Island was a foreboding looking place and its appearance lived up to its reputation.

After a seven-day stay at Fort Mc Dowell, we re-boarded the Republic and continued on the last leg of our trip to Hawaii. There wasn't much activity for us and mainly it was eat, sleep, and view the ocean. Things livened up a bit with a mattress drill on deck (a check on deck for bed bugs, although I didn't experience any). There were continuous card games going on for participants who could afford the luxury. Movies on deck at night was welcomed entertainment.

An unforgettable experience did take place about mid-journey one evening at sunset. As the sun dipped below the horizon, its rays lit up the abundant white clouds, outlining the edges of the clouds in a brilliant yellow-orange color. Since we were at sea, the view encompassed 360 degrees. The sky was completely lit up presenting a spectacle never duplicated in my lifetime. Words cannot do justice to the extravaganza that Mother Nature put on for us. It was sheer beauty, and a great disappointment when it was too good to last and thus faded.

We docked in Honolulu, located on the island of Oahu, which I learned later was the most populated and commercial of all the island chain. My first sighting was the long extinct volcano Diamond Head, which I would come to see every morning once I was established at Hickam Field. Also greeting us was the Aloha Tower. My first limited sighting of Oahu was somewhat disappointing, particularly since I had built up expectations in my mind as to what the islands would look like. The first thing I saw off the ship was a narrow gauge railroad with the industrial part of the city as a background. However, living up to my expectations was the sunshine and the balmy air. From dockside we were transported to Wheeler Field, a fighter plane (called pursuit ship) facility located adjacent to Schofield Barracks, an infantry post inland.

As would prove out later, the U.S. Army Air Corps was long on technology and short on soldiering. The Air Corps was practically in the latter stage of infancy, in a manner of speaking. At that time, many of the non-coms were men transferred in from other branches of the Army. At Wheeler Field, we went through sessions of indoctrination, close order drill, and spent considerable time in calisthenics activity. I don't remember much out of the ordinary during our brief stay at Wheeler Field. Recalled, however, was the time we stood formation and inspection. The non-com in charge stopped in front of me while we were standing at attention. "Pull in that stomach, soldier," he barked. Little did he know that as far as I was concerned, my stomach was pulled in. He didn't buy my explanation that it was my loose shirt that was sticking out, not my stomach. If that scenario were to be repeated today, the sergeant might have a point.

In time orders did come through transferring us to our permanent post at an Army Air Corps

facility named Hickam Field, close to Honolulu. Hickam Field is situated adjacent to Pearl Harbor, the Pacific Head- quarters for the Navy. Hickam was mostly completed and officially activated in September 1938. Looking through my files, I found that the field sat on 2,235 acres of ancient coral reef covered by a thin layer of soil.

Which brings to mind, and looking forward a short time, it was discovered by the medical corps that the ground at Hickam was loaded with tetanus. This called for a prompt action, when discovered, in which we were given shorts at the dispensary. Our group returned to the barracks, and it wasn't long before someone noticed that the face of one of the guys was turning red. His face and neck swelled rapidly. The dispensary was quickly notified and a doctor was promptly on hand to administer an antidote. Soon after the allergic reaction began to wane and the problem was resolved. This was a first for all of us and at the time quite scary to us uninitiated.

The Army Air Corps had seen a need for another airfield in Hawaii, a modern facility, one that would accommodate the B-17 bomber. The field was built to support defense plans and aircraft were brought in throughout 1941 to prepare "for potential hostilities." By December 1941, the Hawaiian Air Force had been an integrated command for just one year and consisted of 754 officers and 6706 enlisted men, with 233 aircraft assigned at three primary bases (Hickam, Wheeler, and Bellows).

So as it developed, I became permanent party at a huge new field, part of the expansion plans of a fast growing service. When we arrived at Hickam, the barracks, later named Halemakai Barracks "Inn By the Sea" (a three story reinforced concrete structure) was not completed. It would house 3,200 airmen when finished. Before we were able to move into the completed barracks, we were quartered in two other arrangements. First bunks were set up in one of the huge hangars, complete with mosquito netting (mosquitoes were a bit of a problem at night). From there we were moved into temporary wooden structures with tent tops. Finally we moved into the barracks, which became my home for the next three years.

Our first job was to take part in moving all shop equipment, heavy and light, from Luke Field, the phased-out Army airfield, which was located on Ford Island in Pearl Harbor. It was a matter of loading the equipment on barges, ferrying over to Hickam, and setting the machinery up in the maintenance hanger. Following the completion of that duty, I was assigned to the Hawaiian Air Depot facility on the field. H.A.D. was a maintenance organization manned by civil service workers. I was focused on becoming a machinist, which would provide me with a trade to fall back on once discharged from the service. It was a disappointment, therefore, when I was assigned initially to the brake department of the H.A.D. that dealt with that aspect of military aircraft. In the meantime, I enrolled in a correspondence course (machinist), which was my first and last, effort in that form of education. My bunk mate Red Messam (Western Star, Ohio, outside of Barberton) and I beat the bushes in town trying to find an idle lathe on which we could become familiar with indication as to the extent of desire to learn a trade. With the passage of time, Red, who also was assigned to H.A.D., and I were allowed to gradually use different types of machinery as part of our duties.. We developed bought at the aforementioned Sears Roebuck store, a large needle, sturdy thread and a generous amount of all-weather glue. I covered the existing top, and, in effect the convertible top became "unconvertible." To that, I added a paint job (brushed), (black) which resulted in a fairly decent looking automobile.

A fun part of the car was the rumble seat outside at the rear of the car, which closed down when not in use. This arrangement provided much fresh air for the two passengers riding back there. The car had its oddities. The starter had a habit of jamming (a common occurrence in that model). In order to free the jammed starter, the procedure was to place the transmission in second gear, get behind the car, and rock it back and forth until the starter un-jammed with a loud ping. In those days, tire irons were standard equipment along with a tube patching kit and hand tire pump. New batteries were out of the question. I bought my batteries from a store in town, which specialized in second hand batteries. If my battery was in a very weakened condition, it was a matter of parking the Model A at the top of the block-long hill between Main and Spring Streets, allow it to roll, and letting out the clutch in second gear. Worked every time! The Model A cost me 32 hard earned dollars whenskill in operating lathes, milling machines, shapers, grinders, drill presses, and power machines which were used to fashion materials (steel, brass, copper, in lathes—a semi-automatic lathe which proved to be a production machine, turning out quantities of pieces.

The work was done to close tolerances (one thousands of an inch) which were measured by

the use of micrometers, inside and outside calipers and gauges, The work generally was performed on demand, usually fashioning parts that were not available when needed. Most of the work was done in the shop, but later whenthat basic piece of machinery, with little success. I mention the quest for machine experience to give an we were transferred from H.A.D. to our own shops, we also freelanced on aircraft that were dispersed in bunkers away from the field. Such as digging out broken studs on aircraft engines by means of accurate drilling and the use of EZ-outs. One occasion turned out rather hilariously, Ed Miller (Boston), who excelled in the procedure, was on a hurry-up call which we also attended, to dig out a broken stud on a B-18 under-fuselage (usually about 3/8" diameter). The bomber was scheduled to leave on patrol duty with the pilot and crew in place. The crew was impatiently waiting for the completion of the job, which did require time. Laboring under these conditions was difficult and Red kept working at it. The pilot finally ran out of time and patience and started taxiing slowly down the runway. Rd was determined top finish his job, and there they went, Ed trotting along with the bomber , holding up the cover plate with one hand while trying to affix the retaining nuts. It was quite a sight. Ed, who was a trifle overweight was gasping fir breath when he finally made it back to us, way to go. Ed!

To give some idea as to the activities and departments involved in the maintenance of an airfield, there were, other than the machine shop, welding, sheet metal, paint, parachute packing, carpentry shops along with aircraft which included office personnel, military police, firemen, and medical personnel which taken in total formed a cohesive unit which assured the efficient performance of a huge air base manned by 3,000+ airman.

As time progressed, we fell into a routine, which was interesting, if not overly demanding. Other than our duty hours, our time was our own. We observed time off on all of the U.S. holidays, Hawaiian holidays, and were given a months vacation annually. Regarding the latter, the vacation time was spent there in the islands since our pay (which incidentally initially was $19.00 per month and soon climbed to $21.00/mo.) pretty well ruled out trips outside the Hawaiian chain. Besides, where better could we find a place to vacation outside our beautiful islands.

Personal activities were post centered, with little contact with island civilians. This was understandable since the island of Oahu was top heavy with Army, Navy, Marine, Signal Corps, and other service personnel. And as I recall, since this was the case, the civilian population was not particularly enamored with service men. To offset this condition ,top brass encouraged participation in all types of sports activity and outings to the many fire beaches, among other things There was some contact with civilians by my bunkmate Red Messam, Mike Toms from Springfield, Mass., and myself, since we were assigned to the Hawaiian Air Depot, a civil service manned mechanical facility of similar activity to our regular shops, but on a much larger scale. One of the functions was to train regular army personnel in maintenance skills.

There was a warmer attitude on the part of the H.A.D. civilian workers toward service personnel since there was considerable interaction between both on a daily basis. We were invited to attend the H.A.D. outings and other social activities. Bob Drummond, a Scot, and his wife were kind to us and had us out to their place for a picnic lunches, followed by competition in table tennis and crochet. I never could really master the latter game, I guess, mainly because the balls were not lively.

I became acquainted with the H.A.D. nurse due to an accident, which affected my right shin. I was helping Mike Toms construct a low flat bed trailer, which was covered completely with a half-inch steel plate. This was an out- of- the ordinary activity from our usual line of work, but none-the-less was of interest to me. I tried to step up on the foot and a half high trailer but didn't step high enough. The toe of my G I boot caught the edge and slipped causing me to come down on the edge of the plate steel just above my boot top. The skin split, the blood flowed, and the bone swelled. I had the option of going to the field dispensary with all its sick call routine or being helped by the depot nurse, a kindly middle-aged lady. She cleaned the wound, bandaged it, and monitored my healing progress daily. The cut healed all right but it was the bone bruise that concerned her. All of which led to a new activity on my part as an unofficial medic. The men as a rule did not particularly like to go on sick call since it involved considerable waiting around, paper work, and loss of work time. Invariably when you have a goodly number of men on the floor of a large barracks wing, someone would suffer a cut, or an abrasion, which in it self would not be very serious, but none-the-less would go unattended. When they discovered that I had reached the point where I could tend to myself with supplies provided by the nurse, I started to get requests for medical

attention as the needs arose. I was glad to help out and with the supply of bandages, tape, and gentian violet, provided by the kindly nurse, I tended to the needs of my fellow airmen. My star patient was a guy who fell off a motor scooter incurring what seemed to be a multitude of scrapes, both large and small. I can't recall his name but can clearly see the mess in my minds eye. For some reason or other, he didn't want to go on sick call and requested my help, at which I balked--a case definitely out of my class. He was adamant, vowing that he wouldn't go to the dispensary so I reluctantly took him on as a patient. Well, it took a long time with many cleansings and re-bandaging but eventually it was good as new. While I didn't mind the time and effort, I did have a concern that the news of my unauthorized treatments might leak out to higher levels. But apparently it did not for I heard nothing on that score. So, my good children, you now know the story behind old Dad standing ready to tend your hurts and wounds when they occurred. The main differences were in types of bandage used and types of astringent. The colorful gentian violet gave way first to Mercurochrome and then to the tincture of Merthyalate On the latter, you may recall my advice to "blow on it" when you complained about the stinging sensation of the astringent.

The air corps volunteers of that day were almost completely high school graduates and came from all parts of our nation. None-the-less we had a share of "characters." The sergeant who handled our particular bay, of small stature and wide grin and comedic nature, was the only possessor of a radio on our floor. Whenever he heard the strains of "Dixie", he would snap to attention and salute. .Then there was the private who evidently possessed to sensation of pain. He delighted in going to a upper scale eating establishment, and once gaining attention to himself, would proceed to drink a glass of water and then eat the glass itself. Another dandy was to manage a loud attention getting passage of gas, then rise from his chair and looking over the assembled diners would roar, "who did that". These are two individuals who come to mind but there were some fun-loving others.

Since I played at sports most of my young life, I was delighted to find organized activities and facilities in which I could participate. Most of my attention was directed to basketball and tennis,. There was no softball action and baseball was overlooked since I had little experience with the game. My first love at the time was basketball. The game was organized on two levels-squadron leagues and the overall post team. Since post play called for considerable practice time during duty hours, and I was focused on machinist training. I didn't try out for the post team. However inter-squadron play fit in with my overall effort and I did play at that level with much enthusiasm. Back in the late thirties and early forties, the type of game played varied form today's freewheeling style. For one thing, a jump ball took place after each score, which, as one would expect, would wear out the center. However, the emphasis was on defense, skillful passing and strategy, which added up to low scores. Free throws were shot underhanded and set shots were propelled with both hands from the area of the chest. The jump shot and dunk came along later. To me, both styles had their points. I can say that there was just as much enthusiasm as there is today.

During the 1939 season, I played for our 1st Material Squadron (which became the 22nd Material Squadron the following year). Mike Toms, who undertook the duty although he was not versed in the game, managed the team. I had a good season, frequently hitting double figures (10 plus points). The following year I was asked to coach our 22nd Material squadron team. Despite my lack of coaching experience, I did undertake the player -coach position.. Fortunately we were blessed with talent, most-noticeably Whitey Orlowski, a tall and solidly built fellow from Detroit. The upshot of the season was winning the 17th Group Championship and the attendant trophy. Our squadron commander was appreciative of our collective accomplishments and treated the team to a victory dinner at a nightspot in downtown Honolulu. The array of dinner silverware was a bit puzzling and I even recall being "coached," in turn by one of my players as to which fork and spoon to use and when. I was quite a departure from our "mess hall" etiquette.

In addition to playing the league schedule, our team played outside games. On occasion, scheduled a game with an infantry team up in Scofield Barracks. We motored up in the traditional motor pool truck and, upon arrival, learned that there were two different unit teams claiming to have scheduled us for the game. It was a dilemma. We couldn't play a concessive double header, particularly in the time allotted, and on the other hand we did not want to favor one team at the expense of the other. I finally came up with a solution and both of the other teams bought it. We played a half with one team, followed by a half against the second team- and, incidentally, won both. This was followed by a meal

at the mess hall of one of the teams and the trip turned out well.
Since there were many teams needing practice time, and with the playing facilities limited, we were hard put to find a place to practice. One such place was the EWA sugar plantation gym and on occasion we practiced on outdoor courts at Honolulu schools. During one such practice, we were challenged by a group of Chinese youths who were watching the practice with interest. The informal contest was on. We found the Chinese players to be fast and quick but once we adapted, we were able to prevail, mainly through height.

As far as tennis was concerned, there were a number of courts available, including non commissioned officers courts. As I recall, the islands were subject to some types of wind throughout the year- either Kona winds or Trade winds. To compensate for this condition, the chain link fences surrounding the courts were lined with broad palm treas. Soon after we were situated in the barracks, I found a nearby court that had lines that were weathered by the sun. I scrounged up some paint and a one or two inch brush. The going was slow and I was happy when a passing airman informed me that I could have the job done by field maintenance upon request. I was eager to play but unfortunately couldn't find the needed competition, particularly at the level, at which I played the game. So I played one against two, which later became known to me as Canadian doubles. I did find a guy who said he played for U of Texas. We just had a good contest going when the racket he brought to Hawaii with him chose to snap a number of strings thus abruptly bringing the game to a halt. Big disappointment.

The following year went much better. Competition was established on an inter-squadron level. I played number two singles and enjoyed the season. One incident, which comes to mind, was when I played against a Captain (officer) who had just transferred from the States. I went one set up on him and was leading early in the second set when the heat caught up to him. (Hawaii is at latitude of that of southern Mexico and one of the first advices that were issued to us upon arrival was to deal with the sun with caution). Under the circumstances, I should have won by default. Since he insisted upon completing the match, and I wanted to play more tennis, I agree to return in the evening to finish the contest. So it was back to the barracks for a siesta then a return to the courts. As it developed, I won in straight sets. The racquet I brought along with me was getting somewhat worse for wear. A squadron mate had purchased a Slazinger racquet, which to me was a thing of beauty. He lost interest in playing and a deal was struck whereby I paid twenty dollars for the practically new racquet. The twenty dollars represented a months pay. The Slazinger served me long and well and eventually became worn and slightly warped. It is now in the hands of Steve Jr. who wanted the racquet for a memento.

One of the perks of winning the group championship in basketball was two weeks of detached service (vacation) on the island of Hawaii. The rest camp where we stayed was near the extinct volcano crater. The crater had been dormant for many, many years, and we walked across the surface one day. In spite of its dormant status, there still was some steam emitting from cracks in the surface, sufficiently hot to boil an egg. Overlooking the crater (and the pit where Madame Peel, the Fire Goddess) reputedly dwelt was a Hawaii National Park Museum, which offered the history of past eruptions. Regarding Madame Pele, one story was that a particular eruption of lava flow threatened the homes and lives of many residences in its path. The assistance of the Army Air Corps was enlisted to re-direct the flow through the use of bombs. As the story went, this interference angered Madame Pele. The end result, coincidentally, was that the pilots of the various aircraft's all met untimely and accidental deaths. At any rate, this supposedly dormant volcano erupted some time after my return to the States and has done so a number of times since. The area surrounding Kilauea is layered with two types of lava- old, smooth, and ropy called pahohoe and rough sharp lava called aaa. Signs in the area identify the year of eruption.One might think that lava covered ground would remain a wasteland forever, but this has proved to not me the case. As a park ranger explained to us on a recent visit, one day a sprig of greenery will pop up through the lava carpet, which would be a forerunner of an eventual verdant area. Mother Nature performs wondrous deeds. Also in the area are giant fern forests, a sight to behold. This miracle of nature could stand some exploration, which I picked up on the recent visit. A few million years ago a spore from a fern somewhere in Southeast Asia was released into the wind and was carried by a wind current 8 miles high into the jet stream where it is borne eastward. Eventually it drifted down and settled on a baron lava field in the middle of the Pacific Ocean. This is one way that life came to Hawaii. Air currents also

carried insects, seeds, and spiders. Other ways: migrating were storm driven birds that carried the seeds in their digestive tracks or stuck in their feathers.

Over a period of 70 million years, plants and animals colonized Hawaii at the rate roughly one every 70,000 years. The species changed gradually with time- they evolved into new forms that were better adapted to island life. Over 90% of Hawaii's native flora and fauna is endemic, found nowhere else on earth. The islands 100 endemic land birds evolved from as few as 20 original ancestors, a thousand kinds of flowering plants evolved from 272 colonized over 1,000 mollusks evolved from at least 22 immigrants, and about 10,000 insects and spiders species evolved from 350 precursors. The astounding diversity of life that flourished on the isolated, once barren islands bears witness to the evolution and tenacity of life.

In retrospect, I never realized how localized I was during my three plus years at Hickam Field. Strangely enough I learned far more about the islands during our bus tours around Hawaii, Maui, Oahu, and Kauai in 1996 than I did during my military stay in the early forties. The tour bus drivers are veritable fonts of knowledge concerning their particular island- geography, economy, nature, history, customs, and you name it. One bit of information that fascinated me was the development of the major islands. The string of islands run from Kauai in the north proceeding in a southwest direction to the big island- Hawaii and came into being in that order. Kauai, as I recall, is five million years old and Hawaii, the youngest is one million years in age. To me the short jet hop we made from Hawaii to Kauai spanned a time frame of four million years!

Hawaii--the Big Island is the only island, which is still growing. The lava flows run their course down to the sea, hit the cold waters and solidify- thus adding over a period of time to the size of the island.

But I'm getting ahead of myself. Its just that these blessed islands are so interesting that writing about them just wells up feelings about them. I can understand how Michener enjoyed putting his novel "Hawaii" together.

Most of us flew over to Hawaii on military aircraft, while Red Messam brought his car "Old Faithful" over on an inter-island steamer. It was a fun-filled, two weeks that included a two-day trip around the island in the old car, which broke down momentarily on an isolated country road. I can't recall what the problem was, but nevertheless, the fault was corrected sufficiently to continue the journey to Hilo, (it seems that the last twenty miles or so went downhill), where permanent repairs were made.

We did stop for lunch on the other side of the island at a country inn which was run by a pleasant Japanese lady, who, upon completion of the meal, surprised us with apple pie for desert, hot out of the oven. Needless to say, we made short shrift out of the unexpected treat.

I have heard it said that if one were victimized by a bad headache a natural way to overcome the problem was to try to relax and focus on something beautiful. And I know that at least in one case that this theory held true. I was experiencing a dandy headache while traveling on day two which persisted. Suddenly the car came to an opening, which revealed a field of lava rock which then led down to the shoreline. Little crabs were scampering across the lava and ducking down into crevices in the lava bed. Overhead the sun above brightly with a background of pure blue sky dotted with soft white clouds. Along with the blue panorama was captivating and was enjoyed to a point that I became aware that my headache had slipped away. We donned our swimming trunks and plunged into the invigorating water. What had a short time before been a sluggish day turned out to be a most pleasant one.

Our allotted detached service time neared an end. We saw Red Messam and the old car off on the inter-island steamer. The following day we boarded a C-3 transport plane to return to Hickam Field and resume our normal routine. But, as it developed, this was not to be. Little did we know that in a few days our peaceful existence would abruptly come to an end and that we literally would be thrust into history. Our arrival at Hickam was on the 5th of December. I was contacted by the manager of our squadron baseball team and asked to play for the team, which was starting to practice on the sixth. I explained that my experience was in the area of softball but at his insistence, I agreed to give it a shot. Since all teams were starting practice at the same time, facilities were limited, so we held a session on the parade grounds next to the barracks. Little did I realize that on the very next day, that peaceful scene would be supplanted by one of death and destruction. And that, in a sense, was the trauma of the successful attack by the Japanese navy aircraft upon "impregnable Pearl Harbor". Practicing baseball on one day and running for my life to keep from being killed on the following day,

on the very same parade ground.

Japanese Attack on Pearl Harbor 12/7/41

Sunday, December 7th, was a typical quiet sunny morning. I was preparing to attend Mass and was about to leave our third floor of the reinforced concrete barracks when we heard a blast, which left us mystified. The time was 7:55 AM. The first inkling that we had of what was taking place was the roar of diving planes and the additional blasts of dropping bombs. Our reaction was to race down the flights of steps and out of the door. A glance up into the sky made it all too clear. When we saw the rising sun insignia on the fuselage and wings of the low flying planes, we knew that we were under attack by Japanese planes. And that, incredibly , we now were involved in a state of war with Japan.

Our first reaction was to take cover in the barracks. Many years later, I was to learn the seven Japanese Vals bombed the hangar line across the street from the east, while another three planes attacked our barracks. Overhead, the Japanese flyers had complete command of the air-dive bombers, torpedo bombers strafing Zero fighter planes, and later high level bombers. The barracks and hangars came under heavy attack, particularly the latter buildings which were badly battered. Air Corps personnel at that time did not go through any type of basic training, since our training was more technical than military. We attempted to arm ourselves with rifles (old Springfield 30s), but typical of the confusion, the supply clerk would not open the storeroom without proper written authorization. When he was finally prevailed upon to provide access to the rifles, we armed ourselves with the guns and ammunition.

Being city bred, the interests of my growing years were in the areas of competitive sports, rather than in hunting and fishing. It was under these circumstances that I quickly learned, from the airman alongside of me, how to load the rifle since I had never fired one previously. We had learned how to clean a rifle, but fire them-no. We poked holes in the window screens (the barracks then had no glass panes since the climate was sufficiently warm throughout the year) and fired at the diving planes, as they roared overhead. While the effort was probably fruitless, it did afford us the satisfaction of fighting back in the only way we could.

We continued to fire away at the attacking planes whenever they passed overhead until a high level bomber scored a hit (or miss) between our wing and the adjacent wing, off to my left. The concussion from the exploding bomb lifted me off my feet and tossed me about six feet from the protecting concrete wall. I landed on my hands and knees, facing the opposite direction, with the rifle still clutched in my hand. While flying through the air, all went briefly black. I was told later, unconfirmed, that an airman in the entrance hall and near the door (screened) without the protection of a wall, was killed with no visible wounds on his body. Apparently he was a victim of the force of concussion. Later, when I had a chance to get a good look at the result of the bomb, it had inflicted a concave excavation about thirty feet across and fifteen feet deep. The consensus was that it must have been a 300-pound bomb, but in retrospect, it probably was more like a 500 pounder.

At the time, I had no idea as to the logistics involved, particularly concerning the second wave which was more intense. I learned last year that in this second wave, the Japanese committed half of their high level bombing force and half of their fighter force to attack Hickham Field. (See above). Hangars 13 and 15 took direct hits, as did many support facilities. Eighteen Zeros from the carriers Akagi and Kaga strafed the field to prevent any counter attack. That activity plus deadly shrapnel from the exploding bombs was so intense that our position in the barracks became untenable and one of survivals only. Men caught unprotected were being taken down by shrapnel.I headed out from the barracks with the goal in mind to reach the boondocks (outer reaches of the field). Enroute I passed the parade grounds which now had the appearance of a war movie. The heavy black smoke from the stricken Arizona had drifted over our field, enveloping the hangar and barracks areas. In all the confusion, one arm of service, the medics, were working with efficiency picking up the causalities.

As I ran down Hangar Avenue, I looked up to see a Zero bearing down toward me. I hit the dirt, trying to wedge myself between a raised sidewalk and the ground, which was really no protection at all. Seeing an aircraft seemingly headed right at me, left me with feeling that was as close to terror as I will ever come to again in my lifetime. Fortunately, the Japanese pilot had another

target in mind, and the plane passed overhead. There were others in a like scenario that were not as lucky, as I learned recently. A sergeant and an airman, running from the flight line, hit the dirt as a Zero made a pass. When the sergeant raised his head, he saw that the machine-gun bullets had cut his fellow soldier in two. A young radio operator saw an airman running down the hangar line pursued by a strafing Zero. Inexplicably, the man was getting shorter as he ran. It took the radioman a few seconds before he realized in horror the airman's legs had been shot off.

At a considerable distance from the main target areas, I was joined by others seeking safety from the bombardment. The attack finally ended, with the last of the Japanese aircrsft heading out to sea. Anti-aircraft batteries were active, but the bursts trailed the Japanese aircraft by a considerable distance. Although we did not know it at the time, we had seen the last of the raiders. The Japanese command apparently was satisfied with their results enough to leave the area for a return trip to Japan.

Again, information available just recently revealed that the intensity of the attack on Hickam was reflected by the ratio of Hickam losses to the total Army Air Corps casualties on Oahu. Army Air Crops figures after the attack were 163 killed, 336 wounded and 43 missing. Hickam's losses were 121 killed (75%), 274 wounded (81%) and 37 missing (86%). Since 28 of my friends in the 22nd Material Squadron were killed, it appears that our percentage of the overall was a sad 23%.

This part of my writing on Pearl Harbor becomes most difficult because on my last visit, and in subsequent reading, I learned of the depth of other realities, which took place that day. I have been interviewed by reporters a number of times dating back to Lincoln AFB. Always, the information given was perfunctory. In fact, many years had elapsed before I felt that I wanted to discuss my experiences. It was not until our last trip to Hawaii in 1996 on the 55th Anniversary of the Pearl Harbor attack that then, and later, I learned of some of the extent of the horror that occurred that day. Horror caused by events uncovered in the book "Pearl Harbor Ghosts—A Journey to Hawaii—Then and Now" by Thurston Clarke, who obviously conducted intensive and extensive research for the book through survivor interviews.

As the jacket of the book indicated, no other event in the 20th century history occupies the same complex niche in our national consciousness. Nor has any other subsequent development, including victory over the Japanese, ever really compensated for the sense of loss, humiliation, fairness and our own in competencies engendered by the attack that day on Pearl Harbor by the Imperial Japanese Navy.

A pertinent comment made by the author was that he had never seen a corpse in documentaries or movies such as "Tora, Tora, Tora". His research covered all aspects of that fateful day. Since the Navy was the primary target area, the one hardest hit, the principal research was on that branch of service. "The Arizona is both a memorial and cemetery because the bodies of 1,102 of her crewmen have never been recovered." Among the telling facts are just a few as follows:

- At times more than 20 ships were attacked simultaneously by several types of Japanese aircraft.
- At 8:10 AM, fifteen minutes into the attack, an 1,800 pound armor piercing bomb struck the Arizona creating a hundred foot gap, penetrating the deck, and exploding in a fuel storage tank. Five traveled through the open hatches to the magazine when it touched off 1.7 million pounds of explosives. Flames and black smoke shot skyward. The Arizona jumped from the water, its foremast pitched forward, and the deck opened like a flower.
- Flaming bodies and body parts were blown skyward.
- Naked sailors, limbs and letters from home landed on nearby ships.
- Men burning like torches stumbled across the deck, their clothes seared off. They walked out of the flames and just dropped dead, remember spectators.
- 200 Arizona dead were lined up on the lawns of the Officers bungalows.
- Burning men jumped from ships into the harbor and were heard to sizzle.
- On Ford Island, several thousand survivors of the Arizona and other wounded battleships wandered through the clouds of smoke, and dripping oil and skin and blood.
- Survivors gathered up dismembered arms and legs from roofs and trees.
- Men trapped in pockets of air in the West Virginia, living for two weeks and chalking off the days with x's on overturned cabin walls before dying.

To me a poignant revelation was that a private from Hickam Field was evacuated from Hawaii crying and combative, hallucinating on the Pearl Harbor attack again and again. Twenty-five years after the attack he was still a patient in Veteran's Psychiatric Hospital under constant sedation and responded to mention of Pearl Harbor by saying "Noises, noises, noises, just another day, leave me alone."

As I indicated in my recent letter to John Burns, Post Commander of American Legion Post here in Manassas, "It would seem to me that the telling of these events would serve little purpose, in itself, other than recounting history. But these, along with the effects of the atom bomb and the atrocities which took place in Europe, to name a few, should, in fact, cause mankind to at least pause, and make every effort to avoid the pitting of nation against nation, man against his brother, and its resulting human toll. Perhaps a forlorn hope, but a hope it is. I know that I, for one, thank the good Lord for each and every day lived since Pearl Harbor."

