

MEMORIES

JIM YUNKER

1995

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THE HOME TOWN - LOUISVILLE, KENTUCKY

In the 1920s and 30s our hometown was a rather sleepy edge-of-the-South city. The two major industries were tobacco and whiskey. The Louisville and Nashville Railroad and river barges carried a lot of traffic through town on the way south and west. The Ohio River was a dominant feature. Besides the barge traffic, there were several paddle-wheel river boats for excursions, with music and dancing. The only manufacturing operations were Hillerich and Bradsby baseball bats, Ballard's flour mill, and Belnap, hardware items.

As I saw it then, Louisville was a beautiful place. We had large tree-filled parks, seven of them, all named after Indian tribes. The biggest were Cherokee, Seneca, and Iroquois, very handsome to this day. Many big old homes graced our neighborhood, the Highlands. They had nice lawns and a profusion of greenery. Oak, elm and chestnut trees were everywhere.

A large proportion of the population was of immigrant stock, especially from the big influx from Europe of the 1860s to 1890s. All our great-grandparents were part of that mass movement to the New World. Just as today, where Hispanic or Vietnamese immigrants congregate together in specific neighborhoods for mutual support, so our forebears created German, Irish, and Italian neighborhoods in Louisville. During our childhood those areas were still largely of one ethnic group.

The most numerous and organized were the Germans. They operated Kindergartens, Turnervereins (early version of the health clubs of today), Liederkrantz choral societies, and several German-language newspapers.

Margaret's mother went to a Catholic school, St. Francis, and had a bi-lingual education: morning classes were in English, afternoon classes in German. As adults, she and her sisters would sometimes converse in German, but only when they didn't want the children to know what they were talking about.

On Margaret's mother's side the Haucks, Bierleins, and Raques were originally from Catholic Bavaria, and came to the U.S. by way of Canada.

On her father's side, the Kaelins had come from the very center of Switzerland, the canton of Schwyz, which was staunchly Catholic.

Both the Kaelins and the Bisigs probably got the impetus to come to our area from other Swiss arrivals, including the priests of St. Meinrad's Abby in Indiana. Their headquarters in the old country was at Einsiedeln in the canton of Schwyz.

Land was scarce in Switzerland for farmers and dairymen, but plentiful in Indiana and Kentucky, so the word spread and we got the benefit of good Swiss blood in Louisville.

We visited central Switzerland in 1990, and found the phone books in Schwyz and Einsiedeln listed many Kaelins and Bisigs. There were several spellings of Kaelin, the most common of which was Kalin. There was a variant of Bisig also, Bissig. This spelling was prominent in Lucerne on the sides of the bright yellow buses of a public transportation company.

The Yunkers of our family came from East Prussia. According to German-American dictionaries, a Junker (J in German is pronounced like Y in English) was a member of the "landowning class", also "minor nobility". Why put in "minor"? Oh well.

Old German law prevented the breakup of landed estates by providing that everything went to the oldest son. Thus the younger sons had to do something else, and there were three major avenues: the military; the church; and emigration. We know from history how important Prussian Junkers were to German military power, but Grandpa Yunker's forebears chose emigration.

According to my cousin Yvonne Yunker, her mother, Aunt Marie, said that Yunker was simply an Americanization of *junge herr*, in English, young man or young sir. "No indeed," said Sylvester, Yvonne's brother, "it was nobility. You mean BARON von Jungeherr!"

"The fact is", says my brother Michael, "our branch of the family were not Junkers. Their real name was Smitz. When those Germans would assemble in Hamburg to take ship to America, there were always a few Junkers and a lot of Smitzes. Now everybody knew that the Junkers were somebody, while the Smitzes were nobody.

"So when they arrived in America, got off the boat and declared their names to the immigration people, there were a LOT of Junkers and very few Smitzes!"

My mother's parents were both Irish: Veazey on her father's side and White on her mother's. These particular Irish were Protestants from Northern Ireland. No one knows

whether these Northern Ireland Veazeys had originally been Catholic, and abjured their faith to escape persecution from the English overlords. If so, I feel sure they kept their fingers crossed while taking the oath of allegiance to the King.

While in Ireland one year, we visited Kilkenny Castle. Our guide allowed as how he was an expert on the origin of Irish names, so I asked about Veazey. He thought, then said, "Well, there was a Norman knight with William the Conqueror named De Vecsi." Why not? More "minor" nobility in the family background, and from ten centuries ago!)

The Veazeys had first come to Canada, then to the u.s. Mom's grandparents had a farm in Indiana before moving to Louisville.

(The idea that there is Indian blood from the Veazeys is almost surely a romantic fabrication. Mom told us about it, but with a mischievous twinkle in her eye.

The story goes that the Veazeys arrived in Indiana just as the Civil War started, and mature single males were subject to conscription. A Veazey son fled to the West to avoid the draft. He returned after the war with an Indian wife and a papoose, who would have grown up to become my grandmother. BUT, anyone who knew Grandma Veazey, with her white Irish skin and blue eyes, would have a very hard time believing that she was half Indian.)

Then there were the Italians, concentrated around Second Street, where my grandmother Carlotta Gazzolo grew up. They were mostly green-grocers and fruit merchants. Catholics, of course.

The Gazzolos came originally from Genoa. Grandmother's father was a six foot two, bearded Italian with red hair and blue eyes! He was called "Il Canone" (The Cannon), because reputedly he had fought with Garibaldi in the unification of Italy.

An ethnic slur aimed at Italian-Americans when I was young was to call them Wops. The term originated with the immigration people. It was shorthand for immigrants, many of them from Italy, who had arrived "Without Papers", hence WOPS.

With all these ethnic groups now mingling together, it was inevitable that inter-marriage, though still infrequent around the turn of the century, would take place.

For us it began with my father's parents, a Yunker marrying a Gazzolo. Then Dad, German-Italian, married 100

Irish Ruth Veazey. Thus me and my siblings are 50 Irish, 25 German, and 25 Italian.

Dad liked to say that we were in terrible shape. "Enough German to make you want to work hard and be well organized, but the Italian "dolce far niente", and the Irish other-worldliness will cause confusion in your lives."

Now, since your mother's heritage is half German and half Swiss, you are 37.5 German, 25 Swiss, 25 Irish, and 12.5 Italian. That 62.5 Germanic strain makes you A-OK thinkers and workers, while the Irish and Italian provides charm and romance. A great combination.

Louisville then had a rather unique situation in the public high schools. They were not co-ed! No. There were two boys' high schools: Male High for those going on to college, and Manual for those going directly into a trade. The girls had five public high schools. For Catholics there was St. Xavier for boys and several good schools for girls, including Presentation Academy, your mother's Alma Mater. I went to public schools, and attended Male High.

Today's environmentalists would go absolutely bonkers if they spent just one day during the winter in the Louisville of the 1920s and '30s. Coal was the heating fuel for homes, businesses, and industry. Coal smoke was everywhere, and when atmospheric conditions were wrong the smoke didn't rise, but hung like a dense cloud above our heads. We would sometimes come home from high-school "downtown", with a ring of coal dust on our collars and cuffs. Coal dust and ash were the bane of homemakers, who waged a daily battle to keep houses and clothes clean. The other seasons were different, with good air, though summers could be HOT.

The residential neighborhoods during our childhood were lively with activities which have disappeared from the American scene. The iron and steel junk man and the rag man came around regularly with their carts. Few houses had electric refrigerators, and the iceman appeared three times a week. The milk man delivered every day. Grocery stores delivered telephoned orders. (Margaret remembers her mother, to the chagrin of the delivery boy, insisting on opening the packages of meat to examine them before paying.)

Vegetable and fruit vendors pushed their carts down the streets bringing fresh produce to our door, singing or chanting about their wares. The tinker brought around his portable grindstone to sharpen knives.

One welcome visitor for children was the man who brought extracts for flavoring cold drinks: cherry, root beer, lime, which were greatly superior to the Kool-Aid packages in the stores. Also vanilla for home-made ice cream. And, oddly enough, medical disinfectants for cuts and abrasions.

Especially memorable in the Highlands were the horse-drawn Donaldson's Bakery carts. These came around several times a week, with their enticing aromas of pastries and fresh bread.

The neighborhoods were busy!

Today there is only one regular visitor, the mailman. But even he doesn't match his predecessor. Until World War II, mail was delivered twice a day.

And during the big depression of '29 to '33, unemployed men knocked at the door, offering to do yard work or some repair around the house for a dollar or a meal. Mom never turned anyone away empty-handed.

A common southern situation existed in Louisville: segregation. Blacks were concentrated mostly west of downtown and near the river. They had their own schools; churches; were not allowed in the central public library downtown; sat in the balcony only at movie houses. Blacks did not appear in the parks in the Highlands or Crescent Hill; nor in the public swimming pools in the white sections.

Black men were almost all laborers. The women worked mainly as maids and cooks for white people.

As a boy it simply never occurred to me to question the existing situation. Perhaps it should have, but it didn't.

1824 ROSEDALE

We grew up in a big old wood frame house. It had been bought in 1919 by my parents and Dad's parents together. It needed a lot of work, and became the gracious home we remember through their joint efforts over many years.