In reflecting back on that fateful day, it becomes obvious that I was indeed very fortunate. There were many "ifs" to consider: If my return to Hickam from the big island of Hawaii had been delayed, I would not have been on Oahu at all. If I hadn't gone to breakfast early in anticipation of attending mass, there is a possibility that I would have been in the mess hall when it was bombed, killing thirty-five men as they ate breakfast. Another if,. Mass was held in an open-sided wooden structure gymnasium until such time as a permanent chapel could be built. The structure was leveled. The one casualty was an acolyte preparing for Mass. He was killed. Had the Japanese attacked a short time later, there was a possibility that I would have been in attendance, along with the rest of the congregation with disastrous results,

Comment most certainly, should be made on "the flag" which flew that day at Hickam. Photographs showed that the post flag was tattered by strafing machine gun fire. As was told to me, the flag was not lowered that night as it was customarily. This was an act of defiance by the survivors of a battered garrison. I was pleased to learn on our last trip that this same flag later flew over the Big Three conference in Potsdam and additionally flew over the White House Aug. 14th, 1945 when the Japanese surrendered. It also flew over the United Nations Charter meeting in San Francisco. It is now encased and on display in the Pacific Air Force headquarters which is located in the barracks on Hickam Field.

The exterior of the Halemokai ("Inn by the Sea") barracks still shows the gouges and pockmarks caused by flying shrapnel and machine gun strafing. The purpose of maintaining this condition is a reminder of what took place that day and the need for vigilance. The barracks building has been designated as a national historic landmark.

The entire experience left us edgy since we had no idea as to what was ahead for us. There was speculation that the attack was a softening blow preceding an invasion fleet offshore. Highly speculative, but we simply did not know. That night we took shelter in a garage in the married non-commissioned officer housing area. I believe it was the house of Pappy Smith, master sergeant, who headed up the shops. With the atmosphere charged with tension, what turned out to be a friendly aircraft made its way into the blacked-out area. Nothing happened until one trigger-happy machinegunner cut loose with a barrage. Immediately what seemed to be a score of gunners joined in. The tracer bullets crisscrossed the blacked out sky and for a while it looked like a 4th of July display. The pilot evidently hit the throttle because he got the aircraft out of the area in a hurry, unscathed. Nobody was injured. While sheltered there, somebody came up with a radio, and we heard President Roosevelt's address to the nation with the "day in infamy" theme.

When we assembled for roll call the following morning, about one-half of our normal complement was on hand. A painful absentee was my buddy, Horace "Red" Messam, who was killed while on duty in one of the hangars. Some others drifted in as the day wore on. The first job we had was to make some of the out-moded slower B-18 bombers airworthy, taking parts from other damaged B-18s to do so. These aircraft made for good reconnaissance and the first flights out confirmed that the attack was a hit and run operation. Once it was determined that there would be no follow-up raids, the tension eased somewhat. However, the trauma caused by the experience remained.

The above condition was evidenced when temporary repairs were completed on the damaged barracks, and we were able to return. The latrine on our third floor wing sustained enough damage so that is was not necessary to use the entrance door. All we had to do was step over what

little was left of the separating wall, and we were inside.

One night, the edginess felt by all became all too apparent when one of the guys, who was experiencing a raid-centered nightmare, let out a penetrating scream. For a moment there was silence, followed by the pounding of racing feet as the wing pretty much emptied in a hurry. After a while, sheepish airmen returned, and the night returned to what might be called normal.

Despite the grim experience of the sudden and traumatic attack, the situation was not devoid of some humor. One of our GI's, a bit of a character, was racing away from the target area under fire, and ,in doing so, he ran into some sort of line strung about neck high in his path. He was upended, suffered some neck burns, regained his feet, and lost no time in continuing his exit from the area. The upshot of the episode was that some time later we stood formation for the awarding of Purple Heart medals to those wounded in action. And there was our man, he of the strung line episode, standing proudly at attention to receive his medal.

Another instance was the aforementioned Ed Miller. Some of us single non-cons were moved from the barracks to the housing vacated by NCO families. It fell to us to feed ourselves using the kitchen facilities. There were four of us in our apartment, and it was agreed that we would take turns cooking. In retrospect, I later wondered how we survived. When Ed Miller's turn came up in one of the rotations, he enthusiastically promised us a dessert treat. Well, in preparation of the "treat" something went wrong, and as we stood around inspecting his flat and dubious looking effort, Red ruefully spoke these immortal words. "I can't understand it. I used only the finest of ingredients!"

Another experience, quite awkward, which took place shortly after the raid at which time we were uncertain as to any follow up raids, was an injury I suffered. We were putting in long hours and in need of some relaxation, so we worked up a touch football game outside the barracks. I was defending against a pass, when one of the opposition slipped behind me. Sure enough, the opposing quarterback lofted a high pass in my direction. Acting instinctively, I leaped into the air to try to bat the pass down, but failed to do so and came down on one leg in an awkward position, which took the full weight of my body. Ow !! The ankle felt broken and swelled rapidly. So it was off to the dispensary (I can not remember the transportation) where the ankle was x-rayed with the result being negative. Heavily taped, the ankle still could not bear my weight. I did not feel any better when I learned that my opponent who slipped behind me (I must have been dozing) and was open for a score was none other than Ed Miller, who was quite unathletic and who missed the pass entirely. That was not a good time to be incapacitated and hobbling around. Had the air raid siren sounded, I would have had a problem getting to shelter, which then were excavations under the barracks. Due to the circumstances, there were no crutches available. After much pleading, the busy carpenter shop personnel came to my rescue by fashioning a crude T-shaped contraption, which sufficed in the pinch.

Also in my recollection is an event that took place right after the raid, which showed that the service could be considerate. Eddie Chavez, a H.A.D. civil worker, and his small family, befriended a number of us airmen. A clamp on off-base passes was immediately put into effect after the raid and was strictly enforced. Mrs. Chavez had given birth to a daughter, and they wanted the baby baptized shortly thereafter, as was the custom among their people. An appeal was made to the base leadership, since Eddie and his wife wanted me to be the godfather. I was called in and granted a limited afternoon pass that allowed me to participate in the christening. After the ceremony and a brief get together, it was back to the base and the work of getting our airfield operational. I can recall how strange it was to see the streets of Honolulu without any military personnel about. I was able to get to know the little one during the year spent at Hickam after the attack. Unfortunately during the course of the war I lost contact with the Chavez family, who were originally from the Los Angeles area. At times I think back and wonder how and where my goddaughter Elizabeth grew up. It is hard to realize that that tiny infant today should be about 57 years old.

As noted above, I put in an additional year of duty at Hickam Field before leaving the islands to return to the States. There are a number of things that come to mind during that span of time such as watching submarines returning to the harbor from the war zone in the South Pacific, cruising through the channel with a broom attached to the conning tower signifying a clean sweep (an enemy ship hit by every torpedo launched), planes returning from action in the Far East with bullet holes attesting to the severity of air combat action such as the Battle of Midway, watching Navy pilots simulate carrier landings on land and being awed by their skill, seeing Air Corps pilots practicing with dummy bombs

at the outer reaches of our field which caused involuntary shivers.

(The Midqway Islands rerferred tp abpve is a small atolllocated imn the central Pacific Ocean near the western end of the Hawaiian chain about 1,300 miles from Honolulu. The atoll with an area of two square miles is composed of two islets, Sand and Eastern and is the site of U.S. Air and Naval bases. The Battle of Midway took place in surrounding waters in June 1942 ending a Japanese attempt to gain control of the atoll. As fate would have it, my good friend and teammate Whitey Orlowski was there on detached service at the time of the battle, I can remember his having a hard time trying to shave off the heard he grew while away from Hickam. As it turned out, the defeat of the Japanese naval forces at Midway was the turning point of the war in the Pacific).I I don't remember going to the beach much during that year. We would go into Honolulu, although things were not the same. The Sunday afternoon concerts at the park next to the zoo in Waikiki became a thing of the past. The service YMCA continued to be a source of entertainment with shows featuring hula dancers, much to the delight of the service men.

During my years in the Hawaiian Islands, there were only two major hotels on Waikiki Beach-the Moana, with its formed Banyan Tree Court from which the "Hawaii Calls" radio show emanated and the distinctive Royal Hawaiian Hotel. The lqtter was taken over (the tourist trade was practically nil during the war) by the military and used as an R and R facility for personnel returning from the battle zone but also open for daytime use by all military personnel. One memory that stands out was a sailor sitting by himself at a table on the patio overlooking the ocean who wept continually and uncontrollably apparently recalling some battle horror. He could not be consoled, a victim of intense contact with the enemy which destroyed his morale.

The thing that did not change was my playing basketball. The bombed out mess hall (the central part of the sprawling barracks) was converted into a gymnasium. The activities of basketball and judo (taught by Honolulu police personnel) were offered. While judo had a certain appeal, I stayed with basketball, coaching the squadron team again that year. Most of the opposition was against other Hickam squadron teams, although we did play against other arm of the service- up in Schofield Barracks and Pearl Harbor occasionally.

I had, toward the end of 1942, put in for flight training, and qualified by passing both physical and written exams. After our last game, I lingered to practice shooting with some of my teammates. The gym thinned out to just myself and one of our better fans who fed me the ball for shots. I decided to leave, but the fan urged me to take a final shot. I turned from leaving, fielded his pass, arched a high shot which rattled into the basket much to the satisfaction of the fan ,and, I guess mine too, since I never forgot the episode. Then it was out the door of the gym leaving behind me three years as a basketball player and coach at Hickam.

After three plus years, I bid goodbye to the lovely island, a dot in the cast Pacific Ocean, leaving under conditions that could hardly be anticipated at the time of my arrival. This was in early December. Before leaving, I went up to Schofield Barracks cemetery, where those killed in action were buried at that time, and visited the grave of my buddy, Red Messam. Red loved the islands and had expressed in correspondence to his mother that he would like to stay there after his tour of duty was completed. And so, as wished, he remained at the island that he loved. Flowers were hard to come by, but I was able to find some roses that I left with him along with a departing prayer.

Upon departure, we were assigned to one of the famed Liiberty ships, traveling in convoy. IT was quite a let down in comparison with the relatively plush accommodations on the U.S.A.T. Republic on the way over. My bunk, in crowded quarters, was about three levels down. Truth be known, it didn't take me long to get seasick. Once that was out of the way things became more uneventful. Other than some uneasiness we felt in open waters the trip proved uneventful. The highlight of the trip was our arrival in San Francisco. It was a very foggy morning with very little visibility. Rumor spread that we were nearing our destination, and the deck was crowded with GIs straining to get a glimpse of our homeland. Suddenly there was a slight parting in the fog. We could then see a span of the Golden Gate Bridge. This was more than enough to evoke a great cheer from the guys, a first sighting of a part of the land that, in so many cases, we had almost lost. It was a great moment. From San Francisco the air cadet contingent was transported to the base at Santa Ana, California, the site of our pre-flight training. My first impression concerning the base was that it was a barren.. The growth there was in buildings, not vegetation.

We had arrived in Santa Ana in sufficient time to allow for generous leave time. I had put in for

a furlough that would allow me to make a trip to visit my family in New Jersey. And prior to that departure we were given a pass which allowed us to explore Los Angeles, and which was my first visit there. After a long period of time in the Hawaiian Islands, we were suddenly thrust into an environment that afforded us numerous entertainment activities, and we loved it. I believe we stayed at the Los Angeles Y.M.C.A. and the U.S.O. became our headquarters. Other than the U.S.O. shows and dances, we were given passes to stage shows, movies, and in one case, tickets to a live radio show. The star was a rising young singer, Dinah Shore. Prior to the start of the radio broadcast, Dinah came out and chatted with the audience. She was quite vivacious. I can't recall what songs she sang during the live broadcast but do clearly remember those seconds before the "on the air" sign came on,. Miss Shore calmly parked her chewing gum under the mike. Also recalled is seeing a college basketball game between the University of California and another area university. What made it unique was that the game was not played in an arena. Instead it took place on the large stage of one of the downtown theaters, which at the time were huge and ornate. So the view of the game was one-sided, no one on the other side or at the other end. It was an unusual arrangement, but I must say that it was most comfortable watching the game in the soft seats.

` The trip home was long and filled with anticipation. Los Angeles was experiencing and unusual heat wave (in Dec.) as we boarded the steam engine powered train. I think the railroads at that period of time were at the peak of their glory, contributing to the war effort by hauling vast amounts of passengers and freight.

The journey took four days in all. I can't recall too much about the trip other than being impressed seeing the Rocky Mountains for the first time, and, going a hundred and eighty degrees, noting that the Indiana landscape that we journeyed through was almost perfectly flat. One thing I do remember was that for the first time in my young life I had to sleep sitting up, which I found most difficult. Also being somewhat confined, with prolonged periods of sitting, my ankles swelled, which I think was a first (other than when sprained).

We finally pulled into the Newark train station, and the short trip over to Paterson completed the cost-to-cost homecoming journey. It was wonderful seeing Mom, Sophie and her family, aunts, uncles and cousins after being away for so long. There was a lot of visiting and catching up on news and happenings. I enjoyed getting together with friends Harry and Bobbie Monseart and Otto Kierbie and his wife, Vi. Harry's parents kindly invited me to a special dinner, which was most enjoyable. Much activity was packed into my leave time and it seemed all too short. Cousin Harriett Pavlak was a neighborhood air raid warden, and I can recall going out with her while she made her rounds making sure that the blackout was strictly observed while the alert was in effect. Leave time was up and it was back to Newark for the return trip to Los Angeles. This time the leaving was not as difficult as my first departure, although it did have its moments. Much had taken place in the interim.

Back in Santa Ana, the pre-flight phase of training became underway. Additional tests were conducted to determine what phase of flight training we were most suited for- pilot, bomber, or navigator. In my case the recruits indicated pilot training. As I recall, the classes included astronomy, math, radio (Morse code), enemy identification, military etiquette, hand weapons, and others pertinent to military flying. Much stress was placed on physical training, as was precision marching. This was my first exposure to astronomy and I found the subject fascinating. Military etiquette included the acquiring social polish with emphasis on manners, and with the discipline of K.P. (kitchen police) thrown in all of the classes were condensed leading one wag to state that if you drop a pencil in class and lean over to pick it up, those actions would put you two weeks behind in class work.

K.P. was the bane of the cadets. What this activity had to do with training a pilot, other than the aforementioned discipline, I don't know. What I do know is that it was for falling out of bed (not literally) at 3:30 a.m., for a period of two weeks. This was done with the usual chorus of moans and groans. The spirit of the situation was summed up best by Cadet Mueller, he of German descent and a thick accent. Toward the end of the two week period when the routine was getting even more onerous at revellie, Cadet Mueller hunched over on the side of his bunk, eyes heavy-lidded from fatigue and spoke, with force, these timely and philosophical words, "Oh vell, vot the hell!" The barracks cracked up with that one and, if nothing else, put us in a better mood to tackle another day.

The sidearm training consisted of a few trips to the firing range, where we went through the exercise of what I believe was the firing of Colt 45 caliber pistol. This again was a first. The object

was to extend your arm fully, line up the target in your sights, squeeze the trigger and- boom! The noise was deafening, definitely hard on the eardrums. This was accompanied by a recoil action that threw my arm back behind my head. Definitely not one of my favorite activities. It was a wonder than nobody got shot.

As indicated, Astronomy became my favorite subject and “opened a new world” to me. Pardon the puny pun (alliteration- Prof. Zimmerman English 101). However, the most revealing class, from the standpoint of enemy identification, opened up to me the brain’s capability of multiple object recognition in split second timing. After considerable study of enemy aircraft and surface vessels, we were put to the test. A slide projector would flash a picture on a screen. In a split second, little more than a blink of an eye, we were to determine the type of armament, how many were in the group and the nomenclature of each. Impossible, I thought. It can’t be done! But, as it developed, it could be accomplished and was! Another class passed. This art called for concentration, and the ability to not blink. If you did so at the wrong time, you had a problem. The latent ability to master the identification program was “an eye-opener” to me, you might say.

In connection with the mess hall, one bit of training we underwent was instruction on proper table manners, which could befit a future officer and gentleman. Which was fine with one notable exception—no large spoon in the setting. Instead of that type utensil used normally in the consumption of soup, we had to use the teaspoon to be used for that purpose, The thinking behind this situation, although never expressed, must have been to slow down the pace of soup consumption. This situation was one that I personally did not appreciate or fully adjust to after having spent a lifetime using a good-sized tablespoon eating one of my favorite courses.

Part of the discipline program involved keeping your bunk area “spick and span”. The bunk blanket had to be stretched so tight that a quarter could be bounced off the surface at inspection. The white glove inspection was something else, also. The inspecting officer, wearing a white glove, would mount a chair underneath an overhead light and run his hand around the top of the globe to check for dust. He only had to do that once. Clean windows were a fetish with that officer who delighted in handing out demerits. The only cleaner available to us was one that came in bar from along the lines of Bon Ami. The windows, with about six panes to each frame, required much time to clean. Once cleaned of dirt, it then required additional time cleaning off the white haze of residue left by the cleaner. We all hated the task. In retrospect, a cadet with a case of today’s Windex would have realized a financial windfall at that time.

The pre-flight training was separated into two terms—upper and lower classmen. Immediately after we completed our semester as lower classmen, I noticed some upper classmen out on the parade ground watering the earth—we had no grass. This they continued to do until they had a mini-pond of slippery mud several inches deep. The whole thing was a mystery to me until a fellow classmate hurrying by hastily explained that it was the custom of the graduating upperclassmen to round up the luckless underlings and toss them into the mud. Well, upon this bit of news, I headed for the barracks to make myself scarce, but there was no place to hide. In desperation (the enemies were approaching the barracks) I got under the lengthy study table and managed somehow to wedge myself under the table surface and over the supporting struts. As it developed, I might just as well have surrendered peacefully since the upperclassmen had previously gone this route and knew all of the hiding places. So I was summarily grabbed and hustled down to the “swimming pool”. No problem, I thought, just a smooth slide down the length of the hole. Not so, as I found out. The mud, although thoroughly saturated had a gritty consistency and the slide turned out to be decidedly uncomfortable. Thus, my “baptism” into upperclassman status.

Whether upper or lower classmen, the thing that all cadets looked forward to was the weekend pass. After the daily grind throughout the weekdays, the weekend freedom was a welcomed relief. Invariably the cadets would head for the Los Angeles—Hollywood area. There was the USO in the Los Angeles and the Hollywood Canteen, which was manned (or womaned) by motion picture stars. The latter was a very popular spot, the favorite of all servicemen. And invariably crowded. After several years of little social contact on Oahu, the Hollywood Canteen was pretty heady stuff, a swing of 180 degrees. One could be served by, and hobnob with, the leading stars of the day. Hedy Lamar turned out to be surprisingly diminutive, pale of face, framed by coal black hair. I tried to interest her into going to the Hawaiian Islands where she would be sure of receiving a great and appreciative welcome by the servicemen, as some other stars did in the past. But the lady

showed little interest in the idea. However, I did get her to pen a greeting and autograph a postcard, which I sent to the guys in the 22nd Material Squadron at Hickam. Other recollections included dancing with Alexis Smith who turned out to be tall, friendly, and a good dancer. Maryann Reynolds, a Crosby leading lady, was a young, pleasant girl with an infectious smile. And Betty Grable I met indirectly. The dance floor always was crowded, and a friend, advised me ,after the fact, that I banged her ankle with my foot. Evidently the GI's favorite pin up girl was understandably unhappy with the occurrence and I was oblivious to it all. I felt that perhaps an apology was in order. However, Ms. Grable was the center of constant attention, so it seemed best to let it slide.

Another popular entertainment spot in Hollywood was the Palladium, a spacious and well-appointed dance hall. This was during the era of the big band and the leading bands and vocalists in the entertainment field were featured. Other than the standard waltz and fox trot, the "jitterbug" was in full swing. The mood of the country was reflected by such songs as "Till We Meet Again," "The Last Time I Saw Paris," "We Walk Alone", "The White Cliff of Dover", "I'll Never Smile Again" as well as some timely songs such as "The Boogie Woogie Bugle Boy from Company B' and the "Atchison, Topeka and the Santa Fe".

A number of weekends were spent in nearby Whittier. My cousin Frances (in Paterson_ had an aunt on her mother's side who resided in Whittier, and I spent several weekends visiting the Harmers whose daughter, Charlotte, was our age. We had a common interest in dancing. During what seemed a relatively short number of visits, I became part of the family. The Harmers lived on a mini-farm location, and I felt quite honored when they named a newborn calf Stephanie after me.

The weekends were not entirely free since we had to report back to the base at 1 PM for the weekly parade and review. A substantial part of our training was devoted to precision marching, and there was great competition between the squadrons. Precision meant right down to the finest details, which helped determine the honor of being the top aviation cadet squadron in the review. (The parade was open to the civilian population for viewing). As an instance, the squadron leaders in advance of the main body of cadets were supposed to be in the lead by a set number of yards at all times. It seemed that we (Aviation Pilots Squadron #42) excelled on this point, which earned my admiration. That admiration was dampened when I found out that our leaders, displaying resourcefulness used a fine, but sturdy, earth-colored string that was kept taut, thus maintaining the proper distance. Of dubious honor, but nonetheless effective. Of course the helpful string was dropped as we neared the reviewing stand.

The parade activity was not easy in some cases, since some of the cadets who celebrated to excess the night before maintained a hangover. Which brings to mind one of our fellow cadets who came to flight training from the infantry. A soldier through and through, schooled in discipline. Well, on a particular Sunday afternoon, he had a champion of a hangover with stomach upset to match. While we stood at attention in rows for what seemed ages, waiting to get the marching underway (you couldn't move a muscle), the heat and sun proved too much for the ex-infantryman and nature took its course. Rather than bend over and thus draw attention and disfavor to himself, he threw up and out while standing stiffly at attention. Unfortunately, being nearby, I witnessed the scene. Highly indelicate, but admirable from the standpoint of military discipline.

Preflight schooling, which I believe spanned a three or four month period, came to a conclusion, and I found myself among the graduates. To refresh my memory of the facts, I dug out a photograph of the graduating class. After forty-six years, the picture is somewhat faded and has become brittle from aging. It verified that we were Aviation Pilot Cadet Squadron #42, which had a total of 167 fine young men. On the back of the photograph were about sixty autographs of friends developed in that short period of time in preflight school. The composition of cadets in our squadron consisted of men from all sections of our country guys from the West Coast, Sunbelt states, Midwest, northern tier states, Mid-Atlantic and New England. If there was any predominance, it was in cadets from California. I enjoyed associating with guys from all over the forty-eight, and found it to be a broadening experience. The first twenty-plus years of my life were spent in New Jersey and a couple of nearby states.

The last get together was a squadron dinner-dance held May 15, 1943, in one of the larger hotels in Los Angeles, the Hotel Biltmore. It was really a fine affair. If there was an negative to that gathering, it was that I never was able to take full advantage of the multi-course dinner. It seemed that each time I interrupted the completion of a course to dance with my guest, I found that the plate

had been whisked away in preparation of another course to be served. I must say that the waiters were very efficient, but they did no favors to a guy with a healthy appetite. It did have the effect of tempting my desire to dance at that point in the evening.

The next step in the pilot training program was “basic”, the initial training in actual flight. When the assignments were posted, I was pleased to learn that I would remain in California. My assignment was to Mira Loma Flight Academy in Oxnard, California. The time had come to leave Santa Ana, the facility that had seemed so barren and lifeless when I arrived there at the beginning of the year. Now, after, the hectic four-month period, I felt a twinge of regret upon transferring to another location. The short hectic period spent at the Santa Ana Base was a meaningful time in my life. For one thing, the experience was my first formal education since leaving high school in 1937. Secondly, it opened new avenues of learning, and reviewing, and cementing previous disciplines. Perhaps most meaningful was that pre-flight opened my eyes to the realization that I possessed latent abilities and educational desires, all of which did wonders for my confidence. I was ready to take on basic.

Oxnard, California, is a coast city about 55 miles west-northwest of Los Angeles, in a rich agricultural area. My first impression was that of a small town environment, so I was surprised to learn that the population was about 100,000 people. My recollection of the Mira Loma Flight Academy was that it was a collection of small living quarter units encircling a large parade ground area with a flagpole as the centerpiece. One of our first activities was to pose for a class picture, which I also dug out from our chest of drawers. In looking over the photograph, I was surprised that squadrons 1-2, Class 43-K numbered 110 cadets. It should be noted that the area flight instructors were civilian pilots. When one considers that the Oxnard facility was only one of several bases training for pilots throughout the country, adding in two later stages in pilot training, plus additional training centers for bombardier and navigator training, the vast scope of overall flight training becomes apparent. The Air Corps, in effect, was girding itself to deal with the responsibilities which would be placed on it as the war effort developed.

Schooling was continued in flight theory and procedures. Since there were only so many airplanes available for use, we were eased into actual flying. Waiting time was compounded by the weather conditions in the area. It seemed, at least at the time, fog conditions existed in the morning.The planes used in training were Stearman biplanes (two wings), which were stable and generally safe aircraft. I can recall the first flight aloft. After being accustomed to large military aircraft, it as an unsettling feeling sitting up there in the air with just the sides of the fuselage keeping you secure. Any preconceived notions about flying went by the board quickly. Flying is not like driving a car. One had to wrestle the aircraft, manipulate the joy stick, throttle and other controls needed to maintain the biplane on a straight course at a constant elevation, the rudder (like a ship’s) which turns the aircraft in a desired direction and prevents yawing (fist tailing), the ailerons which are hinged sections on the rear of the wings and control rolling of the plane, and elevators which are horizontally hinged surfaces attached to the tail which are used to raise or lower the plane. Attention also has to be paid to wind velocity, which could cause the plane to drift off course. Corrective action has to be maintained. The engine is controlled by a throttle, which in our case was located on the side of the cockpit and provided the necessary thrust. The wings provided the lift in conjunction with the engine. All of the control functions needed to be coordinated to maintain proper flight. Although there were some auxiliary fields used in conjunction our main field, the traffic naturally was heavy at the latter. Since there were a number of planes in the air, taking off and landing, one principal was highly stressed. Keep looking to the left and right almost constantly to make sure there were no other aircraft in close vicinity. Any contact in the air with other aircraft was highly undesirable.

The single radial type engine equipped Stearman had two cockpits. The flight instructor sat in the front cockpit and communicated, as I recall through a voice tube with the hearing apparatus in the helmet. While the student had the controls in flight, the instructor would keep his hand lightly on the stick in the event of any emergency corrective action had to be taken. The first maneuvers to be accomplished were taking off and landing. In my case taking off was no problem but unfortunately problems developed in my landings. Depth perception was the culprit characteristic. So while quite a bit of flight time was devoted to landings, other basic maneuvers were also learned and mastered. One was what action to take if the engine conks out. The plane had to be put into a dive and after a specified time the plane had to be pulled up to level flight. This action would (hopefully) restart the engine.

In the meantime ,on my off time I became acquainted with that area of southern California. There was always some place to spend and evening dancing. By the dint of hitchhiking was able to visit the area towns of Ventura and Santa Barbara. Spending one night with some friends in what today is a bed and breakfast accommodation, we were treated to a hearty breakfast by the owner lady who favored us with an unusual treat-- goats milk. Another first!

A thing I remember quite well about Oxnard was the water- really hard. The first time I tried to shower, it was virtually impossible to work up a lather with the soap. I quickly learned that it was possible to buy a special soap at the PX, which would produce acceptable lather. The soap then became standard equipment in my footlocker.

The flight progress system used by the Air Corps was a check system. At specific points in training, the cadet was required to take a check ride with an Air Corps pilot to determine whether the cadet had mastered the essential maneuvers. The first checkpoint included take-offs, and landings as well as several other maneuvers. A while prior to the first check my problem with depth perception took quite a turn. We had some evening classes that dealt with various aspects of flight. In one such session, the instructor stressed the need to pull back that stick “at the critical moment in landing,” which would cause the plane to lose lift and drop down into a three point landing. That point was at an airspeed of approximately 90 miles per hour and six feet off the ground. The following day in my session aloft, I was coming in for a landing with the instructor monitoring the dual control stick. We glided in at the required airspeed. I focused on an identifiable point in the distance to keep on course and, looking over the side, I judged that we were six feet off the ground! Following the previous night’s instruction, I really yanked the control stick back to my stomach. The Stearman lost lift and plumetted toward the ground. The only problem was the instead of being six feet off the ground, the height of the plane was about 12 feet. My instructor made a valiant reflex-action effort to correct the problem by gunning the engine, trying to regain some lift. We hit the ground hard but remained upright. After climbing out of the plane, and inspection showed a bent fuselage and blown rear wheel tire. Not only was the fuselage bent, but so was my ego. That was it for the day.

We had finally reached the stage where my instructor had to send me up solo (alone) otherwise I would have been automatically washed out. With the previous episode on his mind, my trainer was understandably concerned about doing so. The final day arrived and ,after trying a few landings, my instructor climbed out of the front cockpit and gave me a few final words of instruction and encouragement. I could see concern reflected in his face, so I leaned over, patted him on the shoulder, and assured him that things would be O.K.

After glancing at the windsock to determine wind direction and intensity, I taxied out to the runway and, according to procedure, depressed the brakes, reved up the engine, checked the tachometer to ascertain the needed RPM’s, lined the plane up, and gave it the gun. Gaining sufficient speed down the runway, I eased back on the stick, lifted off the ground, gained sufficient altitude, and proceeded to execute the square course which brought me back to a position for landing. Making sure that there were no planes in the path of my descent, I glided the plane in to the critical speed and, judging to be six feet off the ground pulled back the control stick. The estimate was good, the plane lost lift and settled in to a slightly bumpy three point landing. The first hurdle had been completed. I taxied back to the starting point, and executed two additional take offs and landings, none perfectly smooth, but hallelujah! I had soloed and no longer was a “dodo.”

The reference to dodo had to do with custom whereby cadets who had not as yet soloed were required to wear their goggles around their necks whenever marching and standing formation. Once soloing has been achieved, the cadet then would wear his goggles up on his forehead. A mark of distinction!

With soloing accomplished ,it was time to turn to additional maneuvers which were required before the first check ride. However landing problems continued to plague me and additional time was devoted to it, cutting into time which should have been utilized in mastering the additional maneuvers. When the check ride took place with an Air Corps pilot, it became apparent to me that I was not sufficiently advanced to the point that I should have been. While still in the air after the completion of the test, the army pilot asked me whether I would like to go through some dogfight maneuvers. I just had to satisfy myself that I had the capability of withstanding the advanced flight patterns. Since I was pretty sure that this was my last ride, I checked my seat belt and told him to go ahead. And that he did, wringing me out with inside and outside loops, spins, barrel rolls to the left

and right and a few others I can't recall at the moment. To my satisfaction, I found that I enjoyed all the maneuvers.