The house had two floors, then a steeply pitched slate roof, and a striking tower/cupola on top.

It was divided right down the middle by large hallways on both floors. Mom and Dad had one side and the grandparents the other. There was a kitchen, dining room, and living room on both sides of the first floor. Then upstairs, as time went on and we children were born, we expanded into four bedrooms and a "play room". Grandma and Grandpa had the other bedroom.

1824 Rosedale was filled with fine old oak and cherry wood furniture. Pieces such as one sees today only when touring ante-bellum mansions in the South. Dad's bed, for example, was a lofty canopied four-poster. The ceilings were high, and the large rooms were well-lighted by tall windows.

Dad's taste was for the ornate, which suited the expansive character of the house. His procedure was to haunt auction houses, especially for estate sales, to pick up LARGE pieces, of a size simply too big for most houses, then as now. Mom's task was to find a place for all the purchases. "For years", she said, "I trembled whenever a moving van came down our street."

Our yard was large, graced by tall trees and filled with flowerbeds, which Dad planted, tended, and made into a show-place garden. When I was about seven he added a rock garden with five pools meandering through it, enlivened with goldfish.

Dad's acknowledged expertise in gardening is attested to by the fact that for several years he authored the Sunday Courier-Journal's gardening column. He cast the articles in the form of an on-going dialog between the book-learned owner of an estate and his gardener, Giuseppe Biagaluppi. They argued over everything: what to plant; when to plant; how and when to care for what was growing; everything. The padrone's citing of material in his books was dismissed with scorn by Giuseppe, who cited his own and his father's experience as superior to anything in books. Somehow they would end in a tenuous truce, and the reader was entertained as well as instructed.

Though large, our house was skimpy on some conveniences. There was only one bathroom upstairs for the four adults and four children until I was about ten. How we managed to share the one bathroom all that time I have no idea, but somehow we did. There was a sink and toilet downstairs, and eventually when I was about ten we acquired a second bathroom upstairs,

Heating was a problem for two reasons. First, only the main living areas and the bathroom were heated, not the bedrooms. I remember leaping out of bed on winter mornings and dashing for the bathroom, shivering until clothes were pulled on. Second, our heat came from a coal-fired furnace in the basement and a small heating stove in Grandma's dining room. Coal heating was messy and dirty, and woe-betide if the fire went out because un-tended.

Arrival of the coal man was an event. The coal was hauled off his truck by hand, carried across the yard, and dumped down a chute into the basement coal storage area, making a big racket. From there it was carried by coal scuttles to the furnace and stoves as needed.

About 1932 Dad installed a gas-fired furnace which served most of the rooms. Out with dirt and fuss, in with good, automatic, heat. Bliss!

At Christmas-time 1824 Rosedale was lighted extensively and beautifully outside by Dad and a co-worker, Mr. Akers. I remember Mr. Akers, a safety rope around his waist, climbing perilously up on top of the cupulo to set in place a large lighted cross. People would come by from allover to admire the decorations.

Inside, in our living room, Pop would erect a BIG tree, about ten feet high and as full and bushy as anyone could wish. It was adorned with literally hundreds of ornaments and lights. That magnificent tree, enhanced by piles of presents around it, dazzled us when we were allowed in on Christmas morning. A sight still vivid in my mind.

With such beauty in our living room, and after all the preparations, no one was in a hurry to see the tree taken down and the ornaments put away. Usually it was February before it was done.

Again, at the Fourth of July, our house became a magnet for the neighborhood. Dad put on a fireworks display on the front lawn which would do credit to any festival. There were always people in the street watching and applauding. We were joined on the porch by Uncle Carl and Aunt Marie with their five, and other assorted friends. Dad was usually assisted by the faithful Mr. Akers.

The house was full of books, paintings, vases, lovely lamps, and all manner of objets d'art, lovingly collected by Dad and Mother. We grew up surrounded by nice things, and were given to understand that art and literature are important to a full enjoyment of the kaleidoscope of life.

1824 Rosedale was a lively establishment with us five kids, Mom and Dad, and Grandma and Grandpa. There was plenty of noise and activity, board and card games galore, in which Mom and Grandma took part. Relatives were often there.

If one can believe the news and books these days, it seems a LOT of people had unhappy childhoods. Well, ours was happy, at least so it seemed to me. Every day wasn't sunshine, of course. There were dust-ups. Loud arguments. Ours was not a strong silent family.



1824 ROSEDALE AVENUE
LOUISVILLE, KENTUCKY



PAT AND ME



PAT, ME AND MOLLY

GRANDPARENTS

Grandpa Yunker began work in his teens as a crate handler for the Denunzios, Louisville's largest fruit wholesalers. It was tough work for Grandpa, but may explain why, though short, he was a bear of a man, very strong.

The patriarchal Mr. Denunzio has a lifesize statue on his ornate tomb in St. Louis Cemetery. There he stands, wearing a suit, his hand resting on a marble crate of marble oranges.

Later on, Grandpa Yunker rose above day laborer work. Self-taught, he became a machinist for a large metal-stamping factory in Louisville, and eventually their master-machinist in charge of maintenance for all the factory equipment. He told us his success was due to being always waiting at the factory door when the head man arrived to unlock the place! No doubt energy and ability had more to do with it.

It was while working for the Denunzios on Second Street that Grandpa met the Genovese Gazollos. They had three daughters, one of whom was Carlotta, my grandmother to be. The spark was there for Arthur Yunker and Carlotto Gazollo, and they married young, at about twenty.

Their union eventually produced three sons: James Arthur, Sylvester Lawrence, and Carl Annunciation. Yes, Annunciation. Grandmother must have had a good reason for wanting to use in Uncle Carl's name that exalted title for the Angel Gabriel's salute to the Blessed Virgin. But I don't know what it was.

Dad liked to tell of Grandpa Yunker's reaction to my Irish mother naming my brother Michael. The "German" strode out onto the porch where Dad was sitting and remonstrated. "Do you mean to tell me you are going to let that boy be called Mike?" Dad said he looked up at his father and asked, "Where were you when my brother was named Carl Annunciation?" Without another word, Grandpa turned around and retired into the house.

Grandpa loved beer, but prohibition held no terror for him because he brewed his own. I remember "helping" him in their kitchen as he filled the bottles, pressed the caps on, and rolled them across the floor to me to line up against the wall.

After the war, when he was in his late seventies, he would sit outside in his chair at the edge of the street,

watching everything that went on and talking with passersby. Often, Jimmy, then about four, would sit in his little chair right alongside Grandpa, chatting away with his great-grandfather.

When Michael returned from military service during the Korean War, he re-entered U. of L's Engineering School to complete his Chemical Engineering degree work. He and Grandpa were sharing a bedroom, and surprisingly, Mike credits Grandpa with getting him through his final two years.

He says, "My grades went to hell at first after I came back, but Grandpa got on my case big-time. He read every one of my textbooks, and would quiz me on things he had noticed. In order to avoid looking like an idiot to Grandpa, I had to absorb enough of the stuff to get by!"

Grandmother Yunker was as slim as Grandpa was burly. She was rather serious in demeanor, except when relatives were visiting or we were playing games together: cards, Monopoly, Pegity. At those times she was as lively as anyone.

Grandma's kitchen was temptingly redolent of the Italian and German dishes she prepared. She made her own pasta, usually spaghetti or ravioli, with wonderful sauces. And for Grandpa she mastered such things as sauerbraten with spaetzli, and of course did the old standby, pork and sauerkraut with mashed potatoes.

Once in a while at dinnertime, we were allowed to draw straws to see who could eat with Grandma and Grandpa. It never occurred to me that Mother's feelings might be hurt by that, since her own meals were excellent.

Grandma Yunker died at seventy-seven, during the war. While trying to pull on her stockings while standing up (!), she fell and broke a hip. An operation was necessary, and it was a failure. She was brought home but went steadily downhill, never leaving her bed until she died.

Your mother was present at the last. People were coming in and out of the room. Dr. Bisig was there, keeping an eye on Grandma, while also leading everyone in saying the Rosary. The end was very peaceful.

Grandpa followed his Carlotta after we had moved to Schenectady. They are buried together in Calvary Cemetery.

The Veazey grandparents lived on Brook street, in the Irish neighborhood.

Grandma Belle Veazey was the sparkplug of the party, very energetic. She was a schoolteacher, eventually becoming the principal of a girls' school. Rather stern and forbidding, she had little sympathy for fun and games.

Grandpa Howard Veazey was serious and quiet. He worked for the Louisville and Nashville Railroad for many years. But after being laid off during the great depression, he never again held a steady job. Doing instead odd jobs for people, mostly painting.

He made some beautiful things, including a handsome black and silver chessboard which was given to me after his death.

Howard Veazey died during the war. Then Grandma Belle moved in with her youngest daughter, Elizabeth, for several years.

After we had moved to Schenectady in 1949, my mother brought her mother into 1824 Rosedale, where Mike remembers her as a scold of the first water.

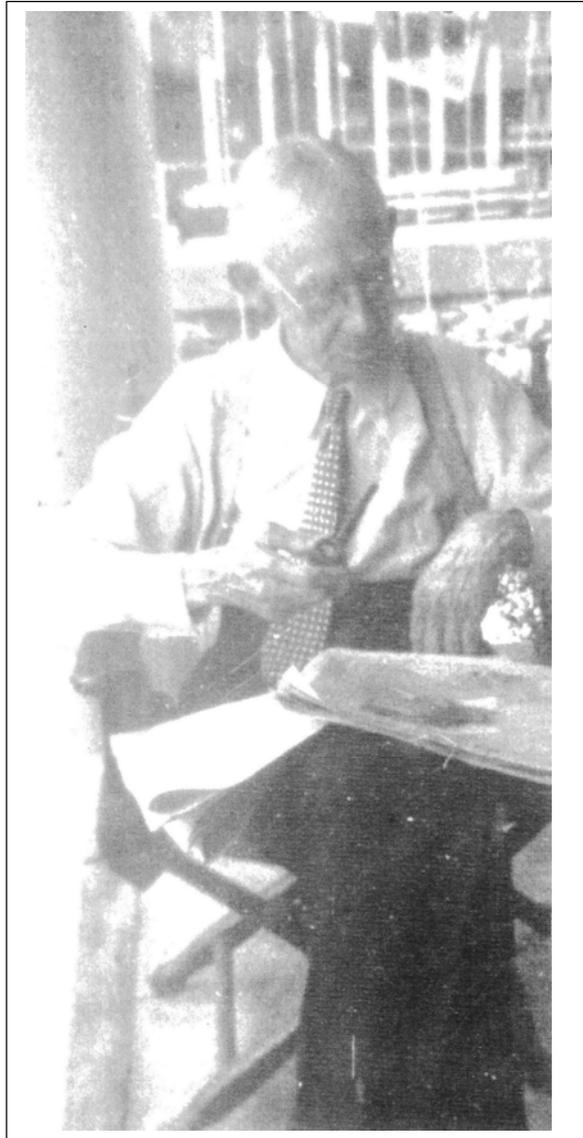
Eventually she became too hard to handle and had to be put into a rest home until her death.



ARTHUR AND CARLOTTA YUNKER WITH THEIR SONS:
SYLVESTER (LEFT), CARL (MIDDLE), JAMES (RIGHT)
ABOUT 1904



GRANDMA AND GRANDPA YUNKER



GRANDPA HOWARD VEAZEY



GRANDMA BELLE VEAZEY WITH
YOUNGEST DAUGHTER ELIZABETH

AUNTS AND UNCLES

The Yunker grandparents had three sons. Dad was the oldest, then Sylvester, finally Carl.

SYLVESTER

Uncle Syl was a SPORT from the word go. Dark, very handsome, debonair, sharp dresser, he yearned to live high, wide, and handsome.

Dad remembered how Syl, when he began stepping out, felt he should have the pick of the three brothers' best duds. Naturally, Dad and Carl didn't see it that way. So Sylvester resorted to stratagems to get what he wanted to wear.

First he would put on his clothes over "borrowed" items of theirs, so they wouldn't notice as he left. Then after that ruse was discovered, he changed to lowering some of their things out of a window in a basket. After submitting to their inspection, he would then step outside and change!

Uncle Syl was as flamboyant and first-class all the way as anyone I've ever known, and he did like to make the grand gesture.

While we were still very young, he was irritated by my Father's refusal to buy an automobile. Dad just said, "I don't need one. The streetcar is fine." Well, one night in summer we were at dinner, the door to the tile patio open. The patio was level with the street at that time. We heard a car coming down the street, and then to our astonishment it turned across our lawn and pulled up on the patio. Uncle Syl got out, tossed a set of keys through the door, said, "Now, dammit, you've got a car!", and strode off.

He married Isabel Barrett, a beautiful woman (Molly somewhat resembles Aunt Izzy) and they produced one son, Milton.

While seeking a way to realize his lofty ambitions, Uncle Syl slogged along a number of years working at various places, including the Louisville Gas and Electric Co. like my Dad. Then he had an INSPIRATION.

There was a lot of oil and gas in western Kentucky, centered around Owensboro, which was starting to be developed in a big way. Uncle Syl determined to move there and become an oil entrepreneur, feeling his way along among such giants

as Mobil, Texaco, Shell, and a myriad of small operators. A bold plan.

But this was in the early thirties, the depression was in full swing, a lot of people had no work, and Syl had no savings. He approached Dad, asking if Pop would support Isabelle and Milton in Louisville while he established himself in Owensboro. Dad said yes, and for a couple of years was the family's main source of funds.

Well, the man from Louisville succeeded magnificently, becoming a real oil multi-millionaire over the next fifteen years. He learned the business from the ground up, wheeled, dealed, bought and sold leases, drilled wells, and cleaned up bigtime! He made light of his success, explaining "It was easy. I studied the geologists of the big companies and decided the Shell man knew the most. Then, wherever Shell bought leases, I bought as close to them as I could. When they hit oil, often enough we'd also find oil on our land."

Because of Dad's generosity during the lean years, Syl gave Pop a one-fourth ownership share in an oil and gas property. No money was earned from it during Dad's lifetime. But later, as part of Mom's Trust, this property was a much needed bonanza, providing her close to \$300,000 over the years from 1968 until her death in 1983. That income enabled Mike, Charlie Bisig, and me to cease sending monthly checks to Mom, which we had been doing since Dad's death in 1958.

On one of his visits to Louisville during the war, Margaret remembers him asking her to run to the store for a pack of cigarettes. She did, he handed her a bill, and when she looked found it was \$100.

On my return from Italy, Syl took me downtown and bought me a really nice suit. I wore it for a long time.

Then, when we moved with Jimmy from Schenectady to Peabody, though we had no money we wanted to buy a house. Uncle Syl kindly provided \$500 for the down payment, and Dad put up \$500 for furniture.

The extent of the fortune Uncle Syl had built up became clear after his death in 1952. He left one million dollars to each of his three grandsons; and Aunt Isabelle provided a million dollars for a memorial chapel to be built next to her church. And there was plenty left over after that.

Carl Yunker, the youngest son, didn't get serious about any kind of a career until he met Marie Schimpeler. That came about because Carl was a good friend of Bud Schimpeler, Marie's brother. Bud introduced the two at a swimming pool. Then immediately afterward, Uncle Carl said he informed Bud, "That is the woman I'm going to marry!"

The Schimpelers were of German background, but also boasted a French component via Aunt Marie's mother, who was a Bohne'. Her name is memorialized by one of Charley Yunker's finest buildings ... Chateau Bohne'.

Though Carl was now knocking on the door, the Schimpelers mere and pere were adamant. If Carl wanted to date their daughter he had to have a regular job, something substantial. Before that, among other things Carl, like Sylvester and my father, had sometimes acted as a runner for bookmaking activities headquartered on Second Street, operated by the Gargottas and Gentiles, our Italian cousins.

So Carl got serious. He surveyed the possibilities and settled on General Electric as being about as respectable a company as anyone could wish. Applying himself with diligence, he succeeded in landing a job with G.E.'s Lamp Division. After training at Nela Park in Cleveland, he became the General Electric representative for lamps in Louisville.

Over the years, as he continued with G.E. throughout his career, Uncle Carl became responsible for all of the Lamp Division's sales in Ohio, Indiana, Kentucky, and Tennessee.

With a responsible career under way, Carl Yunker and Marie Schimpeler were married.

Aunt Marie was a lovely lady, as sweet and nice as anyone you'll ever meet. Her daughter Betty, whom you remember from our 50th party, definitely resembles her mother.

Over the years they had five children: Yvonne, Betty, Charles, Sylvester, and Ruth, named after my mother.

It turned out to be very fortunate for me that Uncle Carl was a G.E. man, because he was directly responsible for my being hired as an electrical engineer by General Electric, when I graduated from U. of L.

In those days the big corporations sent recruiters around to the engineering schools to interview applicants, review their records, and talk to the professors. My grade average was mediocre, to say the least, and I had little hope of being able to start with a first-class company.

But Uncle Carl became the good angel. "Why not G.E.?" he asked. "That would be great, but my academic record isn't good enough." "Apply anyway. What can you lose?"

I applied to both G.E. and Westinghouse. The man from Westinghouse arrived and I had my interview. It was quite brief after he studied my transcript.

Mr. Boring, G.E.'s top personnel director was scheduled to visit U. of L. that year, but was ill. So who stepped in to see us hopefuls? Andy Anderson, the G.E. power equipment salesman in Louisville, who was a good friend of Uncle Carl. That interview went very well indeed.

Then time passed and no offer came my way from G.E., though several of my classmates received theirs. Rats. Well I called Carl, downhearted. He wasn't worried. "These things take time. People are busy in Schenectady." "But Uncle Carl, others in the class already have G.E. offers." "What! Are you telling me that other men have definite offers while you do not?" "That's right." He hung up without another word.