After those exercises, we headed back to the field, and, as we approached the landing pattern, I automatically placed my hand back on the control stick, monitoring the landing. It turned out to be one fine landing. After climbing out of the plane, we chatted for a few minutes, and then he made a statement that threw me a curve. "You know, I don't understand why making landings has been a problem for you. That was one of the smoothest landings any of the cadets I checked out ever made." I was looking at him when he made that observation, and to all appearances he seemed sincere. If that were so, we each apparently thought the other controlled the landing. If he made the statement to make me feel better, I credited him with being a decent individual, which he seemed to be. The other possibility was that together we made a great dual landing.

After the reviewby the board, I was scheduled to go to the Amarillo, Texas base for reassignment. Regretfully I said my good-byes to friends made at Oxnard and those from Santa Ana, thus closing the flying phase of my career. My Uncle John back in Paterson was disappointed when he heard the news, but I think it was somewhat of a relief for mom. She was reconciled to having her son training as a flyer. Her thinking was that while I was up in the air, I was closer to God. My mother was not very knowledgeable about flying at the time. Yet, in her late seventies, the little lady did, unaccompanied, fly behind the Iron Curtain to Warsaw, Poland to visit her remaining family and relatives in the land of her birth.

While "washing out" of the cadet program was somewhat inglorious, I left the program so much further ahead than would be the case had I not aspired to be a military pilot. During the comparatively short time spent at basic training, I was exposed to the discipline required in flying aircraft. I learned the coordination of hands, feet, and eyes needed to fly a plane safely and effectively. The need to focus and be alert at all times in the vicinity of aircraft became engraved. This need was illustrated in a couple of mishaps that occurred, one of which took place prior to my leaving Oxnard and another at a later date. The first instance involved a cadet who had advanced sufficiently to a point where he went out on exercises alone. On one such flight he failed to report back in. We then learned that he had crashed and was killed. The other instance involved a cadet who, if anything, tried too hard (an "eager beaver" in GI parlance). He marched behind me in formation and on a number of occasions would clip the back of my heel with his toe. I learned sometime later that he accidentally got too close to a spinning propeller and was fatally injured.

Another first, hello Texas!

After living in areas with large population, Amarillo at first impressed me as a rather small town. And since it was a brief stopping off point for me, I did not have the opportunity to really get to know the community and its environs. Years later I was surprised to learn that Amarillo, located in the approximate center of the Texas Panhandle with a population of over 125,000 was the fastest growing metropolitan area in the southwest. It had a variable industrial base, leading the world in production of helium and gram sorghum, along with production of natural gas and petrochemicals.

While awaiting reassignment, the demands on our time were not great. What impressed me greatly was the hot weather. It was my understanding, also, that during the winter the weather could get very cold accompanied by the blizzards that the Panhandle was noted for. The group that I was with consisted of other ex-cadets whose flying careers had been terminated. Among them was one Charlie Ellenbecker, son of a Marysville, Kansas farmer. Charlie was a likeable guy with a pleasant disposition and a big smile.

One activity that we took part in was a sixteen mile bivouac out into the country. This was done with full backpack gear. The day we left was a scorcher- 110 degrees. Just to take care of any contingency, a meat wagon (ambulance) was assigned to us, tailing our marching group, which was fortunate because several of the marchers were overcome by the heat and sun. I was reminded of this hike in re-reading Charlie's congratulatory letter for the occasion of our fortieth wedding anniversary which read as follows:

Dear Steven and Ruth,

Congratulations on your fortieth wedding anniversary!

We would like to attend, but will be unable to because of our farming operation. I am really going to have to jog my memory to get back to when Steve and I first met.

I think it was in 1942 on a troop train from California going to an air base at Amarillo, Texas. Anyway, we hit if off and have kept in touch ever since. As I recall Amarillo was a basic training (military) and reassignment center. It was hot and dusty, no air-conditioning in those days. As we were waiting to be reassigned, we had a lot of time to kill. The theatre ran all day, so we spent considerable time there. It wasn't unusual to see some of the GI's watching the show with just their under shorts on.

One event that stands out was a sixteen-mile overnight hike. The terrain around Amarillo is rolling hill country, mostly cattle country. We arrived at our destination about sundown, pitched camp, Steve and I sharing a pop tent. After supper, we noticed considerable traffic of GI's coming and going over a nearby hill. Being curious ,we joined the group. On reaching the top of the hill we beheld a sight which, for some reason, has stayed with me all of these years. Below, in a valley, was a windmill and a big stock tank about forty feet in diameter. The windmill was an old wooden tower job, the kind that pumps continuously, not having a pump handle. The tank was full of GI's. On the tower were two GI's, plumb naked, turning the wheel so their buddies could get a drink. It didn't take us long to join the group.

I was assigned to radio school at Scott Field, Illinois.

I flew a Tour on a bomber crew with the 8the force in Europe.

Steve and I met again in 1946, and I was best man at Steve and Ruth's wedding at Topeka, Kansas. Although we have not spent much time together, I always cherish my memory of my friend from New Jersey.

Wishing you and Ruth the best,

Charles and Helen Ellenbecker

As I recall, eating on the bivouac was the first time I ever ate standing up. (Our table accommodations were long boards supported by posts). Complications were added by a good number of hornets who insisted on sharing our meals. The trip back also was under sunny and hot weather conditions. When we reached the base, I headed straight for the shower building. The cool water felt so great that I remained under the spray for about a half hour and then left reluctantly.

Another activity that sticks out in my mind was a parade and review on the base. A high-ranking officer visited the base. The parade was competitive with a certain honor accorded to the officer in charge of the unit who came out on top. Our officer was a likeable old boy. He had his heart set on winning the competition and knew of our potential as ex-cadets. As an incentive he promised us all a three-day pass if we were chosen as the top unit. We all got together and agreed that we would put on a performance for his sake, as well as ours. Came parade day and the marching got under way. We were out of cadet training only a short time and had maintained the skill earned by many hours, days, and weeks of precision marching. We made a special effort to maintain proper distances, straight rows, and soldierly hearing. As we neared the general and his aides on the reviewing stand, the command "eyes right" was barked, and as one, our heads snapped to the right at the precise moment. That did it. Talent prevailed, and we won the competition "in a walk." True to our commanding officer's promise, we all got our three-day pass.

And, with that formation went the last vestige of our cadet training.

The time spent awaiting our reassignment orders was relatively short so my impression of the great state of Texas was comparatively limited and has remained that way since I never returned, outside of passing through the northernmost part of the state on east-west motor trips.

My reassignment orders came through and turned out to be "Hello Nebraska." Lincoln to be specific.

Hello Nebraska!

This was my introduction to the Midwest part of our country. Nebraska is a large state located slightly north of the center of the main body of the continental United States. The name Nebraska emanated from Indian names given the state (in variations) by the Omaha and Otoe tribes, meaning flat river (the Platte). As I understood it, the generally gently rolling terrain sloped throughout the entire state from east to west as it approached the Rocky Mountains. The weather had great fluctuations with extremes in heat and cold with blizzards (as I was to discover later), some

tornadoes, hot and dry winds and thunderstorms. However the pattern of rainfall and temperatures over the state were favorable toward a diversifying agriculture. Hence the nickname the "Cornhusker State." If my memory serves me right, Nebraska was to be my home for the next two years. And, in retrospect, my activity and interest was centered, for that period of time in the Lincoln area, with one interruption. Lincoln is the capitol of Nebraska, the second largest city in the state, the most populated city being Omaha on the eastern border, adjacent to the Iowa border. Although it didn't have great significance to me at the time, Lincoln is a food-processing center (cattle), also has small manufacturing, and is an insurance center. Of great interest to me was the fact that it was the home of the University of Nebraska. The city in its inception was named after Abraham Lincoln, our assassinated president.

The large airfield, located outside of the city, had as its function the training of bomber crews and a teaching function. Arrivals, simulated missions, and final departures kept bombers in the air throughout the days and some nights. I recall one incident reported by the newspaper of some Lincolnites complaining that the noise of the bomber activity disturbed their sleep. I believe that the rebuttal in an editorial was the "alternative" which would occur if the bomber crews were not trained to later engage the enemy on foreign shores.

As it developed, I was assigned to the 40th Academic squadron, which, as the name indicates, had to do with technical instruction. One of our main functions was cutting away sections of aircraft engines color coded with outlining paints to be use of in the training of aircraft mechanics by the medium of mobile units. Having gained considerable machine shop experience in Hawaii, I fitted into the LAF operation quickly. It was manned by an effective crew and in October of 1943 drew praise from the top echelon of the Air Force as evidenced by the following letter of recommendation which I uncovered going through some of my "stuff."

War Department
Headquarters of the Army Air Force
Washington, D.C.

28 October 1943
Subject: Commendation
To: Commanding General
AAF Training Command
Texas and Pacific Building
Fort Worth, Texas

1. The construction of a P-51 Mobile Training Unit, at the Army Air Forces Technical School, Lincoln, Nebraska in the remarkable time of approximately five and one half days ahs recently come to my attention.

2. I desire to express my appreciation and to commend each officer and enlisted man for his unstinting and untiring effort to accomplish the mission.

Request a copy of the commendation be made a part of the 201 file of each individual concerned.

By command of General Arnold.

Robert A. Harper

Brig. General US Army
Assistant Chief of Air Staff Training

True Copy
John A. Zickman Jr.
1st Lt. Air Corps
Assistant Adjutant

General "Hap" Arnold was the commanding general of the Air Forces. I saw him once when I

first went to Hawaii while we were standing formation in his honor. The above letter had five endorsements descending through each echelon unit until the last one by the captain of our proper section. Sgt. Steven S. Krawczyk appeared as the first enlisted man listed.

Again my principal off duty activity was playing basketball, and once again I found myself coaching the squadron team. This team was not blessed with height, consisting of fairly short but fast players. The exceptions were a taller blonde Swede, who played center., and myself. His forte was defense, and he invariably drew the opponents star player. The shorter team members were quick, and we were able to meld into a pretty good team which finished high in the squadron league standings. One problem at times was fielding a respectable team due to conflicting duties, furloughs, and some transfers.

* In 1943 white and black servicemen were segregated in all services, hence a all-black squadron basketball team which we played against. There didn't seem to be a problem when it came to the base team.

Subsequent to the above, not too long ago I came across an American Legion Magazine article that indicated that on July 26, 1948 President Truman signed Executive Order 9981 initiating the integration of the military. It required some time for all barracks of the military to completely comply with the order.

For me, it was a good season with a one game effiort of 32 points, a considerable effort for the times. Coincidentally, this was against an all-black squadron team. Looking on as a spectator was "Goose" Tatum, the famed Harlem Globe Trotter. That year the base team had an unusual crop of talented basketball players. In addition to Goose, there was another Globe Trotter, a black hoopster who played for the Detroit Pistons until drafted, Ray Lumpe, a young rangy kid from New York University and several other team members whose "pedigree" I can't recall. With the encouragement of the coach, those unfamiliar with the Globe Trotter style of play readily learned the finer points, and the LAF team became a Harlem Globe Trotter clone. The Lincoln team met all the better military teams in the area. The routine was to go into a cat and mouse style of play, which would result in the opposing players lunging and sometimes failing in an attempt to force a turnover, with a resultant score on the part of Lincoln. Meanwhile Lincoln would pile up enough points to put the game away. As with the Original Globe Trotters, the games were a combination of entertainment and good play.

LAF would also play the preliminary game to the University of Nebraska team. With many of the better players gone into the service, the U. of N. team was sub-par. Now playing off the base, to draw the attention and admiration of the Lincoln civilian population and became overwhelming favorites, to the extent that the university team played the preliminary game and LA the main feature. Always to a packed field house.

On off-duty weekends, the guys would either go to the local U.S.O. or journey over the Omaha. Quite often the theaters of the day would feature top bands, always a good show. There also were several ballrooms, always well attended, where a variety of music was played. One dance that I learned was the "Schottische", a round dance resembling a polka but of a slower beat. My understanding is that the origin of the dance was Scottish. Sounds right!

One memorable Omaha trip took place in mid-winter. Several of us attended the wedding of one of our crew – John Sobczyk who was from Omaha. We were having a good time and delayed our departure back to the base. Not long after leaving Omaha, snow started to fall and increased in intensity as we progressed. We had no reason to anticipate a sudden storm and were lightly clad. The snowdrifts, driven by strong winds began to pile up on the highway. We lost traction and slid off the highway several times. Not being removed from years of year-round balmy weather in Hawaii, I was not too much help in the push department. Vision became very limited, a white curtain. The driver inched along with only the occasional hard surface of the highway as a guide. The situation appeared pretty grim when out of the haze a state police car materialized and rescued us by leading us to a farmhouse in the area just off the highway. The farmhouse already had many stranded motorists taking refuge from the storm. The farm family members were very hospitable and looked after the comfort of their unexpected visitors. About noon, the following day the highway was cleared ,and we completed the trip back to the base. Thus we were introduced to the famed Nebraska blizzards and the heart-warming hospitality of country people who opened their home to travelers in distress.

I just recalled my first re-introduction to snow after several years in the islands, which was more favorable than the highway episode. One morning I stepped out of our barracks only to find that during the night Mother Nature had favored us with about a foot of snow. After a separation from the four season cycle for years, I apparently was delighted with the development. Donning a pair of boots, I sought out a shovel and tackled the wood walkways (used as sidewalks). The passing Gi's must have scratched their heads in puzzlement witnessing a fellow GI happily cleaning the snow from the walkways. The fact that I was “whistling while I worked” evidently was what did it. Before breakfast yet!

Being stationed in the Midwest shortened the traveling distance between my post and New Jersey home. The furloughs were fully utilized. The first such time came up hurriedly, and it appeared that I would not be able to get out of Lincoln on my first day. An understanding first sergeant went to work on the needed authorization and had me pick it up at his family’s apartment on the way to the train depot. Since I did not have a reservation on that departure he advised me to seek out and talk to the train master to explain my situation. That I did and was told by the sympathetic train master to wait at a certain spot until all of the other passengers were on board. Just prior to departure he beckoned me aboard as the last passenger. While not guaranteed a seat, I non-the-less was on my way.

Also, being stationed in Lincoln, I was afforded the opportunity to visit Red Messams family in Barberton, Ohio, en route home. I was very happy to meet “Mum”, Red’s mother who lived outside of Barberton in a small town called Western Star. Mum lived in a good-sized 19th century house called Liberty Hall set among many large trees and abundant shrubbery. Mum was my idea of the ultimate English lady, small in stature, gray haired, finely featured, with a trace of English accent. Her natural dignity did not in any way conflict with her cheerful disposition. It was an emotional moment when we first met—the mother who had lost her younger son and the soldier who had lost a buddy at Pearl Harbor. I also met Red’s sister Marge (Weigand) and her husband Jack along with their eight children. I immediately felt at home, the children took to me, and I was tagged as Uncle Steve. Thus, I gained a family for a lifetime. (Also met was Aunt Maggie, Mum’s sister and Ernie, Red’s brother, and his family). This was the first visit that eventually became the first of many as part of the trips back to New Jersey from Nebraska, Kansas and New Mexico.

In my first full calendar year stationed at Lincoln, things continued to go well. My duties continued to be the same in the Department of Technical Instruction (maintenance Section). The section supervisor was shipped out for overseas duty, and I was elevated to that position. Since I had an efficient crew, the transition took place smoothly. I cannot recall the date (prior to April 14, 1944) that I was promoted to the rank of Technical (Tech) Sergeant, a most welcomed development. The reason that I know that the promotion took place before the above date was predicated on the following letter copy.

Headquarters
Lincoln Army Airfield, Lincoln, Nebraska
Department of Technical Instruction
Property Station
14 April, 1944

Subject: Commendation

To: T/Sgt. Stephen S. Krawczyk, 6975247

1. It is my desire to commend you for the excellent manner in which you have performed your duties as Supervisor of the Maintenance Section of the Department of Technical Instruction. Since your assignment to these duties, you have kept the buildings, equipment and grounds in an excellent state of repair at all times. The Mobile Training Units which were produced in your section have always been well commented on by inspecting parties.

2. It is my desire to express my sincere appreciation for your tireless efforts and splendid cooperation during your assignment as Maintenance Supervisor.

Norman V. Johnson
Capt., Air Corps
Property Officer
Nothing like tooting your own horn! Kudos to my crew!

One thing that was different was my introduction to the WACs (US Woman's Army Corps). I had seen members of the WACs around the base but have not had any contact with them. To my surprise a WAC was assigned to my crew. She was Bernie, a little young lady (I believe from Brooklyn). Since all my years in the Air Corps was male oriented, it took a while to get used to the situation.

Bernie was a friendly person and became well liked after a time. She had, on several occasions, invited me to lunch at the WAC dining room, which I had declined. However, Bernie was persistent, and I agreed to "break bread" at the WAC facility. Normally getting to the WAC facility would have to be done by base bus, but Bernie managed to come up with a motor scooter. She had not lost any of her metropolitan New York driving skills as I soon learned. We must have presented quite a sight to passersby--a little WAC driver tooling the scooter with a good-sized T/Sgt. passenger behind, handing on for dear life. The luncheon was an anti-climax after the journey over, but it turned out to be a pleasant time. One really can't complain about having lunch with a roomful of attentive women.

The new basketball season showed much promise, in all aspects. There was an inflow of new personnel, some with good basketball skills. Due to the press of work, I gave up my coaching duties and concentrated on playing. On the squadron level, we melded into a strong quintet and made a good showing in intra-squadron play.

Meanwhile, the LAF base team was in its second year of status quo personnel. The level of competition was much higher. The team played the Great Lakes Naval Training Station team at home. The Great Lakes team center was all-American whose name I can't recall. What I do remember was that this was the first time I had seen a basketball dunked, a most impressive feat. As it turned out, playing against such top notch competition (the GL Naval Training Center club was the top military team in the country) the Lincoln team had to forego the Harlem Globe Trotter techniques and play straight basketball. Unfortunately, the G team won in a hard fought game, and continued to carry the #1 military team ranking.

For the most part, the Lincoln base team continued to display good basketball and entertainment. That is, up until the evening that they did, in fact, play against the then prevailing Original Harlem Globe Trotters, in Lincoln. As I understood it, there were no good feelings between the Original Harlem Globe Trotters and the former Globe Trotters who were presently playing for the Lincoln service team. From the beginning of the game it became apparent that there would be no dipsy-doodle that night. The game evolved into a defensive struggle with hard play on both sides. The contest was close throughout and the end of the game found the Lincoln team on top by three or four points. The Original Harlem Glove Trotters were and are still, after all these years, noted for the fact that they rarely lost. While there was no entertainment side to the game that night, the spectators were thrilled by our team getting a hard fought win.

On the squadron side of the coin, our team played in one of the preliminary game to the base team contest at the University of Nebraska field house, which was filled by, half-time. That was the largest crowd that I ever played before, and I enjoyed it thoroughly. The capacity was 5,200. This was in the days of comparatively small facilities as compared with the large arenas of the present day.

The disappointment of the season came after the regular schedule had been completed. Along with another team member named McKennon, I was picked to play for the all-star team representing our division. This was after I returned from a short furlough in New Jersey. A few days prior to the All-Star game, I came down with a case of measles. Thus I spent the day of the All Star game in bed with a high fever at the base hospital. I think the frustration bothered me more than did the fever. Definitely a bummer!!

Earlier I mentioned that my two-year stay at Lincoln had one interruption. This took place in the winter season of 1944. Orders came through from the higher echelon requesting, or rather

directing, an aircraft machinist, presumably to fill a need overseas. As the service at times was wont to do, the stress was immediate. Now other than myself, there were two machinists in our crew. Normally one or the other, Sgt. Cassidy and Cpl. Clayton, would be selected to comply with the directive. Immediate meant that the candidate would ship out at 17:00 hours. The only problem was that Bill and George were off the base on pass, no doubt having an enjoyable time in Lincoln. M.P.'s were dispatched in an effort to corral one or both and return them to the base. As it developed, they could not be located. Faced with that situation, our people had no alternative but to fill the order by sending me out, despite having previous overseas experience. Once the move became fact, I hastily gathered up my gear, said goodbyes to those friends who were there at the moment, and big the base, adieu. It was on to Kearns, Utah, a staging base for personnel preparing to be shipped overseas.

Kearns Base was situated about 10-15 miles from Salt Lake City. I cannot seem to recall too much about the physical aspects of the base, no doubt typical. As for our daily duties, again I cannot remember what was entailed, other than the calisthenics and rifle practice. However, one activity does stand out in my memory—latrine duty. In this situation, rank had no bearing on who was assigned. Therefore, I spent quite a bit of time renewing the finer points of that noble activity. In fact, it even engendered a certain amount of pride in a job well done.

On the flip side, we did have an abundance of time off—after hours passes along with the weekend passes which were put to good use exploring that interesting part of the country—Salt Lake City and it's environs, notably Ogden and Provo. They were 34 and 43 miles respectively distant from the capital. Surprising is the increase in population of Salt Lake City. Back in 1940, a few years before my arrival, the number stood at 150,000. My trusty New Age Encyclopedia, now approximately "middle age", notes a population of 1,059,000 in year 1970. Incidentally, the aforementioned encyclopedia set was the buy of the century--$15.00 at a yard sale. In it I was able to unearth the reason for the city's rapid growth. Prior to the end of World War II, growth of the city was concentrated within corporate limits. Since the additions of many new industries and expansion of wholesaling and warehousing activities, rapid growth occurred in scattered fashion over much of Salt Lake valley. I can recall seeing, from Kearns, the Wasatch Mountains and another range whose name I had to master—Uintah. This distant mountain in the eastern part of the state is unique since it is the only major U.S. mountain range that runs in an east-west direction.

I was quite impressed with Salt Lake City. The state capitol building stands at the top of a wide avenue (the streets are 132 feet across). From the lofty state grounds could be seen the entire city. Down below, the Mormon Temple is situated and opposite is the Mormon Tabernacle, both impressive edifices. The temple is not open to the public, but that is not the case with the tabernacle, which I visited. It seems that I can recall some unusual features of that building. No nails, nuts or bolts were used in its construction. Instead, the method of fastening was the use of wooden pegs. Also, it was said that the acoustics were of such quality that one could hear a pin dropped in the opposite end of the building. Fact? I cannot confirm this wonder since I had no pins on my person at the time.

Another interesting story that we learned of was what could be called the "Miracle of the Seagulls". Some time in the past there occurred a very heavy infiltration of grasshoppers, which threatened to completely wipe out all crops and vegetation. When all seemed lost, there appeared waves of sea gulls who neutralized the horde of insects and saved the Mormon population. I can recall seeing the monument topped by a seagull in Temple Square to mark the event. Which also evidently led to the seagull being designated as the State Bird. Just a side note: I can remember being on the main thoroughfare and noting that the street was wet, without any sign of rain. I learned that it was the custom to wash the street every day, which left me a bit puzzled since Utah is basically an arid state. I was also surprised at the street crossing signals, which were decades ahead of what we are accustomed to today. I believe the system also involved whistles.

While at Kearns, I became acquainted with a few Mormon families. On one Sunday afternoon, we made a trip to Bingham Canyon and viewed the Utah Copper Mine, which is the world's largest open pit mine. It indeed was a wondrous sight starting with the ground floor level with each successive level set back sufficiently wide to accommodate railroad tracks. There must have been about 25 to 30 levels, ever widening, until the mountain surface was reached.

We also stopped at a factory in the countryside, which turned out to be a beet sugar mill. This was a

revelation to this ex-Hawaiian where the sugar cane fields flourished. Since the factory was not in operation that day, we were allowed to enter and view the sugar processing equipment.

One thing that did not vary from mining communities in other states was the miner housing areas we passed through. The row houses had the same crowded quarters that existed at the time in eastern states mining areas. The daughter of the family I was visiting was surprised at the relatively squalid conditions seen by her for the first time. I assured her that like conditions existed in mining communities in other states. Her father concurred.

As in previous past locations, big band music and dancing were popular forms of entertainment. There was a large ballroom on the main boulevard in Salt Lake City, seemingly packed every night. There was a good U.S.O. facility in town, which afforded varied activities for the servicemen, including dances. Dance hall facilities also were located in surrounding towns such as Ogden to the north and Provo to the south. There seems to be a common thread of dancing activity at all areas that I was assigned to . That being the case, it should follow that the physical condition of much of the population had to be at a fairly good level, at least in the United States.

Other than Salt Lake City, Provo proved to be a good town to visit. What made it more noteworthy was the transportation between the two communities—electric motor cars. On the first trip, I feared for my life. The motorman must have been a lead foot, and there was only one speed--full throttle. The car swayed to and fro to a point that it seemed that the car and trucks would part company. A wild ride certainly, particularly on the return tip at night with the darkness compounding the thrill. Mercifully, it was a comparatively short trip.

In the Salt Lake City area, there are a number of universities, reflecting the Mormon emphasis on education. The first school in Utah was held in a tent soon after the pioneers reached the Great Salt Lake valley in 1847. Salt Lake City has it's University of Utah; Provo has Brigham Young University,; Logan, Utah State University; and Ogden, Weber State. B.Y.U. is a private institution affiliated with the Mormon Church, and Westminster College in Salt Lake City is connected with the Presbyterian Church. Although several of these schools were accessible, I did not have occasion to visit any of them.

One interesting fact about the state of Utah concerns ownership of the land. Since the Mormons were the first settlers (white) it could be assumed that a good part of the state would be owned by the Mormons. However, partly because of the mountainous nature of the eastern portion of the state and the deserts of the western portion of the state and the deserts of the western portion, only a small percentage of its land has been taken by private owners, while the Federal government holds nearly 70%

I can't recall the exact length of my tour at Kearns. Typical of the services, it was a matter of hurry up and wait. In the meantime there was considerable speculation as to where each of us would be shipped. There was a standing joke between another G. I. and myself. We invariably concluded that we would wind up at Baffin Island. Neither of us knew exactly where Baffin Island was located, other than somewhere up north. We did have a suspicion that it was a place where personnel were snowed in year-round. I finally looked it up, and it turned out to be an unlikely prospect since Baffin Island is a Canadian possession. However, the direction was right since the 1,000 miles in length island is located between Greenland and Hudson Bay and straddles the Arctic Circle.

Men were being shipped out regularly, and I was beginning to feel like permanent party. That is until one December morning. As was customary, we fell out about six in the morning. It was cold and a light snow covered the ground. After roll call, a surprising directive was read which stated that all personnel with previous overseas duty would not be shipped out again. I think that the rationale was that the war was winding down to a point where overseas assignments should be filled by personnel without previous overseas experience. So much for Baffin Island!

My return to Lincoln, Nebraska resulted in a comparatively short stay.. As it developed, there was a need for technical people at the Topeka Army Airfield base, a facility a short distance outside of the capitol city of Kansas. The transfer must have been sometime in January 1945 since I remember spending New Years day in Lincoln. Topeka is about sixty miles from Kansas City (Ks. & Mo.) which is a somewhat like circumstance with Lincoln- Omaha. Yet I can't recall any trips to Kansas City during my stay at the Topeka base, no doubt due to a reason which will unfold later.

My duties in Topeka differed from those in Lincoln, that of being training oriented,Instead the work was maintenance centered, similar to my experience in Hawaii at the Hawaiian Air Depot and

regular service shops. At Topeka, I struck up a friendship with Howard Miller, a native of Williamsport, Pa. Howard was already established in the base machine shop and was helpful in acquainting me with the new location and assignment. The transition went smooth, eased by the fact that I had gone through the experience previously.

At times I wonder about developments that occur which contribute to the shaping of ones life. In my case, the geographical moves and events that took place during my years in the service were all preliminary to an arrival at the place where I evidently was meant to be. I say this because my last move from Lincoln to Topeka, a community completely strange to me, was one of great significance, although I was unaware of the fact at the time. All of which will become apparent as developments unfold.

More about Topeka, Kansas which is the capitol of that state and the seat of Shawnee county. It located on the Kansas (Kaw) river. The presence of the Menninger Foundation (operated by the famed Menninger brothers), the State Hospital, and the Veterans Administration hospital made Topeka a renowned center for research and treatment of mental health problems. Also it was referred to as the psychiatric capital of the United States Several Hollywood movie stars were rumored to have sought treatment at Menningers.

The city was founded at the site of the principal village of the Kansas Indian tribe in 1854. Topeka has been an important rail center for the past 130 years, the home of the Atchison, Topeka, and the Santa Fe railroad. The waters of the Kaw river mentioned above have presented periodic flood problems, a fact which would be brought home to me a few years later. In addition, it is the site of Washburn University, a comparatively small institution of learning, well known for its fine law school, a university which would play a part in my near future. Most of the preceding, of course, was not known to me initially. The community in general struck me as being populated by friendly people. I liked the wide streets which were laid out squarely, as contrasted with the older cities in the East. What impressed me also were the number of churches, seemingly one on each corner of the downtown area.

The work duty settled into a routine. When some slack time appeared, it seemed that I would spend time reading educational paperbacks (a cross between the hardbacks and the paperbacks of today). The reading centered in the areas of astronomy and physics. It appeared that the classes in preflight training in the pilot program awakened, to some extent, a desire to learn more about what the world was all about. Another pastime was developing skill in making various articles, akin to “crafts” of the present day. Objects of all sizes made from a variety of materials such as stainless steel, Plexiglas, phenolic, steel, leather, and the like. I made a vicious-looking knife twelve inches in length, complemented by a leather sheath) compliments of the parachute department) and, in contrast, a four inch knife presumably to be used as a letter opener, hearts made out of Plexiglas and dyed to radiate beautiful colors, a jewelry box made out of Plexiglas reflecting modern design, and so forth. At that time vise grip pliers first came out. Using the shop model, I fastened and molded the various parts and presented the finished clone to my electrician brother-in-law Ed Anderson, on my next trip home. It was the first time he had seen vise grips. To me it was an opportunity to present Ed with an example of my machinist ability. A tool maker, no less!

As in previous locations, there was ample opportunity for off-duty recreation for servicemen. The U.S.O. was located at the downtown Y.M.C.A. Dancing was available at Siloen Lake and Meadow Acres. From time to time a dance was held on the base which offered good music and were graced by female volunteers from the U.S.O.

Normally I would take in all of the base dances and almost spoiled that record one Saturday night at which time I was suffering from substantial cold. So I remained in the barracks. That is until the lure of the near-distant strain of music proved to be too much. I freshened up, took a swipe at my shoes, and headed for the dance with the thought of staying for a short while.