Two days later I received a TELEGRAM from Schenectady. The gist was that I should make no commitment to any other company because a formal offer was on the way via airmail. Andy Anderson told me what had transpired. Hearing the state of affairs from Carl, he had fired off a telegram asking what the hell was going on. He had the best candidate to come down the pike since Steinmetz, and the dummies in Personnel were botching G.E.'s chance to get him! It was brazen puffery, of course, but in a very good cause. I was hired.

And my uncle's helpful career influence didn't stop there. After my nine months on Test after starting with G.E., I wanted a job with the Unit Equipment Division in Schenectady. The top man to see was Bud Elliot. Bud was an older man and had a rather forbidding appearance, as if breakfast hadn't quite agreed with him.

We began talking, when, looking again at my name, he said, "Yunker. You know I knew a Carl Yunker when I worked in the East Central District. Any relation?" Eureka! After some smiling reminiscence, Bud grew solemn again. "But the fact that Carl is a good man, doesn't necessarily mean that you are." Right ... but I knew the job was mine.

Then a terrible tragedy. When only fifty, Aunt Marie was killed by a train. Their place was on the other side of the tracks from the road along their farm. They had crossed those tracks whenever leaving or returning home. It was winter, and she was with the windows closed, her mind on who knows what. The train was coming fast from behind her, and

as she turned left from the road and crossed the tracks the car was hit and totally demolished.

Uncle Carl was crushed. Though still rather young, he never re-married. Betty and Buzzy Caye, now married, moved into the Anchorage house to be with him.

Uncle Carl died young, at about sixty. I owe both him and Aunt Marie a great deal.

THE VEAZEYS

Grandma and Grandpa Veazey had five children: Louis, Lloyd, Ruth, James, and Elizabeth.

Aunt Louise and Aunt Elisabeth followed the same career as their mother, teaching. Uncle Lloyd became a legal secretary, today called a para-legal. Uncle Jim worked for the Louisville Gas and Electric Co. until he volunteered to serve in the army during WWII. Afterward he never really regained his balance, especially because he was badly hurt when knocked off an L.G. & E. ladder by a reckless driver.

Aunt Louise, with her husband Ed Mehl, and Uncle Jim were A-OK, but the two who stand out in memory were Aunt Elisabeth and Uncle Lloyd.

Aunt Elisabeth was petite, like Morn, very pretty, and was enjoyed by everyone. She and Uncle Bill Auter, a smiling, gentle man, made a good couple.

Lizaboo was a one-woman party, always laughing and joking around. Her joie de vivre making up for the rather solemn demeanor of the rest of the Veazeys.

At one time Aunt Elisabeth had a dancing school in her basement, to which Morn sent two rather unwilling pupils, me and Pat.

Besides my mother, Aunt Elisabeth was the only other Veazey to have a child, one, Elisabeth Louise.

Uncle Lloyd was a different kettle of fish altogether. He was tall and thin, like all the Veazey men, had a sharp tongue, was sarcastic and cynical, anti-Catholic, and was a convinced atheist.

Lloyd made the headlines in Louisville when he killed a man. He always carried a pistol in his car, and while he and Aunt Edna were parked on the street outside a grocery store,

they saw a robbery in progress. A man with a pistol in his hand was taking money from the store keeper.

Uncle Lloyd grabbed his gun, got out of the car, and when the man came out of the store they exchanged fire. Neither Lloyd nor Aunt Edna was hit, but the robber was and later died. Well, there was the same kind of furor that would take place today. Is deadly vigilante action justified? Or should Lloyd have simply observed and then informed the police? The authorities pronounced themselves satisfied, saying a citizen has the right to stop crime if he can.

My Uncle and Aunt, however, were disgusted by the uproar and moved to Indianapolis, where he continued his career of legal secretary.

When my sister Rose decided to become a nun, Uncle Lloyd, who had never stepped inside a convent or monastery in his life, wrote her a long letter. He described in detail all the terrible things which were going to happen to her once she was imprisoned inside those walls, and begged her to reconsider!

After retiring from full-time legal work, Lloyd and Edna moved back to Louisville and bought a house near Molly and Charlie. Early in the mornings, leaving for the hospital Charlie would sometimes see Uncle Lloyd walking by. "Charlie, are you still going to church and believing all that stuff they tell you over there?" "Yes, Uncle Lloyd, I am. How about coming in for a cup of coffee and a talk?" "Well, not today. Sometime."

He never came in for that talk, but remarkably, at the end of his life, Uncle Lloyd, that one-time rabid anti-Catholic, was doing legal work, pro bono, for the Women's Queen of Peace Mental hospital, operated by the Sisters of Charity!

The differences between my father's and mother's sides of the family were highlighted most plainly at Christmastime.

On Christmas Eve we would go downtown to Second Street, the Italian neighborhood. In an apartment upstairs over the fruit and vegetable store of one of Grandmother's Gazollo relatives, everyone gathered for the celebration. Wine flowed freely. Hugh platters of pasta were consumed. Slim, good looking dark Italian men, wearing BIG diamond stickpins in their ties, danced attendance on their generously endowed wives, who sat regally on the best chairs, chattering away. Children were all around, adding to the noise.

Then, close to midnight, a racket on the stairs. Bells jingling, a whip cracking, it was Santa Claus! The children, us among them, were pushed forward and sat on the floor. The room became very quiet as Santa entered. He was the epitome of all Santas, big, all scarlet clothes and snowy beard (usually it was Uncle Louie, but we didn't know that until older) •

Cracking his whip ominously, Santa would point at one of the goggle-eyed kids and say, "Pray the Hail Mary!", and the appointed one would stammer through it. "The Our Father!", to another one, and finally, "All say the Act of Contrition, and speak up!" When satisfied that Catholic prayer basics were being learned, Santa would praise us and start handing out presents. A GREAT evening.

Then on Christmas Day, after Mass and our own family celebration in the morning, we would go over to Grandma and Grandpa Vesey's on Brook Street in the Irish neighborhood. There in the living room the adults would sit against the wall, conversing quietly. No hubbub of many children. Except for Aunt Lizaboo's daughter, we were it. Mom's two brothers and two sisters had only managed one child between the four of them.

There was food and drink. Coffee and soft drinks with sandwiches. Then Aunt Louise or Aunt Elisabeth would play the piano and we all sang the great Christmas carols. A good afternoon, even though a quiet one.

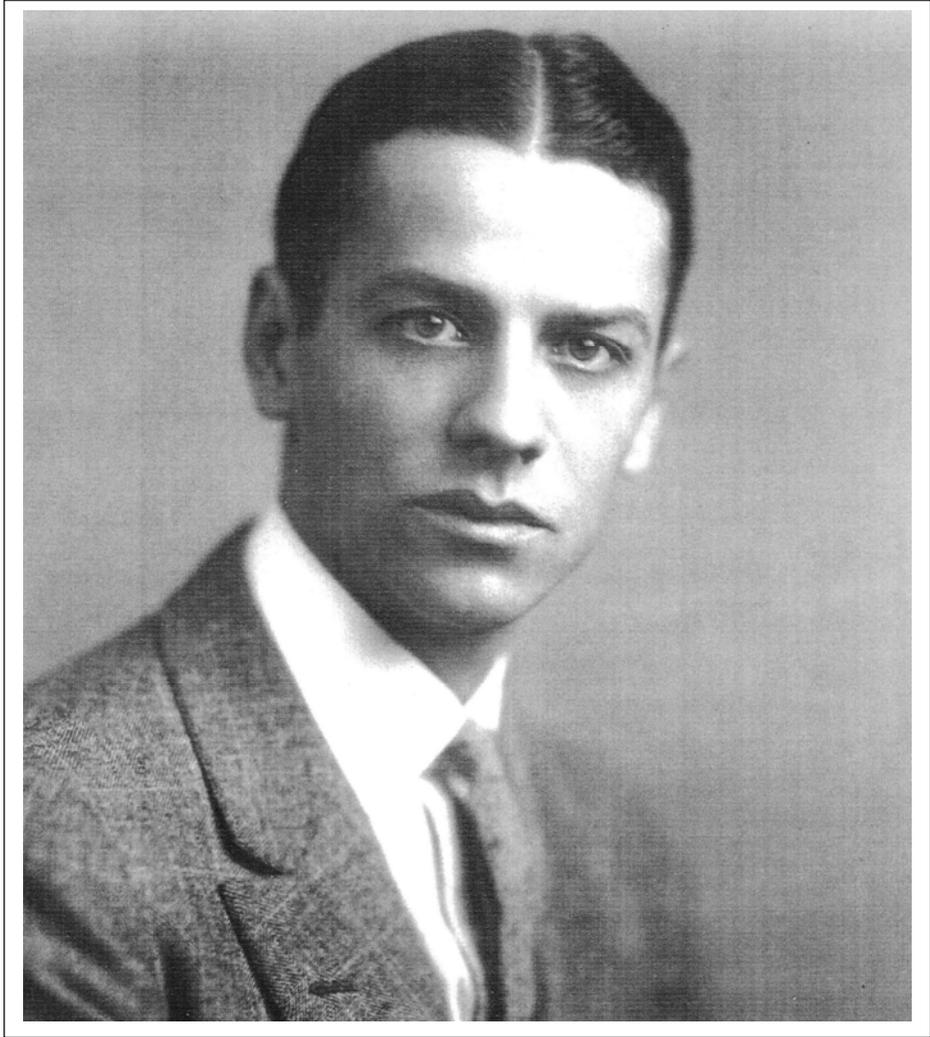
I remember both sides of the family fondly. If there was a single foul ball among them, I didn't know it. Everyone knew that Mom's younger brother, Uncle Jim, drank too much, but he was always great with us kids.



UNCLE SYLVESTER



AUNT ISABEL



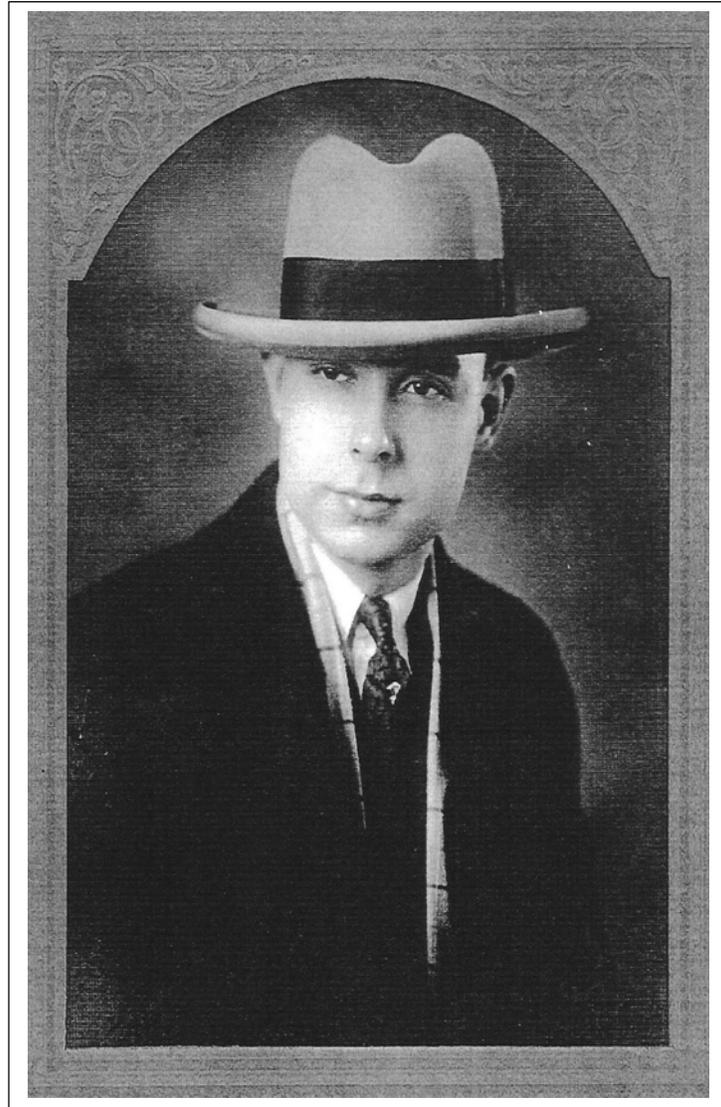
UNCLE CARL



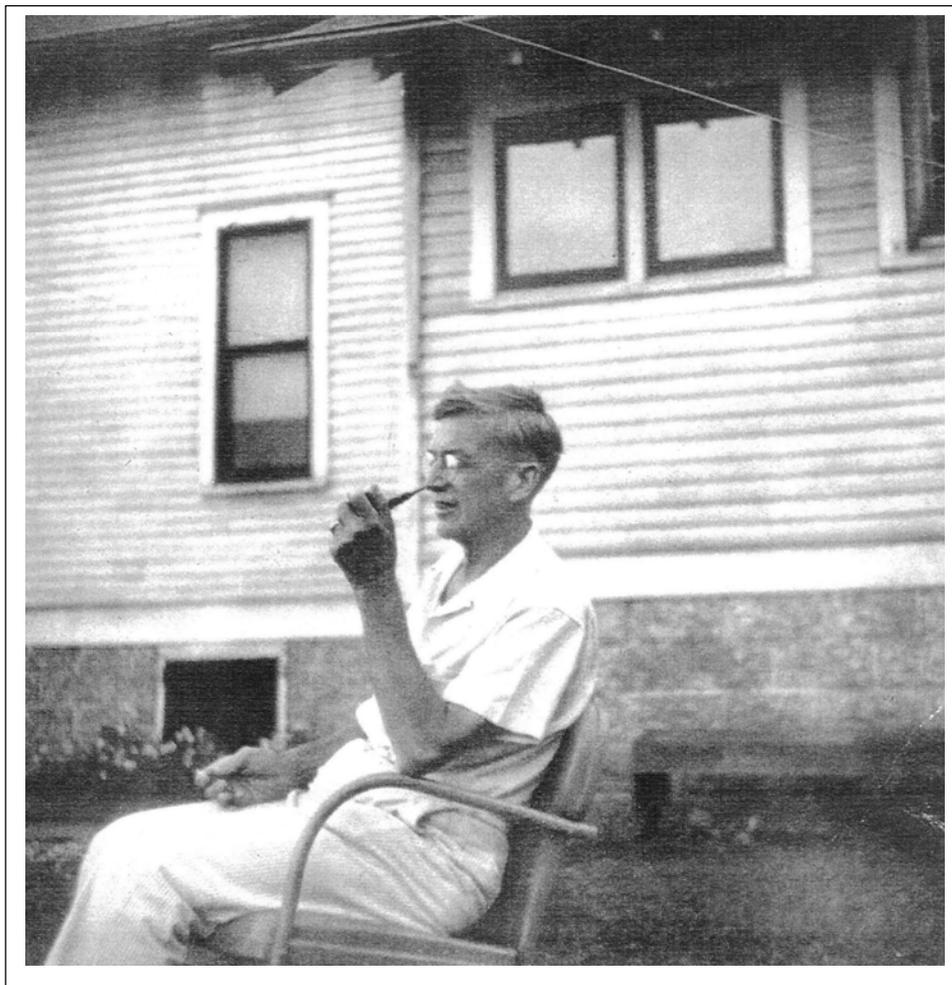
AUNT MARIE



UNCLE CARL



BILL AUTER, AUNT ELIZABETH'S HUSBAND



ED MEHL, AUNT LOUISE'S HUSBAND



UNCLE LLOYD VEAZEY WITH
PAT, MOLLY AND AUNT EDNA



LOUISE, EDNA, UNCLE JIM, LIZABO,
BILL AUTER AND ELIZABETH LOUIS AUTER

MOTHER AND FATHER

James Yunker and Ruth Veazey might seem at first an unlikely couple. The German-Italian man from Second Street and the 100% Irish background woman from Brook Street. However, they had some important characteristics in common. They were both well-read, witty, with lively minds and a great sense of humor, especially concerning the more absurd aspects of human nature.

Dad had a good friend, Ben Roth, who was going with my mother-to-be, and who made a mistake ... he introduced them. They obviously hit it off, and became determined to marry despite objections from Grandma Veazey, whose candidate was Ben Roth.

Belle Veazey, successful educator, good example of the "lace-curtain" Irish beliefs and prejudices of the day, had two major complaints about James Yunker. He was a Dago, from the wrong side of Broadway, and he came from a Catholic family.

But Dad, thirty years old at the time, was already well established in his career at Louisville Gas & Electric, and Ruth Veazey, six years younger, preferred him. So the union went forward.

FATHER

My father was the most intelligent and multi-faceted man I ever knew. Simply listing his accomplishments and range of interests presents an extraordinary-picture.

Dad was a graduate of Louisville Male High School, not a college. But Michael says that in those days Louisville Male served as the liberal arts school of the University of Louisville. At any rate, Dad absorbed knowledge like the proverbial sponge. After starting work at Louisville Gas and Electric, he made himself THE expert on natural and manufactured gas in Louisville. He moved up through the ranks to the position of Superintendent of the Gas Dept. of Louisville Gas and Electric Co., where he spent his entire career.

As a professional one of his great contributions was to suggest storing gas underground in limestone caves near Louisville, thus getting rid of the unsightly gas storage tanks above ground, while also eliminating a safety hazard.

As one can *imagine*, this bold proposal aroused a lot of opposition from the "traditionalists". "What if we lose the gas?" "It's not going anywhere. When we need it, we'll pump it out." It was eventually done, making *Louisville* the first to do what is now commonplace in the gas industry.

The extent of Dad's reputation is shown by Germany, about 1950, sending a team of experts over to consult with him as to whether they could successfully store underground in caves in the Ruhr region. My Pop studied their charts and data, and then told them, "Yes, it will work there. Go ahead." The German delegation, though, said they were reluctant to start pumping gas underground unless Dad was with them to help them interpret the results.

So that's how Pop and Uncle Carl went to Europe for the first and only time, visiting London and Paris in addition to Germany. Did Dad demand, and receive, a large consulting fee for his expertise? Unfortunately no, though he certainly could have. He told the Germans he'd do it for travel expenses only.