Howard Miller was on hand with Dorine Wagley, a girl who he was dating. In addition Dorine’s friend, Ruth, was with them. This young lady I had met previously and contacts with the attractive girl was limited to pleasantries. I couldn’t stay for any length of time, despite the appealing music, but before leaving I felt compelled to ask Ruth for a date. In later years this very same Ruth claimed that I later said I did so because I was weakened from a severe cold. This claim might be questioned, for how could any young man resist the opportunity to ask a lovely young lady for a date? At any rate, that evening turned out to be a turning point in my life.

That initial date turned out to be a movie. Subsequently we double-dated with Howard and Dorine. On the first one, we went out to Lake Shawnee only to find it somewhat crowded. Somebody knew of a nearby farm which had a large pond with rowboat privileges for a modest sum. It turned out to be a fun time with the oddity of airmen turning into sailors. Now this dating was turning into a regular thing, somewhat unfamiliar to this relatively free spirit. Picnics at Lake Shawnee turned out to be enjoyable occasions. On one Sunday we finished picnicking and all felt a desire for watermelon. So it was back into town to a grocery store on Sixth Street, which was fronted by a large tub filled with ice water and watermelons. Then it was back to the lake where we tied into the large delicious melon with no halt in the proceeding until it was "all gone."

Double dates gave way to single dates and off-duty hours found me often heading for town with 1122 Van Buren as my destination. There I became acquainted with Ruth's family: Grandpa and Grandma Malcolm, her mother Gladys Johnson, Ruth's aunt and uncle Lavonne, and Harold Milliken and their children- Barbara, John, and Patty.

I found myself enjoying the family atmosphere and the mid-western hospitality, including an invitation to partake of some homemade ice cream, courtesy of Harold, who provided most of the necessary muscle. This was prior to the electric models of the present day.

All of these people were congenial with the possible exception of Grandpa who appeared a tad brusque at times. However, he became more accessible after I volunteered to mow the grass on the premises Actually, I wasn't being particularly magnanimous although that perhaps might have been the case to some extent. Rather, I wanted the activity, since it would be a new experience for me. I couldn't recall our having a lawn while growing up after our move from 4th Street, when I was a young-un.

On one of our dates, Ruth and I attended a dance sponsored by the Women's Club. This was held in the headquarters building of the Santa Fe R.R. and fittingly, the theme song, very popular at the time was "The Atchison, Topeka, and the Santa Fe." In the interim, the Wagley-Miller dating became more serious and culminated when Howard popped the question and Dorine accepted. Ruth ,of course, was asked to be the maid-of-honor, and I felt privileged when Howard asked me to be the best man. The wedding took place at the Baptist church situated on one of the corners (mentioned previously) bordering the State Capitol grounds. Dorine's family members came in from outside areas of Kansas. The young ladies looked lovely in their white gowns and the groom and best man were attired in the traditional Army Air Corps uniforms.

About that time, George McKinnon, who was transferred to Topeka along with me, and I were looking forward to the upcoming basketball season, which would be our first at T.A.F.B. Spare time during the day would fine us in the gym sharpening our shooting skills. It was not a matter of shots made but rather how few shots were missed. Our modest goal was to make all the shots good. All systems were go for a great season. But as it developed, our high expectations were not to be realized, at least not as far as I was concerned. My last service basketball game had already been played back in Lincoln.

Progress of the war in Europe in early 1945 was such that the Germans were being crunched by the Allies in the west and the Soviets in the east. The allied offense got across the Rhine River in March and fanned out across all of Germany. (During that action, news of the death of President Roosevelt arrived). By the middle of April the Allies were awaiting contact with the Russian troops. Germany was in a state of collapse. Hitler committed suicide in Berlin and the Germans in Italy surrendered the following day. A provisional German government surrendered May 7th (VE Day). When the news reached us at TAFB, I headed for the chapel to offer prayers of thanksgiving for the end of that part of the war.

Despite the emphasis of the war effort being placed in the European theatre, the Allies (mainly the U.S.) with limited means had the Japs back on their heels. At mid-Summer, the Japanese leadership recognized that the end was near. However, in spite of a warning to surrender or be wiped out, the Japanese refused to concede. It thus appeared that there would be great losses of U.S. troops, as well as Japanese, when the sons of Nippon defended their homeland. With our warnings disregarded, the U.S. chose to try and end the war quickly, which was accomplished when a B-29 dropped an atomic bomb on Hiroshima August 6, 1945. With no sign on the part of the Japanese indicating desire to surrender, another B-29 dropped an atomic bomb on Nagasaki. The next day Japan sued for peace and on August 14th, they accepted Allied terms of peace. As indicated earlier,

the Hickam Field flag which was tattered in the sneak attack by the Japanese December 7th, 1941, now flew over the White House the day of surrender. The following day, August 15th, was proclaimed V-J day. World War II was finally over!

Again at the base chapel there were prayers of thanksgiving for the cessation of hostilities and the victory which preserved our freedom. We were given the day off, and I found myself heading for 220 Quincy to visit Ruth and her family. The jubilation of our victory was somewhat tempered by the means by which it was accomplished. I recall my mood tended to be rather somber due to speculation of what effect this incomprehensible (then) weapon of war would mean to the future of our world. At the same time I was grateful that untold American lives (as well as Japanese) had been spared, although at the expense of the enemy casualties at Hiroshima and Nagasaki. A strange situation for mankind.

The decision by President Truman to use the atomic bomb on Hiroshima and Nagasaki to immediately end the war will debated far into history. The grim realities of Hiroshima casualties (92,000) and Nagasaki (70,000) has to be weighed against anticipated Allied losses (as well as Japanese) and the destruction which would be wrought on the Japanese nation in what could be anticipated as a fanatical defense of their homeland by the Nipponese. As it developed, this destruction was circumvented, and, under the protection and assistance by the U.S. Japan rebounded rapidly with its nation intact.

Jumping ahead some fifty years since this is relative to the above treating of the Hiroshima and Nagasaki bombings, I just yesterday evening (6/10/98) came across a newspaper clipping while cleaning out my desk (a necessity since I was having trouble getting the drawers open and shut) which was sent to me by Chuck Brogden, my double partner from Hyatsville, Maryland with whom I won my first gold medal in state Senior Olympics competition. The article was by Louis L. Golstein, Marylands comptroller of the treasury. Goldstein was a 32 year old Marine Lieutenant in the 3rd Marine Division stationed on Guam. He was training for the invasion of the main island of Kyushu when President Truman made the decision which was applauded then, but too often reviled today. His views are pertinent, views that I can understand.

"We celebrated the final victory on Aug. 14, 1945, when the Japanese surrendered little more than a week after the world's first atomic blast leveled Hiroshima.

But today, I wonder if if our victory was ever really complete. If our great fight against world tyranny is distorted-or forgotten-were our sacrifices in vain?

Questions about the bombing of Hiroshima are strictly academic for many young Americans who earlier this year told a pollster they opposed the atomic bombing that ended the war.

But for me, it's strictly personal because President Truman's decision to drop the bomb saved thousands of American lives, probably including my own."

"Today I wonder if our victory was really complete. If our great fight against world tyranny is distorted or forgotten. Were our sacrifices in vain?

To this day, I am firmly convinced that President Truman was right to end the war in Japan. More than 2/3's of 18-29 year olds surveyed by and American Talking/Gallup poll disagree with me, as did one-half of (all) those surveyed. I'm the first to say that they have a right to their opinions, because I fought for that right. But when those opinions are formed without the facts, as the poll suggests, we should all be deeply troubled. Those of us who lived through it know the truth about W.W. II. But 10, 20, 30 years from now, we won't be here to speak out. And I wonder who will if today's young adults have no concept of our role in history and no understanding of the war that not only defined us as a nation, but preserved democracy for the world.

Thomas Jefferson wrote that "If a nation expects to be ignorant and free, it expects what never was and never will be."

Like the Declaration of Independence and the U.S. Constitution with its Bill of Rights, our victory in W.W. II is fundamental to understanding why we are all free people today.

To young people today, I say if we don't speak to you today, how can you speak for us when we are gone?

To educators, I say listen to us so that the mistakes of the past are not repeated.

To all of them, I say agree with us or disagree with us, but at least listen to us before you make up your minds. We earned that right 50 years ago.

And to my fellow W.W. II veterans, the families and anyone who lived through the war, I say

get all the facts on record right now. Write down your memories. Share them with your children, your grandchildren, and your great grandchildren. Volunteer to go to your schools to talk about W.W. II. Above all, fellow veterans, don't be silent. Our victory won't be complete unless we make sure today that it is on record for tomorrow."

One facet of the U.S. involvement in W.W. II, which needs to be mentioned, is the civilian contribution to the war effort. The cooperative endeavor put forth over the war years was very impressive, taking into consideration the diversity of our population- economic and political systems, ethnic backgrounds, and the independent nature of the American people.

As a serviceman, I experienced little in the way of rationing. I do recall that we were required to turn in our used toothpaste tubes (pliable metal at that time) when a new one was purchased. What brought this subject to mind recently was a facsimile rations book received from the War Memorial Commission in thanks for a contribution made toward the W.W. II Memorial to be built and located on the Mall in Washington. The gravity of the conservation effort was outlined in Warning #1- "Punishment ranging as high as 10 years imprisonment or $10,000- or both, may be enforced under U.S. statutes for violation thereof arising out of infractions of Rationing Regulations."

In the book were rationing stamps covering such staples as sugar, coffee, flower, and even shoes, with stamps as spares. There were reminders to save any type of rubber, waste fats, and so forth. Stickers were issued and displayed on windshields for gasoline rationing and even mileage rationing. A "C" sticker was issued for special allowances to such divergent activities as official government and Red Cross workers, school officials, embalmers, essential hospital and utility workers, ministers, rabbis, and priests, and significantly, telegram deliverers.

Women contributed greatly to the backbone of the civilian effort. The ladies left their homes to fill jobs vacated by men leaving for military duty. "Rosie, the Riveter" became a popular figure characterizing the women's contribution in holding down jobs in the war industries.

With the nation engaged in a global conflict, the citizens responded with sacrifices and a country-wide spirit of unity on a scale never before accomplished in our history. It appears doubtful that anything of this nature will be repeated again, in part due to the type of warfare that has evolved since then.

In checking the statistics resulting from W.W. II (the Big One as Archie Bunker was known to say), the figures are astounding. The Soviet Union may have lost 20 million soldiers and civilians, Germany 3 million soldiers and 500,000 civilians, Italy 330 million 80,000 civilians, Poland 600,000 military and 5 million civilians. Only the U.S. with 390,000 military deaths incurred comparatively insignificant civilian losses. Regarding the later comment, this can be attributed to our country being blessed in not having the war come to our shores, the Hawaiian Islands excluded.

The total cost of W.W. II in military and civilian dead may have been higher than 40 million. Millions of others were maimed for life or suffered from disease and malnutrition.

In any case, the halt in hostilities in the Pacific arena bringing W.W. II to a conclusion was truly a blessing. A reflection on the total human toll, shown above, indicates that the world family had suffered enough.

The Army Air Force had instituted a program of early release based on a point system. I was among the first to be eligible for release resulting from the number of years served. A need for a decision to "want out" became imminent. As it was, I had over six years in the service and was ready to return to civilian life. Had I known of the technological advances that would take place in the ensuing years, I might have considered remaining in the Air Force. But the freedom of civilian life beckoned, and I responded, opting to part ways with the military service.

One thing that I was going to miss was not being with Miss Ruth Johnson. In the relatively short period of time spend in Topeka, I had become increasingly aware of the fine qualities the young lady possessed, which I admired.

Once I made known my decision to leave the Army Air Force, things moved in a hurry, reminiscent of my previous departure from Lincoln heading for Kearns. Again, I was given several hours to pack and catch a train to report to Fort Dix, N.J. Somehow I got a call in to Ruth, and she was able to meet me at the train station to see me off. Although there was a mutual attraction, we didn't have enough time together to come up with any serious decisions. There was a firm promise to keep in touch with one another. As the train pulled away and the solitary figure receded, I felt that I

would see Ruth again.

My exit from the service was so rapid that in checking the date of my discharge, I found that the time interval from V J day to discharge date was only fourteen days. Which in a sense, apart from personal relationships, was just as well. There wouldn't be any point in dragging it out.

The processing at Fort Dix, N.J. was efficiently accomplished, and I was soon on my way back to Paterson. My arrival was in the early afternoon. Knowing that my mother wouldn't be at home, I headed directly to her place of employment.

As Grandma Bachi glanced up from operating her silk weaving loom and caught sight of me, the surprise was complete. When I was able to explain to her, over the sound of the clacking loom shuttle along with the noise of the other looms in the factory, that I was home for good, the result was a beautiful smile. Her son had returned after many years away.

So ended my military career and what I call the second phase of my lifetime. The past six years had done much to change me. Primarily, it had the effect of making me a more rounded person. I was subject to, and benefited from, the discipline which is an integral part of military life. The experience assisted in developing some leadership qualities, awakened a dormant desire to acquire knowledge, and provided a background for physical fitness throughout those years. Also opportuned was the chance to travel to new areas, to meet people, and to learn from them.

On the negative side, I learned only two well what can happen in the face of overconfidence and complacency, this relating to the attack on what was considered by the military as "impregnable Pearl Harbor." And witnessing the brutality displayed in inflicting staggering losses in a circumstance of virtually no defense. A happening that could only contribute to a scarring of psyche, although possibly unrealized at the time. It was also a lesson in the resiliency of youth, particularly when reviewed at a much later time.

Thus, after a prolonged "hitch" in the service, I had achieved my primary goal of learning the machinist trade and then some. I was ready to establish stability and get on with my life.

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Part Three

August 1945-April 1985

The following I ran across just prior to our entry into the new millennium-Year 2000. But it was of such interest that I fitted it into this position of my memoirs.

<u>For All Those Born before 1945, We Are Survivors!</u>

Consider the changes we have witnessed before penicillin, before polio shots, frozen foods, Xerox, plastic, contact lenses, Frisbees, and the Pill.

We were before radar, credit cards, split atoms, laser beams, ballpoint pens, pantyhose, dishwashers, clothes dryers, electric blankets, air conditioners, drip-dry clothes and before man walked on the moon.

We were before househusbands, gay rights, computer dating, dual careers, and commuter marriages. We never heard of FM radio, tape decks, electric typewriters, artificial hearts, word processing, yogurt and guys wearing earrings.

For a nickel, you could ride a streetcar, make a phone call, buy a Pepsi, buy enough stamps to mail one letter and two postcards. You could buy a new Chevy Coupe for $600, but could not afford one.

We were the last generation that was so dumb as to think you needed a husband to have a baby.

No wonder we are so confused, and there is such a generation gap.

Author Unknown

Sliding back into civilian life did not take too much effort. It was back to 215 Spring Street, next to the house where I was born. My resources were somewhat limited since military pay did not make for amassing a fortune. But I did have a small amount saved, part of which was used to buy

some civilian clothes, principally a suit (sharkskin).

There was an assistance program in effect for military people making the transition from the service to civilian life. I believe it was called, informally, the 20-30 club or perhaps it was the reverse. This meant that a discharged veteran would receive $20.00 a week for 30 weeks, under the condition of unemployment. And, as I recall, most vets took advantage of the program and just took it easy for the designated time frame. Did Steve Krawczyk take advantage of this perk? Uh-uh! Seems like he was chomping at the bit to be a productive individual. So 20-30 went by the board.

The above program had its purpose, because as the war was gearing down, so was the war-fueled economy. Lay-offs were taking place, returning soldiers were flooding the job market, and I was back to the familiar situation where jobs had become scarce. The employment office (state) did its best to help, with the result was my being sent to companies whose type of work did not resemble ,in any way, the work that I had become capable of. After chasing Paterson and environs, including Newark, I realized the futility of the state employment agency approach and gave it up.

One of the first things that I did after getting home was to resume my membership in the downtown YMCA. I missed the regular exercise regimen of the service and the Y was the closest I could come to that former activity. I would run on the overhead track, exercise lightly, and spend hours shooting baskets. This took place during my idle days and normally the gym was deserted. Since there was not anybody around to retrieve the loose balls, in shooting free throws, I concentrated on not only making all of the shots good, but also swish the shots exactly so that the net would propel the ball back to me at the foul line. The average was rather low, but the successes did help.

The sessions at the Y were instrumental in my finding machinist employment. The Y manager at the gym after observing my basketball workouts called me in. In talking, my unemployment situation came out, and I advised him of my trade skill. His response was that he knew the people at the Watson Machine Company, and that he would inquire as to possible employment possibilities. He also got around to asking me to play for the YMCA team.

It was good to visit all of the relatives and get back into the swing of things. My friendship with Harry and Otto resumed where it left off, but the situation was not the same. Both had married and, that being so, the time spent together now was more limited. Harry married Barbara Totten, a really nice girl. Otto married a girl named Vi, a teacher, who was new to me. Both of the guys were parents by the time of my return.

The gym manager at the Y was true to his word, and at a job interview I was offered employment. The Watson Machine Company, an old firm, dealt in the large work in a vast factory. This was a far cry from what I was trained to do. The machines were large (belt driven) and close tolerances in general, were not required. However, it was work and, in view of the job market, I was glad to get it.

Meanwhile, Ruth and I were corresponding regularly, keeping abreast of each other's activities. As it developed, Ruth had vacation time coming. She worked for the Santa Fe Railroad and also had a railroad pass. Since she had wanted to see the East Coast (Midwesterners routinely headed to Denver or the West Coast), it was agreed that she would come to Paterson for a visit.

The month of October rolled around and Ruth left Topeka, heading for New Jersey. At the time I still had no personal transportation. Ruth was to catch a cab upon her arrival to a bus station, and once she made it to Paterson, she was to call my sister Sophie. Since this was a one-car family, Sophie would instruct Ruth on how to use local bus transportation to get to Rifle Camp Road. Thinking back, that was putting a lot on Ruth. On the day of her arrival, I managed to wangle to day off and also borrow friend Harry's car. With the good intention of surprising Ruth when she arrived at the train station, I made the trip over to New York City but was delayed by traffic. The train had been in for a while with no Ruth in sight. I headed over to the bus station and the result was the same. It was a missed connection.

As Ruth tells it, even today, from time to time, "I asked the cab driver to take me to the bus station. "Lady,: says the cabbie, "do you know how many bus stations there are in New York?" So there I was, a country bumpkin in a big city with people talking in foreign languages (something I had never heard before), and a somewhat curt taxidriver."

She prevailed on him to take her to any bus station with buses going to Paterson, New Jersey. From that point, she followed instructions to a tee, and when I made it back to Paterson, quite

embarrassed, we got together in sister Sophie's kitchen. A greeting kiss and all was well. It was really great to see her again.

We managed to work in a number of activities during the short time of her visit. I can recall going over to the Statue of Liberty, Empire State Building, and an ice show on the stage of the Roxy Theatre. Also, dancing at the nearby Meadowbrook, which featured name bands. We even managed to squeeze in one of my basketball games at the Paterson YMCA.

All too soon, the visit was over and Ruth headed to Topeka, and her job at the Santa Fe Railroad. We both enjoyed the activity and being with each other. The time together did much toward furthering our growing attachment to each other.

Now that I was in the ranks of the employed with a regular paycheck coming in, I redoubled my efforts to buy a car. The auto industry was in the process of retooling from military manufacturing to the making of civilian automobiles once more. However, the time of new models in the showrooms was a while off. The used car market was very tight, brought about by attraction-aged vehicles reaching a point where they no longer were functional. Eventually, I did get a lead, through none other than Charles Venezia, cousin Genevive's husband. To know Charlie is to love him. A consistently good natured, fast talking guy with a sense of humor, Charles had a knack toward dealing. Through Charlie, I followed a lead on an available car owned by a painter who used the vehicle to haul his paint equipment and accessories. It was a Hudson Terraplane of dubious vintage. Although the Hudson "as was" did not look like much, it did run quite well, so I swung a deal for $300.00. (It was a seller's market). After a lapse of six plus years, I had my second set of wheels!

As was the case with my Model A, I immediately went to work to try to make the car more presentable. It was a matter of cleaning the interior, tearing out and replacing the floor matting, and removing the last vestiges of paint hauling. As to the exterior, I prevailed upon Cousin Tony Kozloski to borrow spray equipment to put a new face on the Terraplane. Tony (who in the service was in the Quartermaster Corps) was in the motor pool and had considerable experience around cars and all types of military vehicles.

The color, in keeping with the times, bas black. At that time I was not knowledgeable on types of paint. Upon the firm recommendation of the paint store clerk, I bought automotive enamel, instead of lacquer. Although the Hudson looked so much better, I should have gone with the automotive lacquer, which would have presented a glossier finish.

The Hudsons were unique since they sported an electric transmission system. Ahead of its time, the car had a miniature shift off the steering post, which one could operate with two fingers. It was possible to shift electronically, but not become operational until the clutch was depressed and released. Evidentially, this model was the first with the noted apparatus, and as a precaution, a regular floor manual stick was strapped to the interior on the passenger's side in the case of malfunction.

After Ruth's departure, things returned to normal. I continued to work at the Watson Machine Company (things got more interesting when they brought in a semi-automatic lathe which was assigned to me since there were no others familiar with that piece of equipment). I continued to play basketball, and spent my first Christmas at home as a civilian. My cousin Alfred, (who adopted the name Steve), or Marine, also was back in Paterson for the holidays with his wife Barbara, a Californian, who worked in Washington during the war. Upon his release from the Marines, Alfred and Barbara were married and headed for California (Garden City) where they settled.

Things were pretty much normal other than my cousin Helen's (Klozlowski) marriage to Clyde Ison, a serviceman from the South. At the festivities, I danced with my mother, probably the first time since I was a little one.

Ruth and I continued to keep in touch by writing. One evening, I was surprised to receive a telephone call just as mom and I were sitting down to dinner. The caller turned out to be Colonel John P. Johnson, Ruth's father who was in New York City on business. The Colonel invited me to have dinner with him there in New York City, which posed a dilemma. However, I explained the situation to the Colonel, and it was agreed that I would get over to New York right after eating to join him in refreshment. We met at the hotel where he was staying and spent the rest of the evening getting acquainted. The colonel, as he was generally addressed although no longer in the service, was the General Manager of the Alaska Railroad. He filled me in on his activity, the railroad, and Alaska in general. It was a pleasant evening, and I was happy for the opportunity to meet and become

acquainted with Ruth's dad.

With the letters (frequent) shuttling back and forth, it developed that Ruth would have additional vacation time available, which resulted in a planned return trip to New Jersey. This arrival went more smoothly, and it was great to see that gal again. We made a return visit to the Meadowbrook, and, among other activities, took in a stage play in New York City at the time "Oklahoma" was in the process of establishing a record run on Broadway. I made a special trip to the city to reserve tickets and was pleasantly surprised to find two seats available while Ruth was visiting.

When we arrived at the box office, the reason for the easy availability of the tickets became apparent. In a mix-up in communication, there seemed to be a thirty-day difference. Instead of being for the night we were there, the tickets were for a month later. That was a dilemma. After explaining that Ruth was in from Kansas to see the performance, the manager came up with a novel solution. He naturally could not give us seats. However, since the layout of the rows were in the form of an arc, there was empty spaces toward the end of the rows in the back of the theatre. And in those spaces were low, elevated platforms about regular seat high. And it was from that vantage point that we saw the performance "Oklahoma". We were seated after the lights were turned down, and we headed for the lobby just before the lights were turned up at the intermission and at the end of the play. To all interests and purposes, we were a pair of "regulars" and theatergoers. One thing for sure, it was a unique experience, on that we recall from time to time with amusement.

The latter part of this vignette was significant because of a development that would affect the remainder of my lifetime. During the time of my service, any consideration of entering into the "state of matrimony" would have to be set aside principally due to the fact that there was a world wide war (World War II) going on, and I had no way of knowing what the immediate future would bring for me at any given time. One thing that I was certain of was that once I committed myself to marriage, it would have to be for a lifetime. What with much moving around, that consideration was quite difficult, so the war ending found me back home in New Jersey very much in the single state.

However…. there was a consideration that entered into the picture. Which had to do with a certain young lady from halfway across the country, namely Ruth Irene Johnson of Topeka, Kansas. In the short time that we were with each other, I was able to feel that here was a beautiful girl in all aspects, one that I not only felt comfortable with at all times, but seemed to be a girl with whom I could share the rest of my life. Just when I came to that conclusion I cannot pinpoint, but many, many years later sister Sophie told that I had confided to her that that was the case.

Now that the certainty was there on my part, it definitely was a matter of finding out whether the extent of feeling was mutual. And it became a matter of what procedure to use. As I recall, the day before Ruth was to leave, we were seated on the sofa talking when I mentioned that I had something serious to ask her. That was a start. The "romantic" way a proposal seemed to be made in those days was for the man to kneel on one knee, take the lady's hand, and propose. I guess I was not "romantic" enough to completely follow script, so I half knelt and half sat when I asked the young lady whether she would marry me. And the answer was…yes! It was a momentous moment. There was much to talk about.

It was agreed that the wedding would take place in Topeka, and the date was set at June 1, 1946. After Ruth left, things returned again to normal. I continued to work at Watson's and played out the season with the YMCA team, which, in effect, was the end of my competitive days as a basketballer. Letters continued to shuttle back and forth. Ruth was taking instructions from Monsignor Vallelly, along with a number of other young ladies, in preparation of entering the Catholic Church. I was very happy when Ruth made this development known to me.

As the month of June neared, Ruth was busy making preparations for our upcoming marriage. In New Jersey, I was getting ready for the trip to Topeka. Sister Sophie, her little boys Eddie and Stevie, and mother were going to accompany me to attend the wedding. Of concern to me was the condition of the old Hudson Terraplane. I made our plans known to my auto mechanic at the foot of Rifle Camp Road. He expressed confidence that the car would make the journey I good shape so I went along with his "expert" judgment.

Departure day arrived, and our party of five took off in fine style. Our first night's stop was at one of the exits on the Pennsylvania Turnpike, which at the time was the latest in the highway development. Noon on the following day saw us pulling into downtown Springfield, Ohio. As we

neared an eating place, our mode of transportation took a heavy hit. The engine unexpectedly started to make a loud racket. However, the engine continued to run, so I quickly maneuvered the Terraplane to a nearby garage. The problem was diagnosed as a malfunctioning timing gear, which needed replacement. Today that would present little difficulty in repair, but in those days of post World War II, parts were very scarce. It would require approximately a week to secure the needed part. So regretfully we parted company with our ailing and valiant vehicle and boarded a bus bound for Topeka. Having alerted Ruth by phone as to our transportation predicament and change in manner of transportation, she was at hand to greet us when we pulled into the Topeka bus station.

The short interval between our arrival and the wedding was hectic. Ruth had found a place for us to live. It was a basement apartment with a furnace as a center piece (housing was practically nil at the time), in the home of a co-worker. Which is where I stayed, along with Charlie Ellenbecker, my service buddy who lived in Maryville, Kansas and who was my best man. Ruth's Aunt Lavonne and Uncle Harold, who resided in North Topeka, welcomed Sophie, the two boys and Grandma.

The rehearsal took place at Assumption Church, the evening prior to our wedding. This was followed by a get together of the wedding principals.

Our wedding took place at Assumption Church in the seven-thirty Mass on June 1, 1945, with Monsignor Vallelly officiating. As I recall, I had a bit of trouble shaving that morning, but managed to escape without major damage. At the church, Ruth was a vision of loveliness attired in her white wedding gown, custom made by a French lady. It is my understanding that the satin material for the gown was the last available in town.

Charlie, Ruth's sister Irma, Ruth and I were seated in the ample altar area. The wedding vows were exchanged, and at the conclusion of the Mass, Ruth and I walked back down the aisle, man and wife---a wondrous moment!

From the church, we went over to the photo studio for the traditional pictures and then on to the Jayhawk Hotel to attend the wedding breakfast for the family members. It was a nice gathering, quite uneventful except for the howl put up by little Stevie when a waiter attempted to place a bib around his neck. That situation was not appreciated by the little guy, but none-the-less was a source of amusement for the attendees.

There was a reception in the afternoon at Ruth's home at 1122 Van Buren, attended by our families and Ruth's friends who dropped by. It might be mentioned in passing that Kansas, at the time, was a "dry" state and only 2.4% beer was available locally in the way of alcoholic refreshment. However, Sister Irma had the foresight to have some friends transport spirits of the hard variety from Kansas City, Missouri, across the state line, which rounded out the refreshment selection.

Our honeymoon plans (revised) were somewhat different from the customary variety. Since our Hudson Terraplane was stranded in Springfield, Ohio, that city became our focus. The late afternoon of the wedding found us boarding the Santa Fe train with planned stops in Kansa City and Chicago. We attended a stage play in the Windy City (with connected seats). Also it seems that that night there was a big hotel fire in the near area, which compelled us to contact relatives to assure them that we were not involved.

The following day it was off to Springfield. As I recall we did not make hotel reservations, which normally would not be necessary, and upon our arrival it became apparent that some sort of activity was taking place, which caused a shortage of hotel rooms. However, a hotel clerk located a place for us in a nearby small hotel. The quarters were clean and ample, but one feature of the décor caused a situation which Ruth and I recall every so often with good humor. The center of the large room was decorated with a bearskin rug, head included, which was somewhat on the shabby side (and that's being kind). This feature did not exactly find favor with my new bride. As the evening wore on, so did the lack of appreciation on Ruth's part. Finally the good girl picked up the offending bearskin and unceremoniously tossed it into the closet with my approval, I might add. Which is where it stayed at least until check out time.

The following day, we picked up our revitalized vehicle and then it was "westward ho". Well, we made it clear into Indiana (the neighboring state) where calamity struck again. We were stranded on the hot Indiana plains, and in those days even on Route 40 the traffic was not bumper-to-bumper While Ruth took refuge from the sun under a group of trees, I struck out for assistance. A sympathetic area person picked me up and deposited me at a nearby roadside garage, which were common at the time. The owner (and mechanic) agreed to take a look at our ailing vehicle, and he soon

diagnosed the problem as a faulty coil. He had a used one back at the garage, which he felt would work. After a round trip, the mechanic installed the coil and we were back in business once more. For all the above service, the mechanic charged us a total of two or three dollars and soon departed.

After a short time, the gratitude we felt, buttressed by a sense of fairness, set in after which we set out to overtake the mechanic, who had his family along with him, and upon doing so we tacked on an additional sum, which was highly justified, along with our thanks. And the reaction to it all by our Samaritan, characteristically, was one of surprise. The remainder of the trip to Topeka was completed without further incident. Our unique honeymoon came to a conclusion.