During WWII, the U.S. laid gas and oil pipelines from Texas and Oklahoma to the East Coast. This was the first time natural gas became available to cities and towns along the pipeline routes. Before that, if they wanted to get away from the grime of coal heating, they had to either have some local gas fields, as *Louisville* did, or manufacture gas from coke, as *Louisville* also did.

Well, a number of communities in Kentucky hired Dad as the consultant to determine whether they should set up their local gas company and buy gas from the pipelines. How much investment would be needed; what kind of system would be appropriate for their population; how large would the probable usage be, etc.? Pop made more money from consulting at that time than he ever had from *Louisville G&E*.

Before the war, carbon black was used to stiffen natural rubber for automobile tires. Dad developed and patented an improved process for obtaining carbon black from natural gas. However, during the war, because our sources of natural rubber in Asia were cut off, the government mounted a huge effort to develop good synthetic rubber. The effort was successful, so in the post-war period the market for carbon black-stiffened natural rubber went to hell. Rats!

Dad also experimented with aqua-culture, rarely seen in the 1930s. Tobacco was a big crop in Kentucky then, and as is well known, growing tobacco exhausts the soil in time. So

his idea was to grow tobacco leaf in a nutrient solution rather than in the ground.

We had several BIG metal pans in the back yard at that time, some ten by twenty feet around and two feet deep. Dad tried various nutrients in the water to help growth. Experts from the University of Kentucky visited to see and discuss.

For several years, in partnership with another man, Dad owned a farm in central Kentucky. This directly affected our household in two ways. First, we had several hives of bees in the back yard, doing their stuff producing honey. I was sometimes pressed into service to assist while Dad stupefied (hopefully) the bees with smoke blown from a bellows, and then removed the honeycombs for inspection. Not a fun job!

Second, we hatched chicks in the basement. I mean by the hundreds we hatched chicks. When old enough they were taken to the farm. Seeing the little buggers fight their way out of the shell and totter around, eventually finding the seed trough, was interesting. And feeding them was O.K. too. But CLEANING OUT the trays under their cages was @#!*#@!

Dad read extensively and our house was full of books. He was called "the walking encyclopedia" by his colleagues, and was always ready to engage in discussion or debate about anything: politics, history, religion, economics, you name it. My mother said that arguing with Dad was hopeless. "Just when you have him cornered on some point, he will leap three centuries and two continents away, and take up the argument on entirely new ground."

His enthusiasm about everything that was going on was stimulating to witness. In 1926, when I was four, he called me into the living room as excited as I have ever seen him. He had obtained a primitive crystal-set radio, and wanted me to listen to it. KDKA, the Westinghouse station in Pittsburg, was making the first commercial broadcasts in the United States. Dad pressed one of the earphones to my head and, amazingly, I could hear faint tinny sounds of music coming from five hundred miles away. A wondrous thing!

Dad liked to travel, and urged Mom to come along, but other than one visit to New York, she would not. Therefore, not liking going alone, he did much less traveling than he wished. Later on, when I was doing so much travel in Europe, I would sometimes think how much Dad would have enjoyed seeing the places I visited, eating at the great restaurants, staying at the fine hotels. And especially meeting the various nationalities.

There seemed to be no end to Dad's range of interests. How he had the energy or found the time is a mystery.

-At one time he had a regular radio program on WHAS, our largest station. It was "What happened 10, 25, and 50 years ago", recent history enlivened by some humorous aspects. Dad sometimes sang on the programs, accompanied by Herbie Cook on the studio organ.

-In the 1930s he founded the Kentucky chapter of English Speaking Union. This organization was dedicated to the idea that the world would be a safer place if the English language nations shared common citizenship and would therefore be linked closely together. This was a reaction to the loud noises then emanating from Hitler, Mussolini, and Tojo.

-Dad bought big old oil paintings, mostly landscapes, and tried to restore the damaged ones. He also tried painting originals himself.

-He had a large model train set-up in the attic with the tracks going through remarkable landscapes he built. Mountains, rivers, towns, all made from shaped chicken wire and plaster of Paris, then painted. Any model train aficionado would have been jealous of that set-up.

-He molded and painted lead soldiers, some from commercial molds, some from plaster of Paris molds he made.

-He built large castles for the soldiers, surprising me twice at Christmas with literally hundreds of colorful soldiers arranged around an equally colorful castle. The year he built the largest one he told me he was making it for Milton. I tried to hide my envy. In the event it turned out that he had made TWO similar castles. Milt and I both got one.

For a longtime and greatly loved venture of my father's, how about the production of art glass? You all know the results: beautiful pieces of multi-colored designs inside clear glass. Paperweights, vases, ash trays, lamps, book-ends. Lovely things.

Pop began studying art glass in the early 1940S, and about 1944 he bought a small company in Corydon, Ind. The five man factory was making gas-lamp chimneys, a business rapidly going the way of the buggy-whip market. The Corydon men had glass kilns, glass-blowing skills, and were eager to try something (anything, I expect) else. Well, it took some three years of experimentation, Dad learning and teaching, until viable pieces began to be produced. Meanwhile Pop was supporting the whole group.

Glass Handicrafters then became successful in the sense that a lot of art glass was sold to gift shops all over the U.S., and as far afield as England and even South Africa. The

business reached the break-even point some years, but seldom better than that. Dad spent a LOT of money realizing that dream, but considered it worthwhile. "We are making lovely things for a lot of people. A good thing to do."

The business lasted until the late 1950s, but after Dad's death it went downhill rapidly. There was no one in Louisville to provide the leadership, and the money, to keep it going.

And he did all this with two important handicaps. First, he had only one eye, losing the other one at ten years old while balancing a stick on his nose. The stick slipped into an eye. For the rest of his life that eye pained him, sometimes less, sometimes more. I often saw him rubbing his bad eye.

Second, he had heart problems from the time he was forty-five years old. It was severe angina, making him stop whatever he was doing to rest a while. On two or three occasions he had what was then called a seizure. Today recognized as a heart attack. Dad would go to bed for several days, then return to work and his numerous projects.

I remember being spanked only once by my father. For what offence I don't remember, but it must have been grave to produce physical action. As he prepared to administer a hand to my rear end, Dad actually spoke those immortal words, "This hurts me more than it does you!" There ensued a few half-hearted swats, and I was sent on my way, wailing loudly.

Mom, though, wouldn't hesitate to administer a good slap when she thought we deserved it. Not often, but when it happened you remembered it. Once I was in a room with Mom and her black maid and made the mistake of calling Michael a name. Mild by today's debased standards, the four letter word which sort of slipped out was "fart". I still remember the shocked look on the maid's face, and about one second later my mother grabbed me, whirled me around and WHAM, an open hand right across the face.

My father was a warm and affectionate man. At serious farewells, such as when Mike and I left for military service, or when I said goodbye to him in Albany, N.Y., before his stroke, he would kiss his sons full on the mouth with no embarrassment.

I last saw Dad alive in 1958, after the stroke that completely incapacitated him. Mom had brought him home from the hospital, and with the help of a day nurse was tending to him.

Mother

Ruth Veazey was a strong woman, very intelligent, well-read, and her career before marriage was unusual for a young woman in those days. She had worked as a reporter for the Louisville Herald Post, and then became editor of the Society Page. She also wrote poetry, some of which the Post published. Her piano playing was very good, relatives said, though she had stopped before I was old enough to remember it.

After marriage she became a fine homemaker. She was an excellent cook, adding to her good Irish dishes the Italian ones Dad enjoyed, and some German ones from Grandma Yunker's repertoire. Our meals were therefore quite varied and most enjoyable, especially the big Sunday feast after Mass. Mom liked to be read to while she prepared dinner, and I enjoyed doing it, so many an hour we spent in the kitchen together working our way through books.

There was always a day maid in the house, sometimes black, sometimes white, helping Mom keep everything clean and nice. The turnover of maids was rather rapid. Usually a change was made, Mom said, because she would discover that they were stealing something. Exhibiting what Mom herself used to call a "Byzantine cast of mind", she sometimes left a dollar or two lying about deliberately, to see if the maid would take it. When one did, then a new maid would appear.

As you know, as soon as Dad and Mom married they moved into 1824 Rosedale along with Grandma and Grandpa Yunker. I only realized later how hard that must have been on my mother. She was living in the same house with in-laws from the very beginning of her marriage until they died some thirty years afterward.

At one time Uncle Carl said, "Jim has given Ruth everything except what she wants most, a home of her own."

Her best private time, which she guarded zealously, was spent in the one bathroom in the house. For some two hours in the morning she was totally incommunicado in that room. No use to call or knock. Forget it. That was her time for reading, soaking in the tub, and rubbing her lovely skin with ice cubes. The secret, she said, of a good complexion.

Neither Mom nor Dad had been going to any church when they married. Her change of heart came about when Pat and I reached school age. She felt it would be helpful to us in life if lessons in good behavior and morality learned at mother's knee were reinforced by religious teachings. Her search, led by Aunt Marie's sister-in-law, Carmen Shimpeler, led to St. Agnes and the Passionist Fathers. Difficult to imagine any better introduction to Catholicism.