Once back in Topeka, we became ensconced in our basement apartment. Ruth returned to her job at the Santa Fe Railroad, and I started our married life unemployed. Together, we undertook the initial daunting task of getting our married life underway, being completely on our own. It would be interesting having a tape of our first visit to the supermarket, puzzling over what foods to buy-quantities, qualities and so forth. Those days were far in advance of fast food establishments such as McDonalds, Burger King, Wendys and the ilk. So the adjustment to married life became an ongoing experience that we both worked at, which was a forerunner of what several people recognized and commented on over a period of time as a “balanced” couple.

The Topeka Air Force Base was still actively functioning them in June of 1946 and was staffed by management who were familiar with my work. I was able to obtain employment at the base, although not in my former capacity since there were no openings in the machine shop. Thus, I was taken on by the sheet metal department, an ancillary activity.

At this point, Ruth and I resumed an “active” friendship with Howard and Dorine Miller. Howard opted to remain in Topeka after his discharge instead of returning to his native Williamsport, Pennsylvania hometown. Howard, in the interim, had the foresight to take advantage of the GI Bill of Rights program made available to former service persons by which the government paid the expense for tuition, books, and a modest subsistence allowance, which varied according to single or married status. (This legislation would prove to be the most successful social program in the history of the United States). Howard chose to major in education, attended Washburn, University of Topeka and later the University of Kansas.

At the time our marriage, Howard had encouraged me to take advantage of the GI program, did my old friend Louis La Vecchia. Lou had married a southern girl while serving in the military in that part of the country and entered Peabody College in Nashville, Tennessee, after his discharge. He later went on to attend law school at Vanderbilt University, also in Nashvillle.

Ruth and I were undecided as to what direction to go in and finally opted for perhaps the most unlikely of all-the Territory of Alaska. As it stood, Ruth had a steady job at the Santa Fe. My situation was tenuous, since invariably there would be cutbacks in jobs due to the cut backs of the military effort. We had been in touch with Ruth’s father, who exuded enthusiasm about Alaska and it’s possibilities. He encouraged us to go up to that northern Territory and gave us the assurance of employment. Evidentially, I had not lost all of my wanderlust and Ruth, on the other hand, having lived in one state all her life, apparently was not averse to spreading her wings. The upshot was that we decided to start our married life way up North in Alaska.

At that time the rolling stock of the Alaska Railroad was a mixture of steam -driven engines and some more modern diesel engines, primarily smaller yard switchers and larger switchers, the designation to which escapes me at the moment. The ARR lagged in the stateside sleek shrouded engines used for passenger traffic in the “lower.48.” Since funds apparently were not available for the latter type of locomotives, the ARR undertook to take a large switcher used for long distance hauling and convert it to a more modern appearing engine by complete overhaul and shrouding of that type of diesel. The conversion work was undertaken by the International Railway Car Company, which refitted rolling stock. This company was located in a small town called Kenton in Ohio.

Thus since we committed to seek our fortune in the vast and wild territory called Alaska, I headed for Kenton to join in the conversion effort. Ruth finished up her separation from the Santa Fe and joined me later. The purpose of my going to Kenton was to become acquainted with the monstrous power machine called diesel locomotives. We converted the switches, plus used a passenger car, which in turn was connected into a club car, all of which took a year or so.

During that year, we became acquainted with some of the local people as well as the few ARR employees who came to Kenton to participate in the conversion program, primarily Oakley

Brown, a Montanan, who had spent a number of years in Alaska and held the position of foreman. Oakley was helpful in getting me over several bumps in adjusting to my new activity. It might be noted here that in taking this job it was agreed that our relationship with General Manager Colonel J.P. Johnson would not be disclosed to circumvent any possible display of partiality.

The year in Kenton, Ohio (not to be confused with Carton, Ohio), passed swiftly. Ruth and I made numerous trips-several to visit the family of my buddy Red Messam in Barberton, Ohio, and a couple to Columbus, Ohio, state capitol, including an Ohio State University football game. We learned to contend with sparse living accommodations. In the first location, an old house we shared the bathroom with the owner's family and had to put up with notes left on the stool initiated by the young daughter. It appeared that the girl did not have a full deck. The note content had to do with the procedure of leaving the stool seat up or down, plus comments. Additionally, we had to contend with a cantankerous billy goat that would just as soon try to butt you as look at you.

We graduated to a two-room place in a duplex affair in which we also shared the bathroom. When we entered the bathroom, we would fasten the latch on the door leading into the other side. Upon leaving it was a matter of unfastening the latch, thus making the facility available. The system to the other renters was not foolproof since there were moments of mental lapses resulting in a problem, the severity of which depended upon urgency.

Over the year of the switcher renovation, I did learn quite a bit about the makeup of the huge diesel engine. Even at that the training (hands on) was only a partial education since the engine was immobile and lacked the running conditions needed for an all-around training. So, in effect, I was going to Alaska a diesel mechanic, but only partially qualified. When the project was completed, the renovated streamliner engine, duly christened the "Aurora" taken from the aurora borealis, the northern lights phenomenon frequently seen during the winter nights in Alaska. In the interim, Ruth and I made visits to see our families before departing for the Great North.

THE TRIP NORTH

After a short stopover in Seattle, we boarded a commercial airliner and flew into Anchorage, and, as it developed, over time, into a seemingly new world. Housing in Alaska in the late forties was very scarce, running the gamut from some nice houses to railroad boxcars adapted as a shelter. Some structures had to be seen to be believed. In our case, we were put up in the ARR hotel initially, which was part of the railroad headquarters. We remained there pending an opening in the Quonset hut housing on Government Hill, which overlooked the railroad depot.

As the larger of the two main cities in Alaska, Anchorage was, and is, the major transportation and business center of the territory. The International Airport serves as the jet terminal for direct flights to the Orient, Seattle, and transpolar flights to major cities in Europe. The construction of the Alaska Railroad in 1915 opened Anchorage for settlement. Growth was unspectacular until World War II, when the importance of Alaska as a defense outpost led to the extensive military construction, and the population mushroomed. To illustrate this vast development, I found that the population at the time of incorporation (1920) the population was only 48,041, whereas in 1985 the number of residents stood at 173,000. The time frame was such that we arrived in the territory at the time that the population of Anchorage was starting to mushroom.

As it developed, we were not destined to be Anchoragites for very long since we received word that we were being transferred into the interior of the territory-Fairbanks. So shortly after our arrival in Alaska, we found ourselves just about smack in the middle of that vast territory. We must have taken the evening train to Fairbanks. I say this because I recall traveling through the night in what amounted to utter darkness. Hour after hour with perhaps one or two solitary lights in the blackness of night, which evoked a feeling of loneliness.

Soon after our arrival, it became evident that Fairbanks varied in many ways from Anchorage-size, population, economy, temperature and length of seasons-among others. According to my trusty New Age Encyclopedia (circa 1960), "Fairbanks, (as previously noted), is the second largest city of Alaska located near the geographical center of the (then) territory, 175 miles south of the Arctic Circle. The city is located on the banks of the Chena River (which we then knew as the Chena Slue) near its junction with the Tanana River. Fairbanks serves as an agricultural market for products from the Tanana Valley. It also is a mining center for gold and other minerals, the northern terminus of not only the ARR but the Alaskan Highway as well. Commercial activity at the Fairbanks International Airport is second in Alaska only to Anchorage. Two large US Air Force bases, Ladd

Field and Eilson Field, are located southeast of the city. (Also quite unique is the farthest north golf and country club in the world, which, while we were there, was quite modest). The winter cold amounts to a 11.6 below Fahrenheit in January and has been known to hit 66 degrees below. Summers are hot (very brief) with a July average of 60 degrees Fahrenheit and a maximum record of 99 degrees. Long hours of sunlight make grain ripen in spite of the short growing season. The University of Alaska (then a few barren buildings), is located at College, three miles north of the city. The city was settled as a result of a gold strike in 1920. The residents named the city in honor of Charles Warren Fairbanks, who became Vice President of the United States in 1905.

We were introduced to the seasonal weather shortly after our arrival. The first snow usually appears in early September and the ground is generally covered until March or April. We were assigned housing, which was a Quonset hut located across the road from the engine house and adjacent to the Chena Slue. A nice feature was the heating. It was effected through underground lines, which produced steam heat generated by the boilers in the engine house.

We occupied one half of the lengthy Quonset. Each entrance had a small entranceway so it eliminated stepping directly outside. This area had the effect of serving as a refrigerator area since we initially had no refrigeration. Even with this buffer, at times of extremely lower temperatures, the intruding cold air meeting the inside warm air would result in a thin layer of ice under the inside door area.. This being so, it would be a matter of chipping away the thin layer of ice and freeing the door when an exit became necessary. All in all, the Quonset was quite comfortable. For the first time in our married life, we were able to spread out with a kitchen area, bedroom, bathroom, and “front” room. What we missed mostly was a window since the Quonsets did not afford that luxury. However, in the long dark winter season, this was not too much of a problem.

The above statement brings to mind one of the adjustments which must be made by newcomers from the lower “48”. Due to the extreme northerly latitude of Fairbanks, the mechanics of seasons vary considerable from the conventional seasons of the States. In the winter, there is almost 24 hours of darkness. In the morning, the sun would rise about 30 degrees at which time, around 10 a.m. it would start to descend. Makes for a short day! Conversely, during the summer, due to the northerly latitude, there would be almost 24 hours of daylight. As I recall, between eleven and twelve midnight, there was what we here consider dusk, after which the sun would shine starting a new day! Hence the name “the Land of the Midnight Sun”. This unusual condition I was able to capture on film.

Upon our arrival in Fairbanks, we were unable to move into the Quonset, for lack of furniture among other things. Ruth’s father was able to arrange our staying in the unoccupied (at the time) apartment of “Cap” Lathrop, a storied individual in northern Alaska, and a millionaire among other things. Shortly after our arrival, I received a call from the night crew at the yards. The diesel motorcar, used in light passenger runs between Anchorage and Fairbanks, evidentially was balky and refused to start. As far as the night crew (mostly steam engine workers) were concerned, I was a “diesel mechanic” and the one to turn to in order to resolve the problem. As would be the case from time to time in my lifetime, I was faced with a situation that I was not qualified to handle. There was no way that I could admit my deficiency in the matter, so I donned my clothes and headed for engine house trying to figure out a solution. Someone must have been looking out for me because upon my arrival, I saw that the balky engine now was running smoothly. The motorcar (a passenger car equipped and powered by a Cummings diesel engine) was then able to make its scheduled run. After talking with the guys for a short time, I headed “home”, resolving mentally to make a quick study on that piece of equipment.

Meanwhile, Ruth was able to get a job in the Bank of Fairbanks at 2nd Street and Lacy. There was an opening in the bookkeeping department. As Phil Johnson, bank manager put it, “the job is yours if you can cut the mustard”.

While we were still in the apartment, I experienced the first earthquake of considerable magnitude. I was taking a shower when suddenly the wall started to move back and forth, and I could hear the sound of falling glassware in outer rooms. What timing! I lost little time in getting out of the shower, dressed and out of the building. Ruth and her fellow workers, who were in the basement of the bank at the time, ran out into the street, which was not the best thing to do, in such a situation with overhead wires. Fortunately, the tremors were of short duration so the event left us with little more than a scare and one more experience in one of Mother Nature’s phenomena. As it developed, we were to have an encore later that month. At that time that the Aurora, having been transported north

by steamship, was introduced to the public by means of a short run.. On that short trip, I was able to observe for the first time the operation of the diesel engine in the engine compartment. . When we returned, I was surprised to learn from Ruth that another earthquake had taken place. While experiencing the engine vibration, I wasn't able to feel any earthquake tremors.

And so went our early days as Alaskans. As it developed, we were to spend over a year in Fairbanks, and an interesting year it was. When Thanksgiving Day arrived, we walked the mile or so to church in Fairbanks. The church, and adjacent hospital, was located on our side of the Chena. It was snowing lightly as we arrived at the church. The weather quickly developed into a storm by the time the Mass was completed, complicated by swirling winds. About halfway home, I told Ruth to get behind me and hang on. In this way, we mushed through the driving snow back to our Quonset, with its welcoming warmth and shelter.

One lesson learned early on about Alaskans was that the population didn't stand on ceremony when it came to outerwear. There was no one way to dress. Any type of garb was acceptable, with the governing factor being warmth. We had been alerted by Oakley Brown about the type of clothing necessary to cope with the elements. Prior to leaving Kenton for Alaska, we visited Army and Navy outlets, getting outfitted for what lay ahead.

On a day-to-day basis, I had it easier than Ruth since for me it was a matter of going a short way across to the engine house. With Ruth, it was about a one-mile walk ,so her garb was a parka, mukluks (a soft shoe lined with fur and laced up to the knee) with a scarf wrapped around her face to ward off the biting cold. When she thus arrived at the bank one day with eyelids and eyebrows white from warm breath meeting bitter cold, her fellow employees wouldn't let her in claiming that they didn't admit strangers!

Before the cold weather set in, we acquired a puppy and thus became a group. A locomotive engineer, a couple of Quonsets down from us, had a golden Labrador who had a litter of puppies. I do not believe the dog who sired the newcomers was a member of the social register, which was borne out as the puppies matured. For some reason or other, I impulsively picked one out of the litter and put him inside my parka. While entering our Quonset, it dawned on me that this was a unilateral action, inasmuch as my good wife had not been consulted about the matter. Fortunately, Ruth took it all with apparent good grace, which, however, was somewhat strained when at bedtime our new addition made it known that he was unhappy with being separated from his family. After a lengthy period of time, there was no sleep being accomplished by any of us. Ruth solved the problem by wrapping a ticking clock in a cloth and placing it alongside the puppy. Blessed sleep. Welcome Poochie!

As far as work activity was concerned, what we did was primarily maintenance work (diesel engines). I was not active in work connected with the steam engines, which in what was a period of transition, were used in hauling freight. However, we all worked in the same engine house, so I became acquainted with the personnel and the power used in that side of railroading. These steam people were experienced workers, and it became apparent to them that I was new to railroading. That being so, they evidently decided to put me to the test!

I will try to make this episode as simple as possible, yet deal with its full impact. On one shift, I was observing the procedure by which a brass bushing (about nine inches in diameter), was secured in a locomotive drive shaft.. If you have observed the operation of a steam locomotive engine, you may have noted how the drive shaft, on each side of the locomotive, has a reciprocal action, powered by steam. The drive wheel, which have a circular boss located on a circumference point, which received the power thrust from the drive shaft, joined with an opening in the end of the drive shaft. Since steel against steel would result in a breakdown due to friction, a brass bushing is positioned between the two. In those days, we did not have equipment such as a giant press, so the brass bushing ,slightly tapered, had to be driven into the drive shaft opening by hand power. The above operation was accomplished manually by repeated blows of a large maul, or sledgehammer, wielded by a steam-engine mechanic. The other part of the action was another employee who held, by hand, a steel rod which was moved around the circumference of the flange of the brass bushing, about six impact points. This means that the wielder would wind up and swing the maul -head down bringing it down precisely on the head of the placement steel rod, (approximately an inch and a half in diameter). If the descending maul was brought down off center, the holder could conceivably wind up with a mangled hand. Now it must be said that the maul wielders were highly experienced at what

they were doing. The “gandy dancers” (tracklayers) had that storied capacity.

Up until this time, I was merely an interested spectator. Then, the maul wielder, with a half-grin, asked if I would relieve the holder. So there it was-fish or cut bait! I knew that if I declined, or even used a substitute apparatus (which was a long wooden handle with the steel rod attached), I would never be accepted as one of them. So without even a second thought, I took the steel road and positioned it at the first placement point. I do not recall wincing when the first maul swing came hurling down. With several further positionings of the rod, accompanied by accurate swings, the busihng was finally driven down to the flange shoulder, thus completing the drive shaft operation. And, in this manner, I became a “brother”. At my present age, when thinking back to that particular incident, I shake my head. There was nothing automatic about the procedure, which left no room for human error, requiring full confidence by both participants. Railroading!

The winter weather in Fairbanks brought some extremely cold temperatures, as low as forty degrees below zero or more. At times, I worked the graveyard shift. Among our duties was the going out into the yard to start the engines of the yard switchers scheduled for duty that morning. After many hours remaining idle in the frigid weather, the engines at times proved to be balky. But after much prompting, patience prevailed.

One early morning, I went out into the yard to pick up a flanger plate, which is a steel plate about 8 x 4 inches in size and approximately ¾ inches thick. The flangers were used to clean new fallen snow form the rails and are positioned (when down) just in front of the lead wheel of the locomotive. It just happened that I placed the flat of my hand (covered with my damp glove) on the top flanger (stacked). My glove instantly froze to the frigid. Steel. When I tried to pull my gloved hand from the flanger, it came up along with the glove despite the considerable weight.

Also, on a sojourn into the yard, I was treated to my first sight of the Northern Lights (aurora borealis). The steamers (in this case the color of gray rather than multicolored) danced across the sky in varying patterns. An eerie and awesome sight.

While on the subject of the effects of the severe cold weather, I will have to pass along an incident, which was related to me and was purported to be true. It had to do with two facts: construction workers liked to party and water was a precious commodity, since its supply was not in overabundance. Late one night in town in the near vicinity of a “nightclub”, a fire hydrant burst, sending a geyser of water into the air. The patrons of the club poured out of the building, including one who was three sheets to the wind. This individual, upon seeing the calamity, shouted, “no, we can not waste the water”, whereupon he ran up to the hydrant and wrapped his arms around it. It was not long before the conservative was not only drenched, but soon was subject to icing. His friends had to physically chip him away from the hydrant, carry him back to the club, whereupon the deicing began. So there it is, fact or fiction? Could be! I do know that we had been cautioned that it would be unwise to exert oneself unduly (such as running) since the bitter cold could cause frozen spots on the lungs.

I cannot recall whether I have touched on personal photography before. My picture taking days really got started on Christmas day a few years after graduating high school. Sister Sophie gave me what then was called a candid camera (which took little pictures) as a present. I can recall getting into my 1930 Ford and visiting relatives and friends, taking snapshots at each location. Prior to that, it was Sophie’s Eastman Kodak box camera, which served the family. Some of those snapshots are still around the house. From the candid camera, I graduated to a Kodak Bimat, a flat folding camera, which when opened, extended about four or five inches with flexible bellows. This camera was my mainstay during the years spent in Hawaii. And the intervening time until just prior to leaving for Alaska, when I bought an Argus C2, a 35-millimeter single lens reflex camera. This camera had no flash, which is something I did without until we settled in Alaska. Through a mail order catalogue, I ordered a universal flash, which fastened to the bottom of the camera and extended out to the side. It was necessary for the purchaser to adjust the synchronization, which I did by opening the back of the camera and adjusting until the light could be seen in the split second the lens was opened. The flash at the time was provided by flash bulbs. The Argus C2 served faithfully throughout our Alaskan tenure and was sold to a fellow worker when we left to return to the “lower 48”.

In comparison to today’s sophisticated automatic cameras, which ensure virtually error free pictures, the preceding cameras were basic. For instance, the viewer on the Argus C2 was a miniscule circle with a diameter of a little more than a quarter of an inch. Speed, distance, and lighting had to be

computed by the operator. When I look back at what I had to work with at the time, I am surprised that the slides taken over the years turned out as well as they did. It was a matter of make do with that, which was prevalent at the time.

During a comparative warm spell (close to zero), a fellow worker talked me into a hunting trip. Equipped with my 22-caliber rifle and a hunting knife. I set out with my companion by hitching a ride on an outgoing freight train, which dropped us off at what was deemed to be a likely area for hunting. So we spent the better part of a day traipsing through the countryside with no target available. And so ended my first, and last, hunting endeavor. We made our way back to the tracks and were picked up by an incoming train. The railroad customarily accommodated hunters, along with their game. All that was necessary was for the hunter to flag down the train.

The most memorable part of that day was being able to ride in a caboose, something I always wanted to do. Sad to say, all my preconceived notions were dashed when I found the caboose ride to be jolting and generally most uncomfortable.

During the cold winter months, there was a tendency for people to stay at home primarily due to the frigid temperatures and the dark days and nights. However, there was always the anticipation of the breakout of winter doldrums by a celebration at the end of winter. In Anchorage, it was called the Ice Carnival, and, in Fairbanks, the Flair Rendezvous. By rendezvous time, the days had lengthened and just about everybody took part in the celebration, including the Eskimos. Some of the events of the Flair Rendezvous were a parade with a military band, floats, and a Rendezvous with a military band, floats, and a Rendezvous Queen, who was duly drowned. Other features were hockey games, dog sled races (with par mutual betting, yet), and the blanket toss. This latter activity involved a strong oversized blanket manned by burly tossers, and a slightly built Eskimo girl who displayed breath in-air movement to ensure that she would land in the proper position for the next throw. Heights of up to twenty feet were achieved.

Some minor events were held at the countr6y club site. One such activity was a sleigh ride powered by reindeer. These animals, with their huge paws and tongues hanging out (for breathing purposes, I was informed) proved to be tireless workers. (I can see why Kris Kringle chose them for his transportation purposes). I was seated with my back against the back of the narrow sled, Ruth who was pregnant at the time, was in front of me, and the ride turned about to be somewhat bumpy. But it was from this position that I could only get “an action shot”, that of the backsides of the magnificent reindeer. Here again, preconceived notions of the reindeer were dashed. Instead of the graceful creatures portrayed by artists, the genuine reindeer proved to be quite ungainly.

With the near approach of spring, other activity came to the forefront. This involved the breakup of the ice on the Chena in Fairbanks and the Tacoma River in Anchorage and was called the “Ice Pool”. A good-sized tripod was mounted on the ice in the middle of the river and a wire ran from the tripod to a building in town and fastened to a clock. When the temperatures rose and the resulting thaw took place, the melting ice started to move downstream. When the tripod had moved about a distance of forty feet, the flack in the wire tightened to a point where the clock in the designated building tripped. This became the official time, which would determine the winner of the ice pool. Tickets were priced at one dollar, and it was necessary for the ticket holders to register his or her estimate of the day, hour, minute and second that the breakup occurred. At that time, the pot usually amounted to over $100,000, a considerable sum back in the late “40’s”. If none came up with the precise time, the closest estimate to the actual time became the winner. And I do not recall there being any ties.

As it developed, Ruth and I spent a full year in Fairbanks. One event that clearly stands out in my mind was the “flood”. When the thaw occurred that spring, it developed so rapidly that the runoff exceeded the banks of the Chena and resulted in flooding conditions. As previously indicated, our Quonset was situated on the banks of the Chena. As the water slightly rose, the water widened to the lower areas. Fortunately, we were on a fairly high level. As the water approached our doorstep, I tried to shore up our immediate vicinity. However, that was a s high as the water got, and we br3eathed a sigh of relief. The engine house was completely surrounded.

The town of Fairbanks was not as lucky. The entire town bordering the Chena was inundated. The runoff was fairly rapid and the townspeople and businesses set about clearing up the mess.

And there was my “garden”, I believe, in the spring of 1948 in Fairbanks. It was my understanding that the soil in Alaska is in a permafrost condition-that if you dig down more than a foot r so, you hit frozen soil. At springtime, I decided to put in a garden. As I recall it was lettuce, carrots, beans, etc. At

the earliest possible time I loosened some soil alongside other Quonset and put in the chosen seeds. The result was that I did get the vegetables to start growing. The water available for providing moisture for the plants was so cold that to apply the water directly to the fledgling plants probably would have done them in. So it hit upon the idea of spraying the water up to the top of the curved Quonset and let it run back down over the sun-heated metal, thus taking a good bit of the chill from the water for the thirsty plants. But, alas, the summer season was so short that we were only able to realize a limited crop-the carrots and leaf lettuce. Before the beans could fully mature, the newly arrived cold weather killed them off. And with it my aspiration of being a successful Alaskan gardener. I suppose with experience, one could develop techniques, which would ensure greater crops. For instance, one enterprising engineer ran a pipeline off of the main steam line, which provided heat for our Quonsets, to a mini-bathhouse built alongside his Quonset. He set the inlet valve at such a setting that would allow the bathhouse to be warm enough to raise some vegetables even during the frigid winter seasons. Seemed strange seeing something green growing in the dead of winter.

While writing the above, the thought of Matanuska Valley crossed my mind. Again, referring to my trusty encyclopedia set, the following was noted: “an agricultural valley in southern Alaska, about 50 miles northeast of Anchorage. The area was settled about 1930 and received attention when the federal government began a resettlement project there in 1935 for families from several midwestern states. Principal products include spring wheat, barley, oats, buckwheat, potatoes, hardy vegetables, berries, meats and dairy products. Palmer is the chief town. Area 1000 square miles, cultivated land 9000 acres.”

What was not brought out was that the “great experiment”, intended to make Alaska more self sufficient in meeting the agricultural needs of the populace, did not work out. The main reason was as noted in my garden experiment, that the growing season was too short. While the short season was embraced by almost 24 hours of sunshine, the crops grew in a burst but lacked continuity. I can recall being told about cabbages growing 2 or 3 feet in diameter in the Matunuska Valley, but looking at that situation, it would seem that there was limited demand for cabbages of that size. So Alaskans continue to primarily be served their food needs by air and sea freight.

In the area of vegetables and fruits, there comes to mind our blueberry expeditions. A good many miles from Fairbanks, there existed an area which abutted the railroad track where abundant blue berries grew. When Ruth and I were approached concerning making the trip with a small group, we indicated that we would be glad to do so. It was a rather unique trip, insofar as the transportation was concerned. One of the bolsters (employees who moved freight cars around the yard) obtained one of the small diesel switchers (1200 series) and ferried us back and forth on the trip. Of course, this was with full knowledge of train schedule for that day, which was important since there was only one track.

It was a nice outing and we all returned home with ample supply of berries. However, what we learned later was that that particular area was a favorite spot for bears who also loved the blueberries. Fortunately none of the creatures appeared. If I recall right, Ruth was a bit along with her pregnancy.

Following through on Ruth’s pregnancy, we were blessed with our first child, Katherine Ann, born on September 8, 1948 at the hospital in Fairbanks. The day that Kathy was born, Ruth could not prepare breakfast completely since the smell of the food made her nauseous, so it fell to me to take over. A great big welcome to the family, Kathy.

These were the days of pre-nutrition specialists. I guess the job title of the food preparer would be cook. I was visiting when they brought the evening meal. Lifting the cover, the entrée proved to be a hotdog. With a grimace, my good wife replaced the dish cover and then charged me with the responsibility of getting her some “food”, which I hastened to go.

I vividly remember the day we brought our new arrival home to our Quonset. For that special occasion, I engaged a taxicab. A light snow was falling as I got out of the cab, so I carefully covered Kathy’s head fully to protect her from the chill and snow. It was at that instant that the wonder of parenthood hit me, a wonderful moment.

Admittedly, the conditions for rearing a newborn child were not the most ideal. Both Ruth and I lacked first hand knowledge and experience in that area. There were no family members available for help, counsel and encouragement. Ruth seems to recall that Dr. Spock’s guide was available at the time,

but “people availability” was a different story. The lady on one side of us was no help since her mother had been with her for a year after her child was born. The lady on the other side came over and pulled covers off our youngster, claiming that she was too hot. The lady in the back said Kathy was getting yellow and that herbs were needed.
From the friend’s standpoint, Louise Oakley Brown’s wife and Sonny Manley, wife of John Manley, Colonel Johnson’s assistant, came up to Fairbanks from Anchorage to help for a few days. But they too lacked experience since neither was a mother. The one who helped us the most was Kathy herself who flourished in that far northern environment. After days, then weeks and a month passed by, we started to grow more at ease and enjoyed watching the newborn child grow.
Shortly thereafter, the Christmas season approached rapidly, the first as a family. The availability of Christmas trees was not a problem since there were acres of pine trees a relatively short distance from our Quonset. Despite the numerous trees available, it proved to be a chore finding a little tree that would fit in our small Quonset. And the branches at eye level and above were without pine needles since the density of the _____of trees was such that the sun could not filter down to ground level. It was bitter cold and my leather shoes became as stiff as boards, so there was no time to waste looking for an ideal little tree. I finally solved the problem by felling a high tree and cutting off the top, which filled the fill. And so our first family Christmas season was properly observed with a shiny, green Christmas tree.
Which brings to mind that a few years back when Ruth and I visited Roma, Ruth’s stepmother in Arkansas City on the way back from Denver, I recounted the tree episode while we were discussing life in Alaska. Roma was a bit taken aback since she felt that the taking of the tree to be no in order since it stood on government property. So I hastened to assure her that the situation was relatively academic since within a few weeks bulldozers leveled the entire area, apparently in anticipation of expanding facilities.
After almost a year in Fairbanks, orders came through transferring us back down to the Anchorage shops. Our household goods were handled by the railroad but from Ruth’s standpoint the timing was not good. On the trip down to Anchorage Ruth was ill and did not eat. I was able to get away at one of the trian stops to get Poochie, who was making the trip in the mail car, to allow him to do a bit of exercising. The dog was so very hyper from being enclosed that in his haste to relieve himself, he hoisted his leg at the nearest upright thing, which unfortunately proved to be my leg. Fortunately, I could partially anticipate the situation, so I was able to escape most of the blast.
In Anchorage, we were assigned a Quonset up on Government Hill, which primarily housed railroad employees. Thus we were reunited with Oakley brown and his wife Louise. Oakley was kind enough to make a sled for Kathy, a box like affair set upon a pair of runners. So our growing daughter had her own transportation when she was out for an airing, sufficiently bundled.
My duty in the shops was primarily maintenance. I was working the night shift. We would greet the incoming locomotive with shovels to remove the snow accumulated on the run south to Anchorage. The maintenance work for the most part consisted of inspecting the engine, electrical system, air brakes and oil boxes (lubrication for wheel axles and bushings), flanger plates (for snow removal), and a number of other points which do not readily come to mind.
Underneath inspection, which called for working in the pits, was a matter of checking the brake shoes for wear and tightening all the large nuts and bolts used to support the under=structure using sockets up to three inches. The activity in that area tended to be soiling, primarily grease. My work outfit was a pair of coveralls. No respectable cleaner would accept them, so we filled a large bucket with mineral spirits and sloshed the coveralls around and around until the build of the dirt and grease turned loose. Then it was a matter of wringing the coveralls out and hanging them to dry. The coveralls were worn over our clothes.
Once the inspection routine was completed, we signed the inspection sheets and turned our attention to nonroutine matters. If, in the dead of the night, we found ourselves with all duties completed, we might find an obscure corner of the shop to grab a catnap. In this regard, it helped that we had a good guy for our night foreman.
At six in the morning, it was up to Government Hill to join my little family. Our heating no longer was cost free steam provided by the engine house as in Fairbanks but rather was oil, which was fed from a drum on a small platform outside of the kitchen. My first duty was to fire up the oil store, which doubled as a heater and prepare some oatmeal for my two ladies. It was thus that we fell into a

routine that varied little. But we did find more social life since we were among friends. I can recall our celebrating New Years Eve at the Elks Club. (I had become an Elks member when we were located in Kenton, during our one-year stay there). Also, we had some social contact with Ruth's Dad and Roma. On one such occasion Kathy had her first babysitter consisting of Colonel Johnson.