In retrospect I don't know how she did it, except that example must have been important. Somehow mother inculcated in her children the conviction that belief in Jesus and following his teachings is basic to a good life, as well as giving hope for reaching a better world in the hereafter.

We were too young to notice it, of course, but there was a considerable upheaval over Mom's decision to become a Catholic. Her Protestant family was aghast, and it was some time before good relations were restored. Dad said it was O.K. with him provided we children went to public schools. But subsequently it turned out it was definitely not O.K. with him, as their arguments about religion proved.

The arguments which we heard were always about religion in general and Catholicism in particular, Dad attacking and Mom defending. Pop's favorite weapon was biting sarcasm, with Mom stating her position much more reasonably, it seemed to me. I sometimes wonder if Dad's tough assaults on our mother's and our beliefs made us all the more convinced we should hold on to the faith.

Once a Catholic, Mom became very zealous. Her practice went far beyond attendance at Mass. She went to Novenas, prayed the rosary, was on good terms with particular saints, and had a special devotion to the Blessed Mother. Thus her quest, which she had begun because of her children, turned into a pilgrimage for herself which culminated in the gift of a strong faith.

As time went on she began to drop pleasurable activities altogether. Mom made light of this, joking that "who needs all that frivolous stuff." We thought she did it because she was praying for particular things, or as penance, though mother would never say. She stopped going to movies and the theater. That included not coming to see me in *Iolanthe*, my big musical triumph. She stopped listening to the radio, and when TV came in after the war, she wouldn't watch it. Mom practiced self-denial to the extreme.

I feel sure she prayed a lot for her children, and whether it was one of her requests or not, one thing is history, all five of us as adults have remained practicing Catholics.

My mother's avoidance of "frivolous pleasures" most definitely did not extend to parties with family and friends. We enjoyed some splendid ones at the house. The ones with the Italian relatives were special. Two days beforehand the ladies would gather in Grandma's kitchen, kneading, rolling out and cutting the homemade pasta, while tantalizing odors arose from the huge pots of sauce bubbling away on the stove. Then on the day, and most of the day, eating, drinking, and high spirits galore with some twenty or thirty participants.

Also, once a year Mom hosted a fund raising party for St. Agnes Church. This was always on a summer's evening, and Dad would hang strings of colored lights around his beautiful large garden, along with Chinese lanterns. Tables were scattered about for everyone to enjoy the food and drink in convivial comfort. Fairyland sounds trite, but that is exactly what those evenings seemed like to us kids.

Mom was a terrible driver. She had two accidents with me in the car. The first was like something out of a comic movie. Our car then, I must have been about ten, was a one-seater coup. Mom was taking a big platter of spaghetti and meatballs (yes, we ate a lot of it ... loved it) to her mother and father. I was kneeling up on the seat, facing rearward, holding the platter on the shelf behind the seat so nothing would spill. Well, as Mom made the turn at Norris and Roanoke, where at that time there was no sidewalk, just a ditch by the side of the street, she swung too wide and the car turned over into the ditch on its side.

Looking out the back, not knowing what was happening, I was horrified to see the spaghetti rapidly sliding off the platter. "Boy, am I going to get it," was my thought. Of course the inside of the car was a mess, spaghetti, meat balls, and tomato sauce everywhere. As we began pulling ourselves together, a man came running up and peered into the car. "Oh my God!" he called out. For a moment he thought that the sauce was blood.

The second accident came when Mom was driving me, Molly, and Jerome and Charlie Bisig over to the Uptown Theater. We were going fast, and as we came over a hill on Newburg Road a car turned left in front of us. We hit the car broadside and bounced into the curbing, while the other car careened to a

stop. The driver leaped out. It was a teacher of mine, Mr. Lawrence. He ran over to our car, leaned into the window and began yelling at Mom. Charlie, sitting with Molly and me in the back seat, said loudly "Poke him one, Jerome," to his brother who was riding in front. Mr. Lawrence immediately jerked back his head and calmed down.

Mother gave up driving entirely a few years later after still another accident. Her car was crushed between a parked car and a streetcar as she tried to pass on the right. After that she was driven wherever she went.

About 1934, when I was twelve, something happened which was a tragedy for my mother and father, though I hardly noticed it. Mom became convinced that Dad had cheated on her with another woman. From that time on she would never again have sexual relations with my father. He had to move across the hall to another bedroom.

Life, for me, went on as before, and it was many years before I knew what had happened. But take note: at that time my father was about forty-four, mother thirty-eight. That was much too young to renounce what is such a powerful bond in marriage: sexual union.

I don't know how Dad and Mom dealt with it over the years but it was a terrible thing to have happened. There was of course no question of divorce.

Many years later, after Dad's death, my mother told me about it, saying "If I could do it over, I would have handled things very differently. It was wrong to deny him my bed." Sad.

In the early fifties Mom and Dad's youngest three children all left home: Molly married Charley Bisig; Mike married Betty Gates Moran; and Rose became a Mother of the Sacred Heart.

Pat and Joe with their children were there, so the house was still lively. But Mom said she could hear the walls of 1824 Rosedale moaning each time one of us left for good.

My mother had had a spell of bad health, and after caring for Dad during the year after his stroke until his death, she was exhausted. She spent most of the ensuing year in bed. Dr. Bisig said he was afraid she would never walk again, but finally pulling herself together, she got up and resumed her activities.

Some fifteen years later, Pat and Joe, after their four children had left home, moved into an apartment. Mom insisted that she would carry on at 1824 Rosedale, but it was

clear that at eighty, that big house would be too much for her all alone.

So Philip Bisig, working on a Masters at U. of L., moved in and lived there in the room next to Mother's until the house was sold.

Philip says his spelling and punctuation were horrendous, yet he had to write a lot of papers for his courses. Mom saved him by going over his drafts, editing and correcting in pencil. Then Philip would produce the final version.

Finally that good old house, scene of so many happy memories for four generations of the family, was sold and Mom moved into an apartment.

Ruth Veazey Yunker died in 1983, eighty-seven years old. She is buried alongside Dad in St. Louis Cemetery.

In bringing to mind those years so long ago, it is clear that our mother gave us a great deal besides the Christian faith. She certainly encouraged every dream I had, like my singing ambitions. She was always there when you wanted to talk about things, ready to sympathize, to urge onward, occasionally to admonish. Yet at times she could be petty and even vindictive.

In sum, Mom was a very strong presence. Besides the obvious fact that she was my mother, there was also something noble in her character which made me want very much to please her. She was not warm, like Dad. Didn't hug or kiss. But you felt sure she cared.



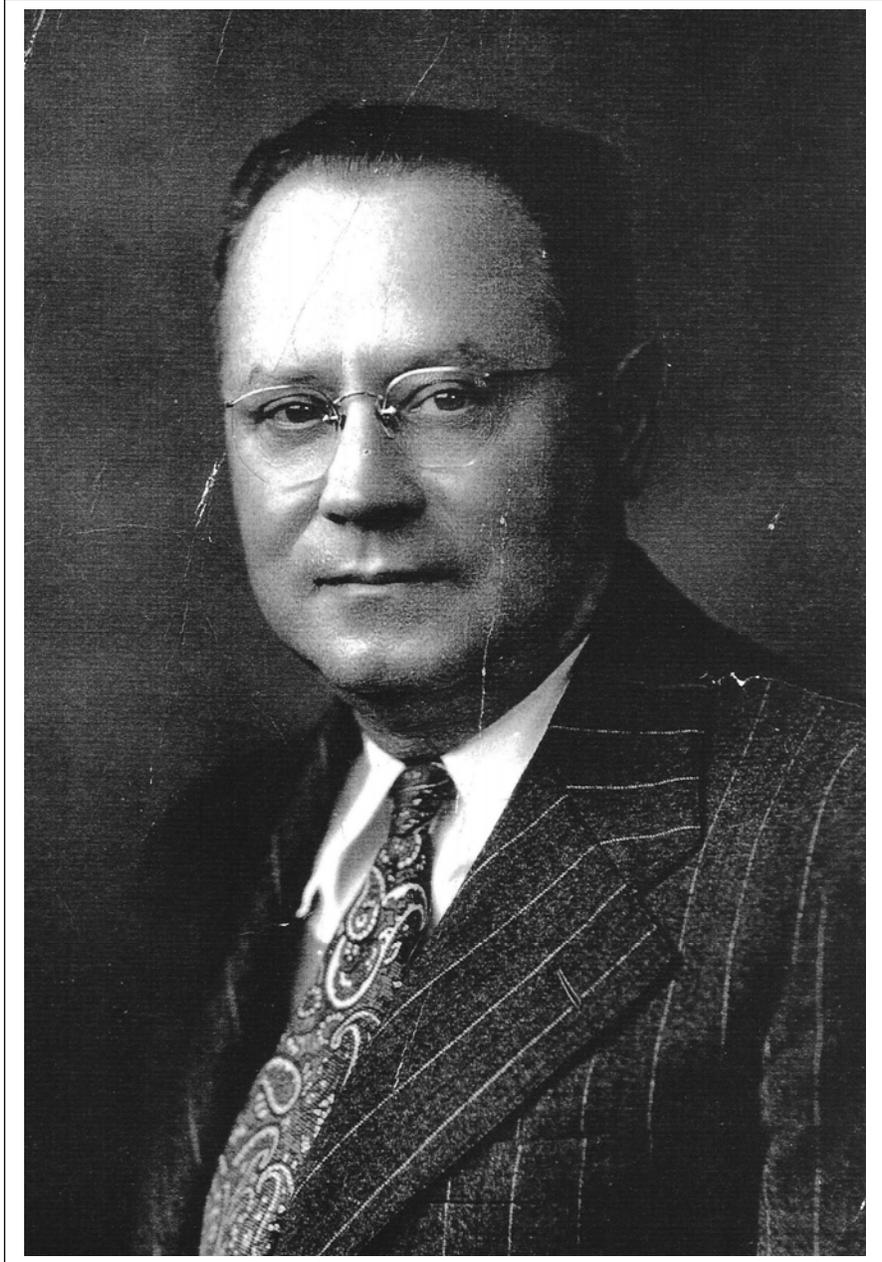
A YOUNG JAMES ARTHUR YUNKER



LADIES OF THE SAINT AGNES CARNIVAL.