One thing that I did was to acquire an automobile, a Chevrolet of unknown vintage. Most cars there at that time had passed their prime, but this one was a champion. It had badly worn rings so with the equipment available to me, I took the engine out and disassembled it to get all the rings. Since we had no garage, I did the work in the corner of the living room (with the consent of my good wife, of course). It was necessary to send for the replacement parts from a mail order house in the lower forty. Once I reassembled the engine, and put it back in the engine compartment, Oakley and some other kind railroaders timed the engine for me in one of the few garages in the area.

The Chevy must have had badly worn shocks because it seemed to me that I traveled up and down as much as I did forward. However, it was a welcome relief for travelling the crowded bus between Government Hill and the railroad yards.

I do remember that the car had one of those small box like trunks on the back. Apparently the trunk was not securely fastened because a part of it fell off and my tools were strewn along the trail. I was able to backtrack the next day and found some of the tools. Evidently my car was well known in the area since several people stopped by to return some of the items that they had found. But---it was transportation.

It was in the spring that I received word that my mother had developed a heart condition. This news was compounded by the fact that we were located so far from the East Coast. Another development was the news that we could expect another addition to the family.

From the economic standpoint, it was becoming apparent to us that we were not making progress in our situation in the far north. While the wages were considerably higher, so too was the cost of living as a case in point, the price of a single cucumber was sixty cents. While this price might be somewhat more in line with our present day economy, at that time sixty cents would purchase considerably more in 1949.

After much consideration, Ruth and I came to the decision to leave Alaska and try our luck in the "lower forty-eight" despite the fact that conditions still were not exactly booming in the United States in those post-war times. So, I did hand in my resignation, which brought to a close another segment of my lifetime, and the first one of our married life. We never did regret our Alaskan adventure. Taking that precipitous career action and handling the living conditions in that outpost (then a territory) had the overall effect of strengthening our marriage.

In retrospect, a person on an Alaskan course tour today undoubtedly would experience a more diversified experience of our 50th state than we did. What we did do was to gain a firsthand knowledge of Alaska's two main cities-Anchorage and Fairbanks--and some areas in between. Including, also, an intensive knowledge of the diversified population (where else would one enjoy playing marbles at midnight with the Eskimo village kids in the railroad yard at the height of the summer season), the history, the living conditions, experiencing the wide latitude in the four seasons, and learning, in effect, what it took to be a true Alaskan. In those post-war years, Russia was seriously regarded as a potential foe. There was a tad of unease existing, knowing that the Russian territory was only a short distance away across the Bering Straits.

Since our separation from the Alaska Railroad was a resignation, there was no responsibility on its part to provide transportation back to the States. Ruth's father arranged transportation on a private carrier, and we headed south late one afternoon in March. Shortly thereafter, when Ruth and daughter were hardly settled in a compartment, the pilot detected oil trouble in one of the engines. So it was back to the Fairbanks airport. The only aircraft scheduled for departure at that time was a converted B-24 bomber, so a switch was quickly made and we headed south once more. By this time it was dark and as I looked out of a window, I could see anchorage as a blaze of light, which gradually faded, a last sight of the land of our residence for the past year and one-half.

Back in the states we were met at the airport by friends of the Johnson's who transported us to a hotel. After a short time, we boarded a train bound for Topeka. It was a nice reunion with Ruth's family, who got to see daughter Kathy for the first time. Being pregnant, Ruth experienced considerable sickness, aggravated by the travelling, which included our trip to New Jersey, where Grandma Bachi and Aunt Sophie greeted daughter Kathy for the first time.

Again, it was a nice reunion with the family after being away for sometime. While we were living in Fairbanks, Sophie wrote us that my father had passed away, caused by a stoke resulting from excessively high blood pressure, which for some reason or other, he did not see fit to try to control. So, unfortunately, my father never had the opportunity to see Kathy or any of his grandchildren.

We were able to determine that mother's heart problem was not critical and was closely monitored in sister Sophie's capable hand. Our daughter had the opportunity to get acquainted with her New Jersey relatives. It was a stroke of good fortune that we were able to acquire my father's automobile, a four door Plymouth with low mileage on the odometer and in excellent working condition. Evidently my father had acquired the car from a couple who raised show dogs and this vehicle was used solely to transport the canines to shows. It also had a neat feature which assured that the dogs in the back seat would not fall out should the doors open accidentally at that time the rear door did not swing open as they do today. Rather, they swing open toward the front. Thus a metal tab was welded in the edge of the front door, so that when the door was closed, the tab covered the edge of the rear door. This being so, the rear doors could not be opened until the front door was opened first. Makes sense? At any rate, it was ideal for transporting children in the rear seat. Strangely enough, I saw a new model being advertised on TV the other night in which the rear door opened up first as they did in the 50's. So, the trip back to Topeka was accomplished in the comfort of a fairly late model (no seat belts or air-conditioning, however).

Once back in Topeka, it was a matter of trying to find employment to support our growing family. The economy was still in the post-war doldrums, and I couldn't come up with anything. I believe that I mentioned previously that friend Howard Miller had started school at Washburn University situated in Topeka, at that time known as Washburn Municipal University. Although it was suggested that Id o the same, either I did not have the foresight, sufficient confidence or knowledge of the advantages a college education would provide for us. At that time, we heard from Colonel Johnson who indicated that he could arrange at least a temporary solution with work as a marine construction worker through a business associate. It involved locating in Portland, Oregon, and being away for the summer. With our finances being what they were (or weren't), after kicking the prospect around, Ruth and I decided that it would be at least a temporary answer to the unemployment problem.

Under these circumstances, it was off to Portland to undertake a new activity in what was shaping up as a varied career. Taking off for new places was getting to be a habit since initially leaving New Jersey to enter the service.

The background of my new employment activity was as follows. There was, at least at the time, and probably at this date, much exploratory oil drilling to answer the growing need for petroleum. First, it should be indicated that the Gulf of Mexico actually was, and is, quite shallow with the areas around the mouth of the Mississippi in some cases only five feet deep in places. This was due to the fact that soil from the more northerly states was gradually washed down by the Mississippi and deposited in the estuary and beyond. The shallow nature of the bed thus made it practical to erect drilling platforms off shore in an endeavor to try to achieve an oil strike. Huge metal pilings were driven into the bed of the gulf topped by a platform, which would hold the drilling equipment.

The normal procedure was for petroleum engineers (geologists) to determine a likely spot for drilling. The next step was to sound that location by dynamite explosions and a determination made after reading pertinent recording instruments. If the results seemed positive, the spot would be marked for future drilling.

The principal problem, which existed in the erecting of a drilling platform, was the cost and time expended in transporting the individual pilings to the drilling site to build the supporting structure one piling at a time. In an effort to improve on this procedure, someone came up with the idea of pre-manufacturing the drilling support structure on land, one-quarter at a time, then moving the four units about to the drilling location. There they would be fastened together as one unit and secured to the gulf bed. But the question was how could the supporting quadrants be transported to the drilling site.

It was determined the available surplus steel barge with a 140 feet boor, operated by steam, would be sufficiently large to handle the situation. The barge was an ex-army piece of equipment named "Cairo". It was being refitted to meet the planned activity. And that was the nature of my work while the Cairo was in port at the Portland waterfront.

The Cairo became my home and one of the stateroom bunks was my bed. It was interesting

observing the waterfront activity, vessels of all sizes and shapes moving in and out of the Portland port. Once activity, which stood out in my mind, was working on a project down in the steam room. The temperature was very high, sweat flowed freely, and salt tablets were passed around from time to time.

Eventually the renovations on the Cairo were completed. Regretfully, I was not able to explore the city of Portland itself since the work on the Cairo kept me pretty much close to the vessel. The Cairo, with its towering A frame, was to be towed by a diesel-driven seagoing tugboat, manned by its Captain and a crew of three. George, the steam engineer who was to work the 140-foot boom, Mac whose job description I cannot recall and myself. It must have presented an odd sight-the small tugboat with the cumbersome barge in tow. And so the lengthy trip started, which would take us down the Pacific coast, alongside Central America, through the Panama Canal and up through the Caribbean to Morgan City, Louisiana. And oddly enough, I was not aboard.

Regulations required that the crewmen leaving the country had to have a “sea card”. Unfortunately, the marine construction company did not awaken to the fact that I did not have a card until shortly before the Cairo was due to depart. In order to obtain the card a birth certificate was needed. I called Ruth and asked her to mail me a copy in care of the Portland post office. The time frame proved to be too short as it turned out. However, in a last ditch effort, I was provided with a station wagon, drove into Portland, and waited for the needed birth certificate. The owner of the station wagon left with the Cairo. I was to start north when the certificate came in and meet the Cairo upriver where it would stop to pick someone up. I would board the Cairo at the point and the wagon owner would depart the Cairo and drive back to Portland. All went as planned except that I met the Cairo without a birth certificate, and, as a result, no sea card. After a consultation, it was decided that I would make the trip sans se4a card with the understanding that I would make myself very scarce below when port officials came aboard during the stops along the way.

Once aboard, it was up the Willamette River to the nearby Columbia River and west tot he open ocean, then heading south along the west coast. The galley was very well stocked with a variety of meats, etc. However, we got off to an inauspicious start when the freezer mechanism went out and we had to subsist on non-perishable foods and rinks for the remainder of the trip.

There was not much in the way of recollection for the first two days of the trip at sea. It was not long before the rocking motion of the barge got to me and I retired to my bunk. The seasickness passed and on the third morning. I got out of the bunk feeling fine and a few pounds lighter.

During the trip, the tugboat and the trailing Cairo did not stray very far out to sea, perhaps five miles from the coast at the most. Our seagoing tugboat, the El Sol, towed us at a steady pace. We had a spyglass aboard the Cairo and could make out some shore points from time to time, Malibu for one. We were not too far out to sea when we discovered a stowaway aboard a baby pigeon, which was abandoned by its mother when we left Portland. Between some softened barley (we had a plentiful supply_ and water, we managed to keep the little one alive and it was interesting watching the bird grow.

Our duties aboard the Cairo were light. First it was a matter of cleaning all debris left form the _____efforts, washing down the decks with gasoline powered equipment, chipping weathered scale, and painting, painting and painting from stem to stern. In the evening it was a matter of igniting the running lights up in the rigging (which I enjoyed doing) and extinguishing the lamps in the morning. But there was a lot of idle time filled by reading, playing card, or , in my case, just sitting on a bulkhead in the calm of the evening looking aft at the gently rolling water. Being completely at ease, observing only water on all sides, and seeing slender sea birds gracefully wheeling around our vessel make for, perhaps, the most serene moments of my young lifetime. The forked tail birds I earned later, were terns, which are _____to the more thick bodied sea gulls, which, however, were not present.

Speaking of winged creatures, George told me when I wandered out of the crew quarters one morning that t flying fish had come aboard during the night. At first, knowing George I thought he was pulling my leg, but sure enough, there on the deck (expired) was a relatively small fish with wings, when spread out, were about a foot across.

The El Sol (and the Cairo) steadily made its way down the length of California, then Baja California, and rounding the tip of the latter, headed for the port of Manzanillo, where we weighed anchor to take on fuel and supplies. The company agent came aboard and thoughtfully brought along some liquid

refreshments. As I recall, that was the first time that I tasted tequila. Not being much of a drinker, the refreshment did pack a bit of a punch, especially since it was right out of the bottle.
No one really had a chance to go ashore at Manzanillo. I do recall seeing a destroyer anchored in the bay and later learned that the location harbored a naval base. Manzanillo is a city located in west central Mexico and is a distribution point for agriculture, mining and lumbering in addition to being a fishing port, according to New Age Encyclopedia.
While at Manzanillo, George, Mac and I had a chance to mingle with the crew of the El Sol. They knew that George was celebrating a birthday. In honor of the occasion the cook presented George with a big birthday cake about 18 inches square and 4 inches high, properly decorated with “Happy Birthday, George”. The only stipulation was that George withhold digging into the cake until back on onboard the Cairo, which he agreed to do. Once we were underway again heading for Central America, George produced the fine cake and a large butcher knife and proceeded to cut slices for the three of us. That is, he tried and tried and tried only to discover that the beautiful cake was composed of a cardboard box covered by the beautiful icing. From anticipation to puzzlement to helpless laughter. So much for marine construction humor, which was furthered when George got on the radio by which we had contact with the El Sol and “thanked” the crew for their thoughtful gift. Fortunately, I documented most of the trip with my trusty Argus C-3, including the above-related occasion.
As several weeks slipped by, we were getting a trifle shaggy. I then discovered one of Mac’s talents when he gave George a haircut. And did a commendable job although the procedure did not require too much time since George was partially bald. I was next in line and must say that I felt a lot better after the haircut, as I invariably do after being shorn. As to who cut Mac’s hair, I can’t recall. Perhaps it was one of the El Sol crew at our next stop and get together. In any event, he wisely declined George’s and my offer to give him a trim.
Other than normal routine, we had the opportunity to see some nearby whales, a school of frolicking dolphins who whipped the water up to froth in their leaping out of the water, and my attempts at casual fishing. By that, I mean that I found a good-sized fishing hook. Before turning in one evening, I loaded it with bait and threw it off the stern. George greeted me the following with the news that I had a strike on the end of the line, which was about thirty feet long. Hauling in the fish and landing it on the deck, we found the fish to be one with an elongated body with a large mouth and three rows of teeth. At this point, my guess was that it was about 6 inches long plus or minus. When George contacted the El Sol and described the fish, it was identified as a “barracuda”, a voracious predator found in the warm seas of the world. An interesting fact, which came for knowledgeable crewman, was that when that species expired, it changed color three times. I couldn’t vouch for that fact, but I will verify that mine was a mean looking critter. What we did with the catch, I can not recall. Probably cut it up for bait. My other catch was a good-sized tuna. That one we boiled and ate.
We reached the most southerly point of the trip when we arrived at the Pacific Ocean side of the Panama Canal Zone. The anchors were dropped in the Gulf of Panama in the near vicinity of the Canal entrance. There were a number of assorted vessels also anchored, waiting their turn to enter the canal. There was no intermingling with the crew of the El Sol, and I believe it was at this stop that George and Mac decided to go ashore and sample some nightlife in Panama City. There was no choice on my part since I lacked the sea card. So the guys lowered a rowboat, boarded the craft and were last seen rowing towards the nearby city of Panama. I must admit that I was somewhat concerned as to how they would make out but all I could do was to hold the fort and await their return. And return they did, apparently experiencing no trouble wending their way back to the Cairo. Being good family men must have guided them on their expedition.
When our turn came up to enter the canal, we were boarded (the El Sol) by a canal captain and crew. The captains and crews of the vessels going through the Canal had to surrender the ship to the canal men, all vessels from the smallest to the aircraft carriers. It then became the responsibility of the Panamanians to guild the ships through the Canal safely.
I had always thought that the Panama Canal ran east-west or vise versa, but in studying the layout of the canal, I found that actually we were travelling just about due north after entering on the pacific side. This is so since the Isthmus of Panama, which connects Central America and South America, extends east west and the canal bisects the Isthmus.
The canal is roughly 51 miles long and as I recall is a combination of natural terrain, lakes, and locks, which accommodate both. If one were travelling from the Atlantic side to the Pacific, as I did on my

journey to Hawaii in 1939, my ship would pass through the locks at Gatun on Limon Bay and be raised to Gatun Lake, which is 85 feet above sea level. Then it would be a matter of travelling the continental divide through the Gaillard Cut and then being lowered to Minoflores Lake by the Minoflores Locks on the Bay of Panama on the Pacific side. Our trip was the reverse of the above.

I believe I mentioned that at the time of our passing through the canal in 1939, I was assigned KP duty and lost out on seeing the canal. Not so this time. Since there was no duty at all with the Panamanian crews handling the tugboat and barge, I found a spot high in the rigging armed with my Argus C3 and had a ball recording canal activities-the _____engines on either side pulling the vessels into the locks and then out of the locks after the ships were raised or lowered, ships passing by on the vast Gatun Lake, dredging equipment in the narrow passages to ensure proper depth of water to accommodate the ships and the like.

Once through the canal, we entered the Caribbean Sea and headed what I would call north-northwest passing Jamaica and then between the Yucatan peninsula and Cuba. Once that was accomplished, it was just about the north passing through the Gulf of Mexico to our destination-Morgan City, Louisiana.

The trip had encompassed thirty days. In that period of time, our scrawny-orphaned pigeon had flourished and grown into a good looking bird, now flying using the Cairo as a home base. The part of the story ended well when we found a home for it with one of the local marine construction workers who raised pigeons. So our stowaway bird was returned to a home with others of its kind.

I got to thinking about the above statement that our relocated orphan was flying at the end of our trip. It seems that that time frame is too little (30 days plus date of birth), so I checked out that possibility with my New Age Encyclopedia and learned that the racing pigeons start training 28 days after birth. It appears that I am on solid ground with this one. Never too old to learn!

Morgan City is located on the Alchafolaya River. The town relies chiefly upon the exploitation and processing of valuable shrimp resources in the Gulf of Mexico. After being at sea for a month, I was anxious to try my “ground” legs. I can recall walking through a bayou harboring some houseboats. An impressive sight was the shrimp boats neatly aligned in the marinas. Walking back to the Cairo, I started to feel some sharp pains in the front of my legs. I soon learned that for the first time n my lifetime, I was experiencing shinsplints. Evidently the limited space on the Cairo for a month had weakened my leg muscles. Another first!

The Morgan City area contained abundant marine life. On my time off, I enjoyed watching fishermen. On the river many good-sized catfish were caught and one of the most interesting sights was watching the technique of one particular crab fisherman. He would attach bait to the end of a line, wait for a crab to fasten itself to the bait, and then painstakingly eased the crab out of the water to be deposited in a pail. Any slight jerk on the line and crab would be gone.

I cannot recall exactly the progress made on the platform quadrants at the time of our arrival. There was some time, however, before the task of transporting the deck segments took place. George was busy preparing the steam crane operation, Mac with his specialty, which I cannot recall, and my time was spent on miscellaneous labor duties. Our crew was supplemented by young college kids working to provide needed money for education costs. They were a friendly bunch, and I enjoyed talking to them.

The time arrived to put the planned operation into effect. Two small tugboats, which we transported from Portland on the bow area of the barge, had previously been removed. Now a completed quadrant manufactured ashore was hoisted aboard. The Cairo then was towed to the drilling site and placed on the bed of the Gulf. Pilings were driven to secure the supporting frame. This routine was repeated until all four quadrants were placed and secured at which time the construction of the drilling platform commenced.

Two things come to mind. One was when one of the workers, a likeable guy, unfortunately had the end of his foot pinched been the de4ck structure and a gently swaying boom black which must have weighed over a ton. The action tore through his boot and smashed the foot. While he was stretched out on his back, he asked me to look at his foot, indicating that knowing me, he would be told the truth. There did not seem to be any blood, apparently the veins had been sealed off. Very apparent were numerous small slivers of bone across the width of the foot. Try as I might, I could not tell him about the full extent of the damage. All I could do was pat him on the shoulder and tell him that things would be all right. What really disturbed me was that it was about six hours before he was treated by

proper medical attention. Today, a helicopter would be on hand in a fraction of the time.
The other thought concerns contact with fellow workers, which would in essence, change the course of my life. I previously mentioned that some of my co-workers were college students with whom I struck up a friendship. In discussions while working, they learned that I was a high school graduate and an ex-serviceman. To a man, they urged me to go back to school. They would be happy to learn that they were influential in getting me to do just that as things developed.
Working under the late summer sun in Louisiana certainly was hot work. A trick that these same guys taught me was a way to get the benefit out of the gentlest breeze. We all wore baseball type caps. The procedure was by lifting ones cap off the head about an inch would result in a slight stream of air running over ones head. I tried it. It worked. Later I learned (by going to college) that what was taking place was characterized by Bernoullis Principle. Which I'll try to explain (correctly or otherwise). The slight breeze that was flowing at me passed around the sides of my face. The same breeze passing under the bill of my cap, up over the top of my head, traveled a greater distance but none-the-less, had the meet the side of the face breeze precisely at the same time. That means the over the head, under the cap breeze had to travel at an accelerated rate. And that acceleration afforded me some earned cooling. The same principle is used in the lift of an aircraft. (Trust a science teacher does not read the foregoing).
With the completion of the drilling platforms, we all piled into a boat to return to Morgan City where the start of another sequence would take place after being away from my little family for the good part of a summer, I had grown rather homesick. Additionally, Ruth was nearing the end of her pregnancy, and I wanted to be with her. So I tendered resignation, journeyed to nearby New Orleans, and caught a plane to Topeka.
Thus my career as a marine construction worker came to an end. It was an interesting and enlightening experience, a good bit of which I was able to document on picture slides, which now have been converted to videotape. The activity also had the desired effect of strengthening our family finances.
It was good to be reunited with Ruth, Kathy, Grandma Worland and all. Keeping in mind my conversations with the college kids on the Gulf crew, I brought up with Ruth the option of my going back to school, we discussed the pros and cons of making such a move It would call for some tight living conditions for a number of years. However, with the G I program, in which books and tuition were paid for by the government, plus an allowance accorded married participants, in addition to the modest rent charged by the University for on-campus quarters the whole thing could prove feasible. An overriding consideration was the necessity of making myself more valuable in the job market particularly with the background of a growing family. Once we decided to go the college route, it was full steam ahead.
Upon contacting the Washburn University administrator concerning admittance, they needed a copy of my highschool credits. In addition, I was given a type of aptitude test to determine the area of study I was most suited for. The result of the test pointed me in the direction of social studies.
As for the high school transcript was concerned, it seemed to indicate that I was no world-healer in secondary school. That plus the time from between graduating high school and requesting admittance at W. U. caused the admittance office to make my acceptance conditional. I was placed on probation for the first six months often, which my grades would determine whether or not I would be allowed to continue.
So that September in 1949, Stephen Stanley Krawczyk became a freshman at Washburn University of Topeka, Kansas at the age of thirty-one. Of the classes that I undertook, English was the course I enjoyed the most, and algebra was the worst. Not only were my math skills highly rusty, but in addition, I had no previous experience in that subject beyond basic arithmatic.
Having had no previous exposure to college work, I didn't know a credit hour from a required course. I managed to muddle through algebra with a little help from Bob Pooler, our landlady's son (campus quarters were not available for the outset). I think Bob was a bit appalled at my lack of knowledge of the activity that I was getting into.
As it developed, I managed a C in algebra, although in truth I wouldn't grasp what practical use that subject could be applied to. Conversely, English captured my attention, what other subjects I took in the first semester proved to be no obstacle. Thus, after six months of study, I became a full fledge collegian.

It didn't take too long to adapt to academic life. I felt my mind being challenged in several different directions. And now that I had plunged into this new world, I was determined to "make the grade."
I can recall an event that took place on the campus, which provided impetus to my academic effort. While strolling around the campus one evening, I passed Moore Bowl where graduation exercises were in progress. As part of the program, outstanding students were being accorded honors for superior work in their particular fields. "Wasn't that great?" I told Dutch. At that time, I felt definite inspiration. I, too; hopefully will be so honored.
But this is getting ahead of the order of events. Starting school in the Fall semester, I immediately became a fan of the Ichabod football team. Most of the home games were played on Friday night. We were at that time expecting the arrival of our second child. We were still living on Tyler at the time. I had my heart set on seeing the October 19th (or was it the 18th-will have to check the birth certificate as to the hour). Ruth and I talked the situation over, and she felt that the arrival of our new child was not imminent. That being so, I got into our trusty Plymouth and picked up Howard Miller enroute to the game. It was a good game, Washburn won, and everything was just fine. Except for the fact that when I returned to the apartment there was nobody there.
Finding Ruth and daughter Kathy gone proved to be a bit of a shock. I was able to contact Grandma Worland and learned that we had miscalculated on the time of the baby's arrival. When it became evident to Ruth that it was time to get to the hospital, she contacted Grandma for help. It developed that there was a problem since Grandma's car had a tire leak. So in turn, Ruth called her Aunt Lavonne, who lived in North Topeka. Lavonne then provided the transportation to Stormont Hospital. In the interim, Grandma picked up Kathy. When I arrived at the hospital, the new baby had not arrived as yet. It was until after midnight that our second daughter made her debut. And Kathy now had a sister, who was later named Mary Louise. A great big welcome to the family, Mary!
Shortly after Mary's arrival, we were able to secure housing in the campus Quonset hut area. Having quarters on the campus was highly advantageous, primarily because it eliminated the time and expense of commuting to and from the campus. We spent that Christmas while quartered in the Quonset. In the spring, there developed an opening in the barracks housing area, which we were able to get apartment 58. The balance of our stay in school was spent at that location.
The space in Apartment 58 was anything but sumptuous. The entrance door led into a small kitchen, then the living room. At the end of the living room there were two bedrooms. A shower (no tub) was behind the kitchen and was reached through the living room. And that was it. We had no trouble filling the space. A gas stove located in the living room provided heat. No air conditioning, of course, a window fan had to suffice. The mid-summer nights were pretty hot. The kitchen sink doubled as a tub until the girls graduated to the shower. All of which was not fancy, but it was home. Our furnishings were quite sparse, mostly donated articles from other members of the family. The first brand new piece of furniture was a bed for the parents, later a kitchen set (the wooden one we had bowed a bit in the middle) purchased from a barber discount supply company, a source learned from other students, and a prized possession-a platform rocker, which accommodated either Ruth or myself with both of the children. The above items were purchased as finances allowed (as I recall the government allowance for married students was $275 per month).
Our youngsters will well remember the kitchen ___. The table had a hard Formica top bordered by a stainless steel band. The chairs were tubular stainless steel with vinyl-padded seats and backs. Over the many years that we had the set, I must have recovered the seats and backs with fresh vinyl at least six and seven times. An enduring set of furniture!
A big step forward was when we were able to give up our icebox for a second hand GE refrigerator. You may have seen one of those appliances in old motion pictures. It had a squarish box with a round_____ __ unit sitting on top. It was delivered to our doorstep and we had quite a time getting it into place in the kitchen. The box must have weighed a ton and could not be lifted by the help we had on hand. What we finally did was ease the box open on the side on top of a heavy blanket and slid it into the kitchen. That difficulty aside, the refrigerator was a delight. Worked beautifully. A quiet operation with reliability, which served us well until graduation.
Another prized possession was a combination radio-record player purchased from Sears on a time arrangement. The records were 75 RPM, and the radio provided us with news, music and the following of the Kansas State basketball games, one year to the final four.
Each barracks building was one long row, divided into four or five units. Our building and the on

opposite us formed a neighborhood with a common yard area, the front yard, so as to speak. Our neighborhood housed mostly law students and veterans so we fitted in well with this older group. Our youngsters did not lack for playmates since just about all of the units housed children in their early. Years.

I decided to make a sand box for Kathy and Mary and in doing so, learned two valuable lessons. The only lumber of suitable size I was able to get gratis was oak. Lesson number one-oak lumber is tough. I wasted many nails, bending them trying to nail the pieces together. The second lesson learned was that sand is abrasive. I had recently put down linoleum in the kitchen area (not top grade). After a period of time with continuing trailings of sand through the kitchen, the surface started to go. Mental note: Future sand boxes to be made of soft wood and located a good distance from the house. Nonetheless, the sand box became a focal point for the kids and was worth the effort.

In the meantime, things were going quite well. I took naturally to the academic life. I concentrated on subjects pertaining to a degree in business administration. There was not a great amount of time available for extra curricular college activity, but I did participate in the Business Club and eventually was elected president. We did the field trips-on e to an auto plant in Kansas City and another to a steel plant both of which were quite interesting. Other club activities were picnics and annual dinners.

Early on it became evident that we could do with some additional income. A fellow student in my Psychology class worked at the State Hospital to supplement his income and suggested that I give it a try. The state hospital's function was the care and treatment (very little) of the mentally ill. Taking on something of this sort left me a bit dubious, plus the fact that employment would be on a full time basis. Fortunately, by this time, I was pretty much in command of my academic effort. Otherwise consideration of the state hospital employment would be out of the question.

I had passed the entrance to the State Hospital many times and wondered what life in the institution was like. The psychiatric aide uniform consisted of white trousers and shirts. The black bow tie was standard and was of the snap-on type. The reason for this was that a regular tie would present an opportunity for an agitated patient to throttle the aide if it came down to that. We were also presented with a sizeable metal key, which fit all doors of a specific cottage. Why they were called cottages was a puzzle to me since the size f each individual building was of considerable dimensions. The key was no lightweight either. Frequent removal and pocketing wore several holes on the right side of the trouser pockets.

We were given orientation sessions and soon were assigned to a specific cottage. It took a while to adapt to the atmosphere created by the patients who did not have complete command of their faculties (in varying degrees). It soon became apparent that most of the patients were elderly and were quite harmless, but did require constant supervision. However, as time passed by there was a noticeable influx of younger persons.

Prior to the time of my employment, generally little was done for the patients other than their care and feeding. Topeka was also the site of the Menninger Foundation. Karl Menninger had established a psychiatric clinic with his father and brother, Will. This eventually became the Menninger Foundation, a non-profit center for education, research and treatment in the field of mental disease. The foundation was of considerable significance since it became the core of a unique affiliation between federal, state and community mental health agencies. Under the Menninger's guidance, Kansas reorganized and modernized its mental hospitals, a program which later was emulated by other states. The Veteran's Hospital is located on the east side of town near Gage Park. With this trio of mental care facilities, Topeka earned the unofficial title of the "Psychiatric Center of the United States". It was my understanding that from time to time some of the movie stars of the day sought care and treatment at the Menninger clinic.

My working shift was the "swing" shift, which became routine after a while. As a psychiatric aide, I was responsible for monitoring the patients in the day room, taking them to recreational activities such as on-ground movies, trips to the zoo at Gage Park, and so forth. One activity that they enjoyed was pick-up basketball games between aide teams. The aide's uniform was also our basketball uniform, which required a drying out period after the contests.

We were also responsible for overseeing and helping the patients at evening mealtime. (We managed to squeeze in a bite too). Following the evening recreation, at bedtime we saw to it that the patients retired properly. Once the patients were in bed, the cottage quieted. There then was a report to be made out noting in detail any differences in the conduct of the patients.

I was surprised to learn that my psychology teacher also was a part of the hospital staff. This came about in one class session when the teacher pointed out to the rest of the class that I was a psychiatric aide at the hospital. Apparently he was the one who reviewed my nightly reports.
The Washburn football team of my freshman year featured a talented service returnee who was an exceptional running back. His name was Art Fletcher. If my memory serves me right, he also put in some time as a psychiatric aide. And if I recall correctly, he also was a talented piano player. I can recall him playing the “Thin Man Theme” which was a popular song at the time and fitted to piano.
In the ensuing years, Fletchers name popped up in the news from time to time. The last I read about him was that he was the head of the Healthcare Human Services Department, which I believe was a cabinet post.
As noted previously, the state hospital was in a period of change. Doctors in the field interned at the hospital, many from foreign shores. New treatments were being employed in an effort to bring qualifying patients back to normalcy, such as electric shock treatment and the use of medication such as Phenobarbital used to calm highly agitated patients. (Referring to the medical dictionary Kathy gave me, I found Phenobarbital to be a barbiturate anti-convulsant and sedative hypnotic.)
In referring to the above, it could be said that things were not completely serene, particularly regarding some younger patients. There was the case of the young, strongly built farmer who was brought in about the time I came on duty. His problem stemmed from a period of time when our area experienced a substantial period of rain. This farmer stood by helplessly, apparently watching his crops being destroyed by excess moisture. It seemed that tension built gradually until he snapped, and he was brought to our hospital. Being agitated and unruly, the farmer was placed in a locked room which further increased his agitated state of mind.
I t was not long before we heard a thumping noise coming from his room. In an effort to get out, he used his heavy cowboy boots to pound on the wooden door. This went on and on until we became aware of the fact that he was making good progress toward making a hole in the door. It became apparent that we had to react. The aides from our cottage and another responded, and I learned a bit about emergency measures. A doctor was alerted. About five or six of us manned a mattress of considerable size and when the door was unlocked and opened, we rushed the patient, pinning him down. A sedative was administered quickly and gradually took effect. One thing I still remember was the clarity of expression exhibited by the patient in berating the physician. The whole episode, being a prolonged new experience really had a draining effect, and it was a relief to cross the threshold of Apartment 58 at the shifts end that night, physically exhausted.
I really did not know what to expect upon reporting for work the following afternoon. It was a complete surprise, therefore, to find the farmer walking around the outside of the cottage in a relaxed and friendly frame of mind. What a turnaround!
Then there was the time that I learned how careful an aide had to be in handling a disturbed patient. The cottages, of course, were segregated by gender. We were called to a women’s cottage to help subdue an unruly and feisty young girl who was causing a commotion. While I was trying to pull her arm at close quarters, she snapped her head around and I heard the sharp click of teeth coming together. Had I been a few inches closer, there was a good chance that my nose would have suffered a dire consequence. A near miss! And a lesson learned. I had learned of a case when an aide suffered a badly damaged ear in like circumstances.
At times we were called together at meetings on demonstrations, which gave us a better understanding of treatment techniques. At one such meeting the center of attention was a slightly built young woman, who apparently was sedated. When the instructive session was over, everybody left and it fell to us aides to get the patient back to her room. She couldn’t walk; there was no wheelchair, only a few inexperienced aides. A couple of us tried to carry her unsuccessfully and it appeared that the transportation was going to be somewhat hard on the patient. Without further thought, I waived the other aide aside, picked the patient up, cradled her in my arms and carried her to her room. It was a fair distance, which I guess was not usual procedure, but nonetheless, solved the problem.
As mentioned previously, there was considerable experimentation in treatments to help agitated patients. One such treatment involved cold-warm treatment to relax the patient. I think back on this one occasionally and have to smile. Early on at one shift, the aides and nurses were assembled to demonstrate the technique. It called for a volunteer and since there weren’t any, the head nurse eyed

me; I knew better than to refuse. So reluctantly, I shed all of my clothes down only to my Jockey shorts and the demonstration commenced. I stretched out on an icy sheet covered table and was rolled and wrapped by several sheets until I was covered from my Adams apple down over my toes. It's hard to describe just how cold I felt. The idea was to allow me to rest in that condition until my body temperature dropped to what point I don't know. Once that was accomplished, I would be unwrapped and the warming process would cause a completely warm, relaxed feeling.

All this was fine except for one problem that developed. A cry went up; "patient escaping" and everybody in the room thundered out to try to prevent the patient from leaving the grounds, including the head nurse. A natural reaction! Except that there I lie, completely encased in wet sheets to a point where I couldn't do more than wiggle a toe, no one in sight. Heaven forbid that a fire, earthquake, tornado or whatever should take place. I can't remember ever feeling so helpless.

After a period of time, which seemed like ages, the patient was corralled and the experiment participants filed back in the room and the experiment resumed. I was rolled back and forth until all the sheets were removed and in truth, as I began to warm up, a feeling of relaxation took over. As I recall, I experienced a bit of difficulty making it through the remainder of the shift.

Just as in "normal" life, the patients were a group of individual personalities. The supply room attendant, who handled his job with efficiency, was a native of Brooklyn. He was a resident of the cottage for many years and apparently had no desire to leave the institution and rejoin the general public. (The outside). We both enjoyed talking sports and I would occasionally run into him at a Friday night Washburn football game, which was an indication of the confidence and trust that the administration placed in him.

Then there was Delph, a crafty patient who seemed to delight in being a pain in the backside; otherwise harmless. He liked to "break out" once in awhile to keep things interesting. On one such occasion, Delph was brought in by a pair of state police officers and I had to go over to the main building to reclaim him. I went through the usual procedure of shaking him down. Delph was clean until I checked one of his slippers and found a double-edged razor blade secreted in the sole of one of his slippers. It was like we were putting on a show for the benefit of the officers. In spite of his sometimes irritating behavior, I began to like the guy.

Working at the hospital was an education in many ways. As is the case with regular hospitals, some patients did pass away. One of our elderly patients suffered a stroke and was not supposed to survive the day. Upon reporting for duty, I was instructed along with another aide, to monitor the man closely and once life ebbed completely, to take measures to prevent a sanitary condition. Once that duty was laid on us neophytes, we sweated out the shift, but, as it developed, the patient did not die until early the following day. This was my first experience with a stroke victim and it was difficult witnessing the suffering.

As we travel through life, it probably does not occur to us that we may in some way have an impact on those persons we come in contact with.

A fellow student, who also worked at the State Hospital, was a young man by the name of Barry Crites. Barry was married, no children, who was majoring in psychology. This outside work fit in with his area of study.

While working together on one shift, Barry confided to me that he had made up his mind to drop out of school. My reaction was to point out that his decision was not to his best interest. Using myself as a case in point, I asked him if he had ever considered what I (being twelve years his senior) was doing in school. To throw three years of study down the drain would be an absolute waste. Before the shift was over, Barry was rethinking his decision and as it developed, graduated the following year.

The above incident slipped from my mind and it wasn't until several years later that it came back to my attention. In reading the Washburn alumni publication, I was pleased to read that Barry Crites held a responsible position in the psychology department with the Kodak Company in Rochester, N.Y.

An epilogue. The long full-time working hours at the hospital cut into my study hours and it became apparent that I couldn't do justice to my collegiate effort and continue full time employment. So after six months, I tendered my resignation, which brought to a close my career in the psychiatric field.

So it became a matter of seeking part time employment. Howard Miller was working for the Allied Seed Growers store on Kansas Avenue. He planned to leave his job of driving the store delivery truck because he planned to transfer to Kansas U. He recommended me as a replacement to Mr.

Smith, the owner and I were hired. Many months later, I had occasion to make a delivery to the State Hospital. Once I completed the delivery, I decided to visit my old cottage to see how things were going. When I made myself known, the patients began to drift over until I was encircled. They were pleased to see me, to shake my hand and pat me on the back. Which in turn left me pleased and with the realization that many impaired people had depths of feelings that they rarely exhibited. Even Delph, who was the last to say goodbye as I left the cottage.

Mention was made earlier regarding the summer that we experienced a lengthy period of almost daily rain. The ground reached a point where the grass felt spongy under my feet. On a larger scale, the Kaw River, which separates Topeka proper and North Topeka overflowed its banks and caused considerable damage to residences and businesses; particularly in North Topeka where Ruth's Uncle Harold and Aunt Lavonne lived. Ruth's sister Irma resided across the street from the Millikens. At its peak, the water rose to the second story of the Milliken house. They had to be evacuated early on.

One night during the flooding, we were awakened about midnight by a truck making the rounds of the campus. A bullhorn operator was making it known that the municipal water works was being threatened by the rising water of the Kaw. Manpower was needed to fight against that certainty. I talked it over with Ruth, got dressed and boarded on of the shuttle trucks. At the water works it became a matter of filling and taking sand bags and building a breastwork around the perimeter of the works. This went on for the remainder of the night until daylight when the mayor of Topeka announced proudly (with thanks) that we had "saved the waterworks." I don't believe that I attended classes that day.

Before the floodwaters ebbed, I viewed the swollen river and was impressed by mans inability to control some aspects of nature.

Just about all of my account of the life of Steve Krawczyk has been pretty much done chronologically. Seems like the current account of my college years is a bit disjointed. This may be due in part by the most recent of my various ailments, anemia. It seems that there is a low-grade seepage of blood somewhere in my frame that, in spite of numerous tests, remains undetected. Anemia leaves one weak and a by product of this affliction is a condition called "Restless Leg Syndrome." RLS, which is in the nature of an ache rather than a pain, a drawing, pulling sensation with somewhat involuntary movement, jerks, which is a source of distraction. A recent blood test revealed a low iron content, which is needed to form red blood cells, the agent which carries oxygen to all parts of the body. I received an iron infusion today and it is somewhat difficult to concentrate, including furthering ones memoirs.

I touched on supplementary employment several times so I might just as well complete that aspect of my college life. There was some mention made of working for the Allied Seed Growers store in downtown Topeka. I can't recall the duration of my employment at Allied but it must have been a couple of years. My main duty was delivering to customers and helping out on the sales floor. There I learned much about seeds, gardening and associated activity. If things got slow, I would help in the construction of small birdhouses which were placed on sale. Allied imported Dutch tulip bulbs and yearly would put on an arrangement of beautiful tulips, provided by the bulb company for sales purposes. I can recall taking home a basket full of the beautifully colored flowers when the display ran its course.

Also, and I have no recollection of how it came about, the store once featured giant black and white panda bears. It wouldn't do until I could corner the necessary dollars to buy two of the bears for daughters Kathy and Mary. It was much to their great delight, when I walked in to the apartment with a stuffed bear in each arm.

I liked working for Allied, particularly for Mr. Smith, the owner. However, the areas of work that I engaged in did little to compliment the business studies that I was undertaking. One of the older students in our barracks area ran a small remodeling business and needed someone to manage the accounting of the business. So we struck a deal and I went to work for him.

Although the intent was good and I got some practical bookkeeping experience as a result, the business itself was sporadic and gradually faded after the flood induced market waned. This in tern resulted in the mutual dissolution of my employment.

A short time later I found another job with a second hand furniture store on Topeka Avenue that proved to be the last of my college-related employment. Here again, the business continued to be

brisk after the flood that called for a couple of deliverymen, particularly since the pieces tended to be bulky in many cases.
About the only notable recollection stayed with me in that employment was a delivery made to an orphanage outside of town. I'm sure that somewhere in my forebears there must have been some good traders, but this never was my forte-with one exception. My partner and I were delivering a number of items to the orphanage, climbing the lengthy concrete steps to the front door when one of us stumbled. A nicely fashioned but somewhat frail coffee table went flying, hit the concrete and virtually came completely apart. After completing the delivery of the other items, we scooped up all of the pieces of the table that we duly reported to the store manager upon our return to the store.
The manager was not terribly upset by the development, but felt that he had to account for the item. His approach was to offer to sell it to me, (no returns). It so happened that our sparsely furnished apartment could use an item like a coffee table. And what could I offer for the bruised piece? My wallet revealed that I had no dollars (not an unusual condition in those days), about fifty-six cents in change. All that I could add to the deal was a Boy Scout pocketknife with a broken blade. The manager, after due deliberation, accepted the coins and damaged pocketknife and congratulated me on my bargaining power.
With considerable application of moon glue and some strategically placed brad nails, the table was reconstructed and proved to be a welcome addition to our furniture inventory.
The school years passed swiftly. My initial concentration was on required subjects and courses in my major- business administration. My minor was English, which I really enjoyed. It was in this connection that I sharpened my ability in working under pressure. In my English classes, we had a weekly assignment (for Monday morning class) of writing a theme on various subjects. One, which sticks in my memory, was entitled "My Brothers Keeper." After a week of studying, classes and work, we liked to relax on Sunday, generally with the Millers. The general routine was for Ruth to remind me late in our visit that there was a theme due. So it was a matter of goodbyes to the Millers, a return to apartment 58, setting up the ancient Underwood typewriter (bought at an auction for $10.00 when we started school) and pounding out a theme before retiring. It didn't come easy because the material had to be presented just right. Additionally, my typing was not that great in those days previous to correcting fluid. (Whiteout)
In school one wonders at times whether the direction of selected area of study was a correct one. What brings that to mind was a philosophy class held one evening at the home of Dr. Merton French, the head of the Philosophy Department. During a break, in an informal discussion, Dr. French asked me what my major was. My answer seemed to leave him with a puzzled expression, although nothing further was said by either of us. In retrospect it would seem that the good doctor felt that the area selected did not fit.
By the dints of heavier hour loads and summer school, the accelerated academic pace allowed us to graduate in three years. I went to one night class along the way but it didn't fit in. With most of the required business subjects put behind me, the last semester in particular was heavy in electives, particularly Sociology.
Although most of the schoolwork was concentrated, there was room for some humor. I had two sociology classes, one after the other featuring the head of the sociology department, an old boy, a character with no plan. Departed from the text at the drop of a hat and went off on a tangent, expounding on subjects which tended to put him in a favorable light. (Everything from the art to overstuffed furniture-then coming into vogue.) One day in the first class he posed a question that had to do with the identity of a painter of a world famous work of art (now long since forgotten.) That question met with complete silence on the part of the class. The professor enjoyed berating us for our lack of knowledge of the arts and then grossly supplied the names, which I somehow retained. In the next class, which I attended, the professor was evidently enjoying his previous question, which he posed and again met with initial silence. In the meantime, I nudged the guy next to me and supplied the name in question, but he was reluctant. So to uphold the honor of the class and save another dressing down, I shouted the answer from the back of the room. The immediate response was a roared "now there is an educated student!" I couldn't live with the false characterization so when I admitted I came up with the answer from his previous class, the class exploded with laughter. Instantly the nimble-minded old boy again roared "now there is an honest man!" again to the considerable amusement of the class.

An option that I had in mind was a possibility of entering law school upon completion of undergraduate work. Probably due to old friend Lou LaVecchio's success in pursuing that course of study. I took Business Law in my last semester to get a feel for the field. This undertaking would have required three additional years of study. So that possibility was ruled out. Ruth had her hands full keeping the family going. At this point, I want to make it known that she was a wonderful support in our college endeavor. Additionally, we had learned that we were going to be blessed with another child. So it became a matter of leaving the comfortable shelter academics to get on with the duties of a provider. I had to smile upon overhearing one graduating senior advising another "it's a jungle out there!"

Hi all! Back again (4/20/99) after an interval of several months. It must have been a combination of running out of steam and taking care of a number of things, i.e. cataract operations on both eyes, etc. In that interval I was surprised and delighted at the publication of two books which brought forcibly to the attention of the public the events that took place during the current century. First a book by Tom Brokaw, a famous television anchor, called the Greatest Century (Generation sic), which outlined the trials, tribulations and accomplishments of the 20th Century, was written and published. At almost the same time a book by Peter Jennings and Todd Brewster called THE CENTURY came out which also chronicles the events of our current century in great detail. Peppered with many fine illustrations, the latter book was given to me by son Steve and Ashley. The Brokaw book was sent to me by George Baumgardner, Marg's friend. I'm grateful to them all. In a slight sense I felt that I had been upstaged as the material in many cases paralleled my forgoing material. But they are complete works and served as a reminder of many events not previously recalled. But what I really appreciated was that in these books there is recognition and appreciation of the people who helped form the greatest nation in the world, which brings to the attention of the succeeding generations what the 20th Century people went through. It might be said that the books were "overdue."

All to soon, in a sense, my graduation day arrived. One drawback in the great scheme of things was that our third youngster chose the time of the graduation to put in his appearance. Therefore, Ruth, after helping through the college years, was not able to attend the graduation ceremonies. (It should be noted that our anticipated third child was welcome anytime.) However, Grandma, Kathy and Mary wee on hand to represent the family.

In retrospect, just to be there in line awaiting the start of the commencement exercises was a little short of amazing to me. Inasmuch as the possibility of attending college at the time of my graduation from high school was simply out of the question. If there were any regret at all, it would be along the line of not being able to participate in the varsity sports at W.U.

In anticipation of things to come, I had paid a visit to Dean Sellen, would be calling out the names of the graduates as they strode across the platform to accept their diplomas. I prepped him on the correct pronunciation of the Krawczyk name, a precaution which he appreciated. In our chat that followed, Dean Sellen indicated that the prepping had occurred only once before in his tenure as dean.

While still waiting for the start of commencement activities, I harkened back to the time of my witnessing my first graduation ceremony, observing the honors accorded students for superior work, and the resolve that I would work toward that end. Now three plus years later, I found that I had indeed achieved that status. Being onstage at honors assemblies and being elicited to membership in PiGammaMu, the National Social Science Honorary Society in March of 1952. Reviewing the graduation program, I found that I was listed in "honors section for the entire college course" and under "Department Honors for the current academic year" as a McVacar scholar-2.6-3.0. All of which was a thrill in accomplishing an informal goal set back as a freshman by a depression "kid" from E.19th Street in Patterson, N.J.

(an interesting note, the Bachelor of Laws division listed Robert J. Dole, who was to go on to a prestigious career in U.S. politics. Additionally, interesting was the fact that Mr. Dole was not among the top 6 scholars listed under Magna Cum Laude.)

The exercises started in Moore Bowl on a pleasant summer evening- the 87th annual Commencement. Dean Sellen held up his end of our arrangement, with a smile and emphasis on the pronunciation of the Krawczyk name.

Acceptance of the diploma made my earning of a college degree official.

It then became a matter of leaving the campus and establishing residence back at the Pooler's on

Tyler Street. By then we were a family of five with the arrival our newest child on Memorial Day. It was the custom of Ruth's relatives to journey to Oak Hill, Kansas to visit the cemetery on Memorial Day. It was also the anticipated time of John's arrival. That information was withheld from Grandma as it was felt that she would forego the trip to Oak Hill that meant so much to her.

As it developed son John did put in his appearance May 30,1952, Memorial Day. Unlike the present day custom of the fathers taking part in the birthing, the men of those days sat around in the waiting room. So I waited and waited and waited. Seems like nobody understood the task of advising the expectant father of developments. Finally I stopped nearest person who appeared a likely source of information and learned that indeed we did have a new child-a son. WELCOME TO THE FAMILY JOHN!!

While pursuing our college degree in the years 1949-1952, there was an uneasy peace existing in our world. Over in China, Chiang was ruling under a basically corrupt society, the people themselves experiencing a condition of little food and less liberty. These conditions were a breeding ground for Communist party activity under the leadership of Mao who finally prevailed. The last of the Chinese Nationalists fled the mainland for the safe harbor of Formosa. About that time there were indications that communist Russia also had exploded their first atomic bomb.

In our country, those were the days of the frenzy created by Senator Joe McCarthy whose wild accusations of communist ties were unsubstantiated, ruined the careers of many Americans.

In June, 1950 President Truman decided to go to war with Korea. Fear that the Communists success in China would spread throughout Asia was the main reason for our return to war. The 38th parallel was the line of demarcation separating the Communist North from the non-Communist South. It was the Russians aim to press Communist upon a large portion of our world.

The North invaded the South in Korea with the blessing of Soviet Russia. To make matters worse the Chinese joined the Northern Communists. "The War" (termed a police action) lasted three years, a period in which Korea was pretty much savaged. Fifty thousand Americans and two million Koreans died. Korea was still divided politically; as was the case at the start of the war.

Some believed that the Korean conflict would result in WW III. With the Hiroshima disaster still in the minds of many people, many began to build bomb shelters.

General McArthur reversed the Communist tide by driving them back across the 38th parallel. He wanted to press on through North Korea, across the Yolu River and into China. President Truman ordered him back fearing a confrontation with Mao. McArthur did not follow the Presidential order to desist. Whereupon McArthur was recalled back to Washington and subsequently was fired.

Toward the end of my last semester, several prospective employers interviewed me; including Hallmark cards in K.C. the most likely company to with was the Sherwin-Williams Co., a leading paint manufacturer headquartered in Cleveland, Ohio. The interviewer was the head of the credit department in the Southwest region office in K.C. A personable named Bill Fine, who subsequently over the years would rise to the position of C.E.O. of the company. With the encouragement of the head of our business department, Don Foth, and following in the footsteps of my business club predecessor Duane Stremple, I finally decided to go with that company. Despite a starting salary that was somewhat under whelming, S-W seemed to offer the best overall prospects.

After a few introductory weeks in the Kansas City regional office, I was assigned to the Topeka branch for some hands-on experience in branch credit management. However, timing proved to be a factor in the direction I would take. Mrs. Poolen was anxious to reclaim her apartment. So the plan to assign me to the Memphis Tennessee main branch went by the board. Rather than expose us to an additional move, the regional office appointed me to the main branch in Albuquerque, New Mexico where there was an immediate opening in credit management. I often think it is somewhat strange and a bit wondrous how little circumstances serve to determine the direction of ones life.

Upon learning of the impending move, I hiked over to the school library to check an encyclopedia to determine when this city of Albuquerque was located. (The last class I had in geography went back to my early days in high school.)

So it was up and away to New Mexico. We all climbed into the 1939 Plymouth and headed southwest. Ruth, Kathy, Mary and infant John in the arms of Grandma Worland. Route 66 was the prototype of our present interstate roads. We drove and drove, mile after mile of unpopulated areas until we reached Tucumcari, New Mexico, seemingly the end of the world. We put up in the tow hotel, clean with the people friendly. After a good breakfast the following morning, refreshed, we took off to

complete our adventure to Albuquerque, New Mexico. Now Route 66 characteristically was a two-lane highway. Therefore, trucks were a hazard since passenger car drivers had the tendency to grow impatient following the slower trucks for miles on end and would attempt to pass at any opportunity. One such driver coming in the opposite direction, attempted to pass a truck as we approached going towards the. He misjudged. Suddenly I was confronted with the truck and the passing car, in our lane. Grandma yelled "Steve, what are you going to do" and the immediate answer was "hit the shoulder", which I did. Somehow the Plymouth averted the passing car by what seemed inches, and I was able to muscle our car back on the road, thus averting a hitch in our plans to make it to Albuquerque.

When we arrived in Albuquerque that evening, we headed for the Main branch location of 2nd and Copper. We learned that the manager, Ed Jordan, was at the subsidiary branch out on Central Avenue towards the Heights. We did catch up to Mr. Jordan there, introduced ourselves and learned that we would be temporarily at the hotel across the street from Albuquerque Main on 2nd Street, which was located on the second floor. The point being made here is that as we climbed the steps to the second floor, I felt a little winded which was my first inkling as to what living would be like at any altitude of 5,000 feet. Fortunately, most business and residences were on story buildings.

Rentals proved to be tight, at that time, but Ralph Weir, the man I was replacing, talked to his landlord and arranged for us to take over his rental house upon Ralph and his family's departure. This was out in the North Valley. Ralph was leaving credit management to go into the company's auditing department.

So we started to settle into a routine in our new community, which was destined to be our place of residence for the next eight years.

Albuquerque proved to be an interesting city. First of all it was old, being founded in 1706. The city was under Spanish and Mexican rule for the first 140 years. But the end of the war with Spain, Mexico, in 1848, was included in the Cession of New Mexico, Arizona and California to the United States. The plaza of Old Albuquerque is a picturesque reminder of earlier times, and is the main tourist attraction. In 1880, the New Albuquerque was laid out a mile eastward. The thing that struck me initially was the length Central Avenue running east to west for many miles on either side of the center of town.

Albuquerque was in the throes of rapid growth dating back to World War II. The power behind the expansion push was atomic and military installations, Sandia Base and Kirkland Air force Base.

The city is located on the Rio Grande River, near the center of the state. The climate is dry, with a light annual rainfall per year. Less than ten inches as I recall. It is a governmental, commercial and transportation center for a large area of the southwest. With the light annual rainfall, the agricultural and ranching activities were dependent upon irrigation water. As I recall, the water source was Wolf Creek Pass up in Colorado. The amount of snowfall during the winter season at the pass was closely monitored since it was indicative of how much irrigation water would be available the following spring and summer in the valley.

At the time the Latin American population was quite high. The people were congenial and many prided themselves as being "Spanish". However, back in the 1950's the balance was shifting toward non-Latin population as people streamed into the area for health and retirement reasons due to the favorable mild and dry climate.

Regarding my comments above on the culture of the population, I learned that in 1940, 40% of the New Mexico population was Spanish speaking. By mid century, this segment was reduced to 35% and by 1970, to less than 30%. Cultural life was spread over four types of people-Spanish, Mexican, Indian and Anglo-American. The Spanish element resulted from early explorers and missionaries founding the missions of the Catholic faith. The Mexicans established themselves when they won their independence from Spain and formed a new republic in New Mexico. The Mexican rule lasted only twenty-five years.

The Civil War had little effect on New Mexico. However, Confederates entered the Sunshine State and took over both Albuquerque and Santa Fe. In 1906, New Mexico won admission as a state (47th) after several tries. So in effect, when the Krawczyk's arrived in Albuquerque, the state was only 46 years old. Yet, while we resided there, in 1856, we helped the city of Albuquerque celebrate its 250th birthday.

During the year of celebration, it was required that the males sport either (or both) a mustache and

beard. Not being the hairy type, I opted for the beard of a sort. Must admit that I felt a bit of pride when the barber up the street asked me if he could brim my beard a bit. Another memory resulted from a trip back to New Jersey. In addition to the amusement exhibited by the family, I went over to New York City to visit Bell Fire, the gentleman who hired me in Kansas City. He then was the manager of the Pigment, Color and Chemical Division in New York. We attended a credit meeting of major companies at the Williams Club and I was somewhat of a center of attention since facial adornments were rare at that time. Of course, there had to be one doubter in the group checking out my beard. He reached up and gave my beard a yank. Which left him feeling embarrassed and me feeling like popping him one. But since this incident occurred during the social segment of the meeting and we were all feeling pretty good, I let it ride.

Back to the population shift, it is interesting that in the 1950's New Mexico experienced a net in migration of 15,000 people. However, in the sixties (we left in 1960), the net out-migration totaled about 125,000, due in part to the closing of some military installations. Looks like the Krawczyks went with the flow.

Outside of an occasional dust storm, the climate was quite pleasant. The local paper kept a box score on the front page of the number o f days in the years that the sun made an appearance. With the temperature rising at times to the upper nineties, the situation could be alleviated by crossing the street to the shady side, a situation caused by the dryness of the air.

Our stay in the valley was rather short. We made a move down the street on Ensenada Place because the rent was about fifteen dollars less, a significant saving at the time.

Then came a development seemingly out of the blue. We never did attempt to buy a house up to that point, due mainly to our lack of full understanding of real estate and house mortgages, plus our living form paycheck to paycheck. However, my good spouse took it upon herself to contact a real estate agent and arrange for a meeting. The upshot of this development was a purchase of a small house at 220 Quincy N.E., a nicer area up in the Heights (towards the Sandia Mountains). When the payment schedule arrived in the mail, I was shocked to learn that the majority of each payment was for interest. Even to the degree that I called the real estate agent about midnight demanding an explanation. At this point, I was instructed in the ramifications of mortgage financing! Oh yes, the purchase price of our house was $11,000, seemingly a modest amount today, but a considerable amount in 1953.

As things turned out, we were destined to live in Albuquerque for eight years. We all settled into the pace and environment of Southwest living. Although 200 Quincy was rather small, we seemed to have managed quite well. The small bathroom (one only) had a tub, but no shower. So with great confidence, and no experience, I undertook the task of providing the family with a shower facility. With great patience (very much needed), I managed to install a showerhead. However, there arose a problem-we could get cold or hot water only. So it was back to the plumbing supply store where I had explained to me the merits of a mixing valve, very much a needed component. Armed with the valve, it was back to the bathroom where the problem was resolved, much to the delight of all the members of the family.

While on the subject of the bathroom, I can recall sitting on the edge of the bathtub and freshening up Kathy and Mary's "saddle" shoes, which were in vogue at the time, a combination of brown and white. To me, this was pretty much routine, an extension of the talent developed while in the service. The neighbor down the street would commenced from time to time about expecting to see the girls walking past his house every Monday morning on the way to school wearing the sparkling "saddles."

The house of 220 Quincy thus became the training ground on house maintenance (painting interior and exterior), patching a leaking roof, unplugging stopped drains in the limited area underneath the house, battling the dry climate with daily watering of the grass in the front of the house, ad infinitum.

Despite the modest housing, we did not lack for visitors. Grandma Bachi, Sophie and boys, Howard and Dorine Miller, Patty (Ruth's cousin), Roma (Ruth's stepmother) and even a brief visit by Monsignor Valley who married us in Topeka. Also, among the visitors were Cousins Frank and Jean Laski and Harriett and Stella Pavlak. Now the latter group were numbers we couldn't accommodate, so they were quartered in a motel. These cousins were making annual trips to the Southwest at that time, which eventually led to a mass migration of the Pavlak family (including Al and his family) to Arizona. This is where the family resides today although reduced in numbers to Harriett Pavlak and Jean Laski.

Under the circumstances, we as a family had limited funds for entertainment. Television was more or less in its infancy. The local station (one) started programming about 10 am and signed off late at night. The choice of stations available was rather skimpy; nonetheless, we were afforded some of the top programs of that time. A treat was when we would pile into the car and ago to a drive-in movie. However, we never failed to observe each and every birthday and the holidays with proper degree of celebration. When Ruth learned that some youngsters in the class were not invited to birthday parties, she characteristically solved that situation by inviting the whole class to attend the kid's birthday bashes. What a circus that policy incurred. Handling 25-30 lively youngsters turned out to be quite a challenge from the standpoints of room, games and treats. I can recall my arm getting tired from ladling out ice cream, among other duties. But the parties were always a success and made worthwhile when some of the mothers, whose children normally were not invited, expressed their appreciation.

Then there were trips up to the Sandia Crest, a wondrous trip along the ascending tree-shaded snake-like road with picnics along the way, the end result being a beautiful panoramic view of the valley. I was reminded of another activity last Saturday night (7/24/99) when we attended one of the summer concerts held on the spacious Manassas Museum grounds, which included a hilly section on one side. The young ones (in abundance) couldn't get into the spirit of the programs music so they were having a fine time charging up and down the incline, chasing one another. This took me back to Albuquerque and the "hill park." This park was a source of enjoyment for the kids, particularly since it had an abutment covered with shrubs, which afforded a hiding place. There always were shouts of approval when it was mentioned that we were going to the "hill part", usually on a Sunday afternoon.

From the standpoint of work, once I became familiar with the duties of a centralized credit manager (which included two other branches in Albuquerque) things were pretty much routine. The challenge lay primarily in handling the extension of credit to the painter segment of our sales, which along with dealer sales represented the bulk of total sales. The painters and painting contractors were an interesting and diverse lot. That activity demanded, and received, the bulk of my time and attention since housing in Albuquerque was expanding rapidly primarily eastward toward the Sandia Mountains. In retrospect, the paint sales customers were a varied and colorful group of people from Peter Bennenuti, a bearded house painter and artist who stated that I looked like Jesus (for which I thanked him) to Carmen Pacias, a sweet Latin man with a large family, whose funeral I was to later attend, to the Edward Snow Company, the largest builder in Albuquerque and environs.

Home building then (and I suppose is the case today) was highly competitive. As a result, many in the painter trade exceeded terms when it came to making payment. One source of protection afforded a supplier is what is call lien rights. This tool could be used against a delinquent painter or construction company to effect payment. If there is a lien against a house, it poses problems concerning the sale of the house in question. It was my duty to stress to the sales people the recording of the address of the house where the paint is applied. It was not entirely foolproof since the mixed nature of the items muddy the lien rights. However, it was a good tool.

The time lien rights in the amount of several thousands of dollars became an issue was with an unreliable construction outfit (not a regular customer) who did not or could not make final payment over the proper length of time. Despite our advice that we intended to exercise our lien rights just prior to lien rights expiration, payment did not arrive until the day before expiration. The problem was the check (payment in full was drawn on their account in a small town about 100 miles from Albuquerque. I called the bank toward the end of the day and was advised that yes the account covered the amount of the check.

Knowing that clearing the check in regular channels (with the good possibility that it might be returned non-sufficient over which time our lien would expire along with our rights to property, I decided upon a course of action. Rising early the next morning, I got into our trustworthy Plymouth and headed to the site of the bank and was on hand when the doors opened. I asked for the bank president, explained our position and asked for a bank check made out to Sherwin-Williams in exchange for the builder's check, which we would endorse over to the bank. The surprise bank manager stated that he would have to confer with the builders, which he did by phone and result was that I did get the bank check, the lien rights were no longer relevant and I left town with the bank check in hand.

Like the water works in Topeka, the builder payment dilemma was "sacred". This was a real coup for

a relatively inexperienced credit manager. The ride home was pleasant.
Another payment situation involving a larger building contractor was one where the contractor happened to be a local professional wrestler whose name (Slovic) escapes me. He also had a foreman who was a former tackle on the University of New Mexico football team. The contractor lacked reserve funds so the work was on a shoestring basis. The contractor wanted to use our paint and we, of course, wanted to sell him. So it was worked out on a "joint check" basis. When the contractor was paid by the construction company, the check was made out to the contractor and Sherwin-Williams. Under this arrangement, the entire check in payment for the contractor's service was endorsed over to us. After deducting the total among us for point supplied. I would write our check to the contractor for the balance.
Fine. Everybody happy, but there was a slight kicker. When the contractor presented our check to our bank for cash, our bank balked at obliging due to the amount of the check involved, and lack of knowledge of the paint contractor. As a result, it was necessary for our branch manager to go to our bank with the contractor to vouch for the transaction after which the bank obliged by cashing the check.
Still fine. But the second time around, Bernie, the manager, asked me to do the vouching. Which I was happy to do, no problem. Almost, that is. Between our store and the bank, there was a bar. The two _____customers suggested that the transaction be celebrated by having a refreshment of two. It was a nice time with each of the two regaling me with their experiences in the ring and football field. Being a conscientious employee, I tried to head back to the store to resume my duties after a couple of drinks with these two huge guys, on either side of me, insisting in a friendly way that we have another, what can a guy do but oblige. The next one was a boilermaker (I believe a short washed down by a beer, a mixture that I was not accustomed to). By the time I was in the spirit of the thing and when I finally left, it was a matter of wobbling the two blocks to the store. In retrospect, I guess the two guys were having fun getting the credit man looped and perhaps a measure of repayment for the strict handling of the account.
Back at the store I did not return to my desk but rather sat in the back area, staring dully at nothing in particular. When manager Bernie came back to inquire as to how I was, I advised him that the experience was "beyond the call of duty" and that if there was any further vouching to be done, he could do it himself. Whereupon, I repaired to my trusty Plymouth, which somehow got me to 220 Quincy N.E. and to my understanding and sympathetic wife. A short day at the store!
Over a period of time, I developed a certain measure of expertise in the art of getting people to part with their money (in payment of the account, hopefully within terms). Which was a good thing because low "past due" plus minimal write-off of debts had a lot to do with the "bonus". As indicated before, my salary was modest and the earning of the yearly bonus was a necessity. In addition to the above factors, a good audit rating was a must. That facet was not a problem and my "excellent" ratings were practically a certainty. Seems to me that there was another factor in the bonus structure, which I cannot recall at this time. Nonetheless, with the children growing older our expenses were mounting, hence that need for a full annual bonus. As I do recall our fiscal year ended August 31st, and the bonus check (net $1200) arrived around early October. I still have one of the bankbooks of that time indicating the balance, refurbished with the bonus amount being lowered over the year by periodic withdrawals until the balance neared zero, at which time another yearly bonus built the balance up again. And that is the way it was in the early days. I believe this is termed as "living on a shoestring".
One thing about the job in Albuquerque, I did have an assistant. The first one was Harry Herrera, a Hispanic, whose father was a Justice of Peace. Harry went on to be a PM salesman (Painter Maintenance). Ruth and I attended Harry's and Emily's wedding. He also stood in as proxy godfather, along with Renee, our sales clerk, for Margaret's baptism. We employed a number of Spanish speaking guys who were a friendly bunch, some of which were Charlie O. (Harrison) and Charlie O. became a subsidiary branch manager. Charlie O. and I attended many a Lobo football game (when the stadium was still on the Central Avenue main campus) and we were rabid rooters.
It was normal for the Hispanics to speak to each other in their native tongue. I once attended a class (night) at the University in an attempt to learn the Spanish language. It proved to be a limited success (nobody to practice with), but I did retain a smattering of the words. One noon three of the guys were heading out past me and I caught the word "comer" (eat). In a blink, I looked up and said "Wait a

minute, I'll go to lunch with you." That startled the boys and Orlando commented, "We will have to watch this guy". I believe the verbal exchange in Spanish became less frequent, while I was around, after that.

Another assistant proved to be Eric Gaynor, a transplanted Canadian. Eric previously worked for the Canadian Railroad, so we had something in common. The rigorous winter weather in Canada palled on Eric so he, along with his wife, Bet, headed south. Also, the man was a nut when it came to horses. Looking ahead, when Eric Retired in the Alamogordo area, he bought a small spread (his ranch) and had several of his beloved quarter horses. It was my privilege to sponsor Eric when he became a United States citizen, a proud moment for him and a good one for me. We still exchange cards and notes to this day. Unfortunately, his life long cigarette habit has caught up with him. He is on oxygen and Bet now writes the notes for him, but in those notes one can be discerned Eric's indomitable and every cheerful spirit.

As mentioned previously, I did develop a good rapport with the painter sales customers, a varied lot. And in doing so, I learned much about dealings and communication, the interchange of thoughts and feelings between peoples. On one occasion, one of our painter customer's daughter ran into a serious medical problem, which required an excessive amount of blood. The word reached our store and we responded. The manager and PMI rep contributed $10.00 each to purchase pints of blood. Not having the necessary $10.00, I headed for the hospital and donated a pint of Krawczyk blood. And that was the end of it, almost. Some time later our store put on a sizeable painter meeting and party. I was surprised when a lady came up to me and identified herself as the girl's mother (she did pull through). The mother's sincere and heartfelt thanks made the occurrence even more worthwhile to me.

The earning of a college degree triggered a desire, and then a goal, of having all of our children attend college. Again this was, at the time, a far cry from reality. I can recall walking around our block, with Ruth, discussing the subject and wondering how on earth we could swing such a program. I whipped up a large chart listing vertically the names of the children and horizontally the years. Upon completion of a years work, I would put a check mark on the chart for each child. Never could remember what happened to that document. The answer to the above "wondering" surprisingly played itself out over the year.

These are random memories and certainly not in chronological order. But there are so many and to record them all would be quite weighty. For instance, early on the local dairy ran a contest, advertised on the local TV station, asking for names to be assigned to three newborn calves-a Jersey, a Guernsey, and a Holstein. Sitting there with the youngsters, the kids suggested that I try to name the calves. Inspiration time! Being from New Jersey, the Jersey became Jo-Jo. It then followed that the other two should be named Go-Go, and Ho-Ho. Turned out that our entry was the winner. However, more memorable was an appearance on TV with Kathy, Mary and John, who I was holding throughout the program. And, one day, a billboard in the area featured Jo-Jo, Go-Go and Ho-Ho, as did the milk cartons for some time. Fun!

And then there were the fireworks every 4th of July. I must admit that this was a very uneasy time for me, especially with the kids running around and waving the sparklers. I had a time trying to keep them a safe distance from each other. The remainder of the fireworks I would ignite myself. Which on one occasion led to an embarrassing situation the youngsters never would let me forget. We had the fireworks activity on the front lawn of 220 Quincy NE. The light evidently was quite dim because I attempted to ignite one piece that never would light. After a closer inspection, it seemed that I was trying to light a broken jump rope handle with a part of the rope sticking out of the handle end. Yup!

Other than trips we made back to New Jersey at vacation time, the only other trip that comes to mind was a journey down to Carlsbad Caverns at the time there were no elevators down to the bottom of the 750-foot level. The other youngsters could manage for themselves, but transportation for Marg was a bit of a problem, so I lifted the young girl up so that she straddled my shoulders-and that's the way we made the complete tour, down and up. When I think back to the holding John at the TV studio and toting Marg through the Carlsbad Caverns, it seems a bit hard to believe.

The holidays through out the year engendered family traditions. Easter was always a big holiday with the girls sporting their new outfits tailored by Grandma Bachi's dear friend Mrs. Hawthorne back in New Jersey. Of course, cameraman Dad had to pose them along the lines of models. The Easter egg hunt early in the morning (too early) was a source of excitement for the kids. Christmas was always

duly celebrated. St4rangely enough, in a part of the country where the pine was the predominant tree, it was difficult finding and buying a full-bodied tree. In fact many bordered upon being scraggly. Fortunately, mother Ruth was a master at handing tinsel. Scraggly, or whatever, to Kathy, Mary and John the appearance did not diminish the fun they had decorating our annual Christmas tree.

As the years passed, it became apparent that son John had inherited his father's love of sports. So I fashioned and painted, in the back room of the store, a basketball backboard, regulation size, of course, and fastened it to the side of our detached garage. John was a little feller at the time so I placed the basket at a height of six feet. John took to it immediately and spent hours trying to put the ball in the hoop. Later it seems that John told his mother that his stomach was bothering him. Although we could not find any specific reason for the problem, evidentially Ruth came up with the diagnosis-stomach muscle strain developed from trying to reach the height of the basket. Needless to say, there was an adjustment made pronto.

I can not recall which of the eight years we lived in Albuquerque it was that we made our first luxury item purchase, a mahogany piano (the color in vogue at the time). The purchase price was in the area of $500, which called for a small down payment and subsequent monthly payments for about two years. Both Kathy and Mary were taking lessons. One day when I arrived home from work the girls advised me that they had a surprise for me, whereupon they sat at the piano and produced a note-perfect duet rendition of the "Song of the Islands." For this ex-Hawaiian, it was a delightful and memorable event.

The girls were into scouting under the leadership of their mother, Ruth. As part of the activity, shows were put on at the customer room of a local bank-modeling, plays, etc. When it came to the plays, there was a need for props and that was where I became involved. Which put a strain upon my imagination and creativity. The "wishing well" turned out to be a "ten", using branches and materials scrounged from the back of the store (using Sherwin-Williams paints, of course).

It was customary in our household to eat all meals together, a custom that prevailed throughout the entire upbringing of all the children. When it came to the main course, particularly roast beef, I would cut up the portions of the meat, which was a habit, started when the kids were small. Unconsciously, this procedure prevailed throughout the years. I was a member of the Holy Name Society, and it was the custom for us to put on a dinner at the local orphanage at Christmas time. When I saw for the first time the expertise displayed by those little ones in the handling of a knife and fork, it dawned on me that I had far overextended the function at home. From that point on it was every youngster for themselves.

Year 1960 found me still enscounsed in the same job. By that time, I was growing a tad restless. The former credit manager, Ralph Way, had gone into credit9ing and our location became part of his territory. It was always good to see Ralph, who without fail gave me an "excellent" audit rating, and, in talking to him, the auditing field began to develop a certain amount of appeal. Enough, that is, so that I expressed to our regional office in Kansas City a desire to look into that field. As a result, I made a trip into the Cleveland headquarters office and visited with the audit department personnel. In doing so, the feel that I developed was that the auditing function was rather stra-ight-laced and pretty much "by the numbers". As I walked the short distance form Central Avenue to 200 Quincy upon my return, it struck me that would be appending a great amount of time from my little family if working in the auditing field. That thought certainly was a negative. After talking it over with Ruth, we decided to forego pursing that possibility.

I also learned that there was a position of similar stature in the Rubberset division (brushes, rollers, etc.) of our company, which is located in Crisfield, Maryland. The thought of working back East did have an appeal. However, that possibility did not work out.

Evidently these inquiries made it apparent to management that their credit manager in Albuquerque would like a move up. Shortly thereafter, a job opened up in Oklahoma City, which afforded management an opportunity to solve the problem of what appeared to be discontentment by their man in the Sunshine State. The Oklahoma City centralized credit manager was being "kicked" upstairs to the manager's job of the Oklahoma City Main Store. The credit job was basically the same-the difference was in the total number of branches (stores) controlled and the volume of receivables handled, plus the larger salary afforded.

Again, it was "conference time". In our discussion, it became pretty much apparent to Ruth and myself that this move was pretty much a necessity. It should be kept in mind that in those days, jobs

were not as plentiful as they are in our present continued growth economy. The negative, of course, was that it would mean uprooting the kids from the area, which had become their home. Kathy and Mary now were approaching the teens and the infant John became eight years of age. Even the native New Mexican, Marg, had reached the ripe old age of four. But the acceptance of the Oklahoma City job became a reality, and we prepared to take leave of Albuquerque and the Sunshine State.

Our stay in Albuquerque was a good. One. It was a good place to rear children. The high elevation and dry air provided an environment in which the children spent a good portion of their time out of doors. The location was such that the kids came in contact with different ethnic groups and learned the ways of other peoples. Even to this day, Kathy, Mary, John and Mary (to a more limited degree), look back with fondness to their years in Albuquerque and never miss an opportunity to visit while in that part of the country. For Ruth and myself, it is a matter of looking back with satisfaction to the time frame of the formative years of our growing family.

The first step of the transition was traveling to Oklahoma City to become familiar with the area and, in my case, the people associated with the Oklahoma City Main branch. Bob Douglas, the credit manager I was replacing, turned out to be a friendly and capable person. And very much instrumental in helping us to find a place to rent. It turned out to be a house in Midwest City, located near Tinker Air Force Base, which housed the gigantic B-52 bomber. These four engine monsters created a ruckus passing over our house, which was situated in the landing pattern. The first indication that a B-52 was coming in was the flickering of the TV picture. Then the Venetian blinds would rattle, leading to a crescendo as the plane passed overhead. If one happened to be on the phone at the time, it was a matter of putting a halt to the conversation until the plane passed out of range.

Arrangements to occupy the house were completed, and it was time for Ruth to drive back to Albuquerque to rejoin the youngsters and Grandma, who held down the fort while we were gone. This meant that Ruth would undertake a long distance trip on her own, for the first time as it developed. Ruth handled the responsibility in fine fashion. Apparently her main concern was keeping pace with the run as she sped westward.

As it developed, our stay in Oklahoma was relatively short-a little less than two years. Our residence in Midwest City was almost a year. The family rejoined me, and we settled in for the summer of 1960. The children were enrolled in St. Phillip's and completed a school year at that location.

An unusual development took place in that we were contacted by phone by a Mrs. Hodur, whose maiden name was Krawczyk. It was unusual in that Mrs. Hodur was the secretary for St. Patrick's in Oklahoma City itself. Which puzzled me at this point until Ruth explained that I had enrolled at St. Patrick's church upon arrival in anticipation of settling in that parish. At any rate, Florence spotted our name, hence the telephone call. So were fortunate in developing a friendship in our new location, which has lasted to the present day.

One of the first orders of business was to erect a basketball backboard, which was attached to the house over the garage. This was a source of pleasure for son John and myself, but turned out to be a source of distraction for the lady of the house with the constant thumping when the ball hit the backboard. However, Ruth was a good sport and the backboard remained.

Our stay at 625 Bradley Circle, was a somewhat short. One recollection that comes to mind involved tornados. It should be mentioned that Oklahoma City is locate d in what is characterized as "tornado alley". When a tornado watch developed into a tornado warning, the local TV stations relayed the need to take cover with flashing alerts on the screen. And local squad cars would prowl the streets emitting distinctive siren wails. It so happened that on one occasion a tornado seemed to be heading for Oklahoma City, which evidently became alerted to our area and everybody headed for the protection of the hangars of Tinker Air Force Base. That is, everybody but the Krawczyk family, for as it occurred, we were not aware of what was taking place since we all slept through the whole thing.

After having the advantages of home ownership as a positive and the constant overhead air traffic negative, Ruth and I decided to forego living in Midwest City. We like the area in which the Hodurs resided, particularly since it was in the St. Patrick's parish. That, despite the fact that St, Pat's did not have a church building proper. Mass was held in the basement of the school. But more on that later. The property that we bought was on Shawnee and again was in the $11,000 range.

Cannot leave Midwest City without recounting what took place just prior to the move. One afternoon,

Bob Douglas took me aside and asked whether I had heard from Ruth within the past half hour. Apparently a fighter plane coming in for a landing at Tinker Air Force Bas had malfunctioned and crashed into one of the houses in the landing pattern, setting the house on fire and killing an occupant. I got on the phone, contacted Ruth who assured me that the family was all right and gave me the following story.

"I was standing in front of the garage talking to a lady who was interested in renting 625 Bradley. I looked up and was amazed to see a man's legs hanging in the air. This was followed by a loud crash (when the plane hit the house a few blocks away)."

What Ruth saw was the pilot of the plane who ejected when the plane went out of control and crashed several blocks away. I must ask Ruth as to whether she knew the outcome of the conversation with the lady. Did she or did she not rent the house? In any event, it was a rather close call.

The timing of the move was such that there was a short interval in which to repaint the entire interior of the house. Armed with paint, rollers and other equipment needed to complete the job, I headed for Shawnee after work. I do not recall how many after hour sessions it took to get the job done, but I can recall vividly working past three in the morning, getting caught up in the spirit of the activity. What I remember most was doing the overhead work (ceilings) and the extreme neck muscle pain resulting from the awkward position. But when we did move in it was to a freshly painted interior, which was a source of satisfaction to all.

As indicated previously, St. Patrick's church did not have a church building. Due to the size of the congregation, the need for a church was immediate, so the church members undertook the talks of building one. And most of the work was accomplished by parishioners buttressed by work sub-contracted in areas that we could not handle, such as the complete glass enclosure of the sanctuary that in turn was enclosed by a concrete shell. A Mexican craftsman who excelled at that type of architecture was brought in to build that part of the church. The design was simple, rectangular in shape. The most imposing feature was the bell tower from which three bells were suspended. As I recall, my main contribution was taking pieces of irregularly shaped slate, all of which was more or less the same thickness. This amounted to innumerable hours of shaping pieces of slate on a power saw which were equipped with diamond tipped saw blades. Despite the fact that no two pieces of slate were alike in size or configuration, it was surprising to me that they could, through trial and error, be fitted closely together, which was another activity that I was involved in, the bedding of the slate pieces and filling in the cracks with concrete). All this activity resulted, I believe, in covering the floor of the entire church which when cleaned, and polished, resulted in a very attractive and durable floor. One, which I am sure, will outlast the lifetime of the industrious volunteer workers.

Some time back, Florence Hodur told us that a plaque, listing the names of the parishioners who worked on building the church, was placed in the entrance. Fortunately, Florence, who still resides in Oklahoma City, had seen the list of names being gathered and brought our name as volunteers, to the attention of the church. We have not been in St. Patrick's since our residence there, however, it is gratifying to know that we were so recognized as having participated in the building of the church.

Again, a new house, therefore, a new backboard. Since our house on Shawnee was constructed of brick, I could not very well fasten the backboard to the structure. So, it was a matter of locating a four-inch diameter steel pole and attaching the wood backboard to it in the back of the house. And as a sidelight, this is where I was to learn of the tenacity of Mother Nature. The area in front of the basket was fully covered with green grass initially, which then was methodically beaten down and worn by foot activity. That is, to a point where all the green grass disappeared and all that was left was a fine network of string like vine on bare ground. I figured the grass to be long gone, but, after basketball season ended and the onset of another season the following year, to my amazement, the grass came back as full and verdant as it was originally. I cannot recall the type of grass we had, but it must have been along the lines of Zoysia.

Most of our social life was tied in with the Hodurs-Stanley, Florence and their two daughters-Rita and Betty. Stan worked for the government. Originally, they were from the Chicago area, which has a large Polish-American population.

With Easter approaching, Stanley decided to make some "kielbasa" (Polish sausage). And only with

the finest ingredients! The necessary equipment (a hard powered meat grinder and the meats-beef, veal and some pork), along with the casing. Plus the necessary spices, particularly garlic. It was a two family project, and those who were not physically active in the production of the quality sausage lent support. Quality was stressed because "store bought" kielbasa was generally regarded by true Poles as not being quite up to par, particularly since a high percentage is pork. As it developed, the quantity was quite abundant and divided equally between the two families.

After the completion of the manufacture of the kielbasa, it then was necessary to let it dry. At home, I propped a couple of cleaned broom handles on supports and hung our share of the links of sausage on the broom handles in the kitchen. Well, Stanley must have had a heavy hand when he laced the meats with garlic. We all awoke the following morning to be greeted with an exceptionally strong scent of garlic, quite overpowering. Up came the windows, open came the doors, to allow a draft of fresh air. I do not know whether the EPA existed at the time, but, if so, I am confident we would have been cited. Glad to report that the sausage was a gastronomic success and was consumed by all in a relatively short period of time.

On the subject of food, while Grandma Bachi was visiting us she prepared a quantity of "pirogi" (cheese filled pockets of dough). The technique was in taking prepared circles of dough, pressing the balls of cheese (or other ingredients) into the dough, then folding the dough over in half, and sealing the edges by pinching. (It is my understanding that some "pinchers" are so adept that they have a signature crimp). After the pirogi was cooked, a good portion was hand-delivered to the Sister's house at St. Philip's, much to the delight of the several Polish-American nuns serving the parish.

I can recall John's activity in baseball while in Oklahoma City. At that age, the youngster's motor skills were not fully developed. One area that was particularly weak was pitching and most of the scoring was done by a succession of walks. On one occasion I was rooked into being an umpire. To prevent the game from being a constant series of walks, if the young pitcher got the ball anywhere near the strike zone, I would call the pitch a strike. Now some of the parents of ballplayers proved to be a tad overzealous. One mother on the opposing side kept up a steady barrage of criticism of my umpiring. After being verbally blasted over several innings, it reached a point where I had had it. Taking the ball from our pitchers hand, I walked over to the impolite lady, held the ball in front of her face and, in effect, invited her to take over the umpiring to see if she could do any better. The result was complete silence from both the lovely lady and her husband, so I was able to return to my umpiring post and the game was completed without further critiquing on the part of any of the spectators.

While I have been critical of some of the spectators as noted above, in a sense I guess I had my moments also. Since pitching was a weakness and John had a pretty good arm as an infielder, I started to work with him to see what he could do as a pitcher. While waiting at a service station where our car was being worked on, I marked out the proper distance, fashioned a home plate and found that he had good consistency. After my talking to his coach, John was given the next start. He did so well that the team became excited and enthusiastic. I was no better and kept up a steady barrage of encouragement until the point that the umpire ordered me away from the backstop.

Every so often I would hear a person irreverently refer to Oklahoma City as a "cow town". In fact, however, Oklahoma City was quite an interesting city. First of all, it is the state capitol and the largest city in the state of Oklahoma. Its economy is diversified and is the headquarters of a vast natural gas and oil region, and there were producing oil fields located within residential and business areas. I know that I was surprised when I first saw the state ground with oil derricks actively working on the premises. The city is also Oklahoma's chief livestock and cotton distributing center. Some of the other industries included automobile assembly plants, electrical products, iron works, etc.

Oklahoma City was part of the historic rider to an 1889 appropriations bill which opened the unassigned lands. President Benjamin Harrison proclaimed a "run" to start at noon on 4/22/19889. Some 100,000 people-by wagon train, horseback and foot raced into the area to stake 10,000 claims. The hustlers did not wait. They entered the area in advance and became known as "Sooners" a term that gave Oklahoma its nickname, including the University of Oklahoma football team. In the next few years, there were four more runs, the largest being the opening of the Cherokee Strip, along the Kansas border. In 1907, Oklahoma became our 49th State. So when we resided in Oklahoma City, the state was only 53 years old.

Oklahoma City's part in the above outlined run came when the site was opened to settlement on the

afternoon of 4/22/1889. By nightfall, a tent colony of about 10,000 settlers had been established. The city grew rapidly and became the state capitol in 1910.
Frequently, I would have occasion to pass the campus of the Oklahoma City University. Little did I know that the time would come when I almost became a student at the school. The fancied desire to attend law school, which originated back in our Washburn University days, never left me. Apparently, I thought that attending night school was a possibility so I gave it a short. Again, after talking the matter over with Ruth, we decided to give it a try. This involved taking an entrance exam, which, as I recall, involved a variety of subjects from architecture to law. As it turned out, I evidently had a sufficient amount of a general knowledge on a variety of subject to enable me to pass the examination and be accepted by the law school. And I was prepared to do so, but fate intervened, and I never stepped in to a Oklahoma City Law School classroom

Despite the above, the law school desire had not been played out.
Some of the things remembered about residence in Oklahoma were the red (more like orange) coloring of the clay soil, the hot weather extending into late October, the rabid support of the University of Oklahoma (Sooners) football team invariably a top rated team in the country, visits to Roman Nose, a unique swimming pool with natural rock design, among many other things.
I enjoyed my work as centralized credit manager, overseeing the credit function of the main branch (store) and three outlying branches. Our personnel cooperated well and things in general went smoothly. Then, after a relatively short stay in Oklahoma City, I was offered a job in the Southwest Region office located in Kansas City, Missouri, as a credit supervisor. Not only would it be a step up, but also would place it close to Topeka and Ruth's relatives living in the area. Again, after due deliberation, it was decided that the family would make the move.

The next step was a trip by me to visit the Southwestern Area office, and also to look around for prospective housing. Kansas City proper, Independence, and areas across the state line into Kansas were explored. Eventually the activity led me to the planned community developed by J. C. Nichols Co in Prairie Village, Kansas. The house I zeroed in on was nice, rather small for the size of our family ,but in the range of our affordability-11,000-11,500. It was then back to O.C. to complete the arrangements for our departure, principally the sale of our house on Shawnee. That proved to be little in the way of a problem since it was a seller's market. In fact, the evening following the sale of the sale, we received a frantic call from a lady wanting to know whether the house was still available. In those days there was little in the way of appreciation., and often the sale of a house could be accomplished without the services of a realty company. Again the selling price was in the area of 11,000. Although we did not realize any appreciation on the sale, we did however realize a benefit in that it provided housing during the Oklahoma City stay-ergo no rental expense.
So, in August, 1962 our family headed toward the site of my new job. There was some delay in getting our household goods up to Prairie Village which left us temporarily displaced. This was resolved by our being put up in a Kansas City (Kansas) hotel at the expense of the company. In a way the youngsters were delighted because our room was on the third floor. Therefore, they enjoyed us use of an elevator which to them was a new experience and fun.
On the other hand, the relocation involved inconvenience caused by the disruption in our family life. In those days, company moves from one area to another were generally accepted, thus uprooting the family. The husband was the "breadwinner" in the majority of cases, and the wife devoted her time and energy to the rearing of the family. Today routine acceptance of company moves are no longer automatic, since in numerous cases the wives hold down jobs as well, and, in some instances, command higher salaries. This being the case many prospective moves are declined when the overall effect is not to the overall benefit of the family

This move to the Kansas City Southwest Area office did present some problems. While Ruth and the children were put up in the afor4ementioned hotel, I had to return to Oklahoma City to complete some unfinished business. The movers were slow in getting our household goods up to Prairie Village, partly because of the Labor Day holiday. The fast food diet was beginning to take its toll. We were at that time looking forward to greeting youngster five, and Ruth had a stomach problem along with

some of the kids. In the meantime, Ruth had enrolled the children in the Prairie Village schools. Each day it was a matter of shuttling to the house and waiting for the arrival of the furniture, . After Labor Day, the movers arrived, as did the head of the household, so everything began to fall into place. Life in Prairie Village was underway.