RUTH VEAZEY YUNKER IN THE HAT.

PAULINE KAELIN BEHIND HER LOOKING RIGHT.



FATHER AT FIFTY



MOTHER



DAD ABOUT SIXTY, WITH MOLLY AND ROSE
WHILE VISITING SCHENECTADY

SISTERS AND BROTHER

The birth years were Pat: 1921; me: 1922; Molly: 1925; Michael: 1928; and Rose: 1934. The gap between the first three and the two youngest was important in our various activities. Pat, Molly, and I were frequently together, playing games, going places, dancing at Mom's mixers, fighting with each other. Michael and Rose being six and twelve years younger than me, there were much less common doings with them.

Pat tended to be dreamy, and often seemed to prefer books to people. Her reading was omnivorous, especially fiction. She, like my Margaret, knows so much more than I do about authors, titles, plots. Either of them could teach English Lit anywhere.

At the same time Pat could be as lively as anyone when she wanted to. She laughed easily, and had a great sense of humor.

Like many young people, my sister was a devotee of the silver screen. Her special favorite was Ross Alexander, and her room was adorned with his pictures.

In our late teens Pat had several boyfriends: Charles Klosterman and Bill Glover, friends of mine, and Bob Simon of my engineering class at U. of L. But something clicked when Joe Richardson of Philadelphia came on the scene. Joe was in uniform, stationed at Fort Knox.

Pat says Fr. Aloysius, our pastor at Saint Agnes, was responsible for their meeting. It seems Fr. Al told the mothers that their daughters would be meeting soldiers, so why not ensure them meeting good Catholic boys via the Catholic USO downtown.

Mother immediately took action, sending me to the USO with orders to bring home some soldiers. I reappeared with Ralph Kennedy and Joe Richardson. Later, Rocky Paluccio, also from Philly, would visit. Rocky, who spoke Italian, got along famously with Grandma Yunker and her Second Street relatives. But it was Joe who had the necessary chemistry with Pat.

Pat remembers a double date she and Joe had with Margaret and me. We went to a movie with Cornel Wilde as Chopin and Merle Oberon as George Sand. Both Margaret and Pat were furious with me because I kept muttering about historical inaccuracies in the film.

At the end of 1942 Joe took Pat to Philadelphia to meet his family. After that successful visit they became engaged. When Joe asked for Pat's hand, Dad said O.K. if Joe would promise to stay in Louisville with Pat.

They were married in 1943, and their family eventually grew to include four children: Martine, Joe Jr., Drew, and Ruth.

The man from Philadelphia did indeed stay in Louisville, living with his mother and father-in-law at 1824 Rosedale, just as my mother had done with Grandma and Grandpa Yunker. And like her, I feel sure, there were times when that arrangement was hard on him.

Molly was a live wire, in spades. Very pretty, vivacious in manner, and great fun to be doing things with. She was extremely gregarious, liking people and a lot of activity around.

She had a beautiful soprano voice, going for a year to U. of L.s' music school. That summer she auditioned for the chorus for the operetta season and was accepted. Molly had a role, non-singing, unfortunately, in Blossomtime. She played the Queen, and looked quite regal in her finery.

At seventeen Molly began her tempestuous relationship with Charlie Bisig. He was twenty-two.

Charlie says they began to know each other while he was at U. of L. and Molly was in Atherton High. Dad would be driving Molly to school, and would pick Charlie up if he was waiting at the bus stop.

Though definitely interested, Charlie hesitated to ask for a date because of the age difference. Finally he mustered enough courage to speak up, and Molly said O.K.

Between Molly and Charlie there was definite electricity, strong emotional attachment. Also, high energy conflict. Their battles were epic, followed by reconciliation.

You know the happy ending. They were married in 1951, after the war and Charlie's medical studies in New York and New Orleans had caused times apart. Their courtship had spanned seven years.

The Bisigs had seven children: Mary Philomena, Charles Jr., Isabel, Gwen, Leah, Philip, and Larry. A terrible tragedy was the death of Gwen at only seventeen.

Michael and I did very little together. He was six years younger, and though we shared a room until I was sixteen, he went his way and I went mine.

Mike was a remarkably even-tempered, good natured guy. He was the only one of us who never, ever, had any run-in~ with Mother. Somehow he side-slipped any problems. As Mike was leaving the house of an evening, Mom would say, "Where are you going?" "Out". "When will you be home?" "Later". With any of the rest of us, that would simply not have been acceptable. He called her "Old Bean", and she loved it.

Mike sailed through high school and the first two years of engineering at U.of L. getting top grades. But he had joined a National Guard unit which was called up during the Korean War. Thus he spent 1950-1952 in the army, six months of which were in Germany. After returning to Louisville, his college work declined precipitously and he limped through the last two years of college, doing everything but study hard.

His GPA for the first two years was 4.0! Then 2.0 in the last two years. Still, he graduated with the ChE which eluded me, joined Dupont, and stayed with them until retirement. He became their top manufacturing engineer on the insulating film Mylar.

Michael met Betty Gates Moran while in high school. Several fellows, including Betty's brother, had a poker club which met monthly in their homes. The first time at Moran's, Mike says he was greatly impressed by "a perfectly charming young girl. I thought right away, she's the one for me".

During the last two years of college their engagement was sealed. They married right after Mike's graduation from U. of L. in 1954, and went off to Dupont in Wilmington, DL.

Michael and Betty Gates have four daughters: Hewitt; Ellen; Shannon; and Julie.

Rose was the baby of the family, born in 1934, six years after Michael, making her twelve years younger than me. Thus it is not surprising that I did very little with that pig-tailed little sprite. She was lively, in the Molly mode, and seemed to me to be quite cheerful.

Rose, though, remembers her childhood with bitterness, believing she was an unwanted child. She accuses Mom of doing her best to make her life miserable. Rose says Grandma Yunker was her best pal and ally, helping to offset the chill she felt from Mom.

I wasn't aware of her unhappiness, but it is significant that Rose was born at about the same time Mom and Dad had their sad break.

Rose was adventurous, as Margaret and I first learned when she, Molly, and Dad came to visit us in Schenectady in '49 or '50. We took them to Lake Sacandaga for an outing, and Rose insisted she was going to swim all across that large lake, about a mile wide.

Appeals to reason failing, I went along following her in a rowboat, just in case. Well, she accomplished the feat, but was quite tuckered out at the end. We returned together in the boat.

At fifteen she took flying lessons! One couldn't get a license until sixteen, but Rose learned to fly, including solo, before leaving Louisville to become a nun.

Much later, completing her work at the Sorbonne in Paris perfecting her French, Rose toured northern France and Belgium by herself on a small motorcycle(!) before returning to the States.

Rose has a beautiful singing voice. While getting her PhD in Education at St. Louis University, romantic family lore has it that she moonlighted as a chanteuse singing songs in French at a nightclub. The truth is, says Rose, that a friend was leader of the orchestra at that club. "He asked if I would like to sing there one night, just for the fun of it. I leaped at the chance, sang, and had an enjoyable time. Of course I sang in English, except for "C'est ci Bon"!

After twenty years in the Sacred-Heart Order, Rose returned to "civilian" life and earned a PhD in educational method. Her thesis was on the Training of Police. With the sponsorship of the Police Chief of St. Louis, she rode in patrol cars and experienced first-hand what our police face every day in enforcing the law.

Rose then became an educator at the University of Texas, first in Galveston and then Houston.

In Galveston she met Peter Bowman, also a professor, and the mutual attraction was immediate. They married in 1983 and acquired a daughter, Song, in 1986.

Rose says it feels like she is doing things now that she should have done when much younger. "I seem to be living my life backwards!"



PAT AND JOE RICHARDSON



MOLLY AND CHARLES BISIG



MOLLY AND CHARLES AT HOME A YEAR LATER



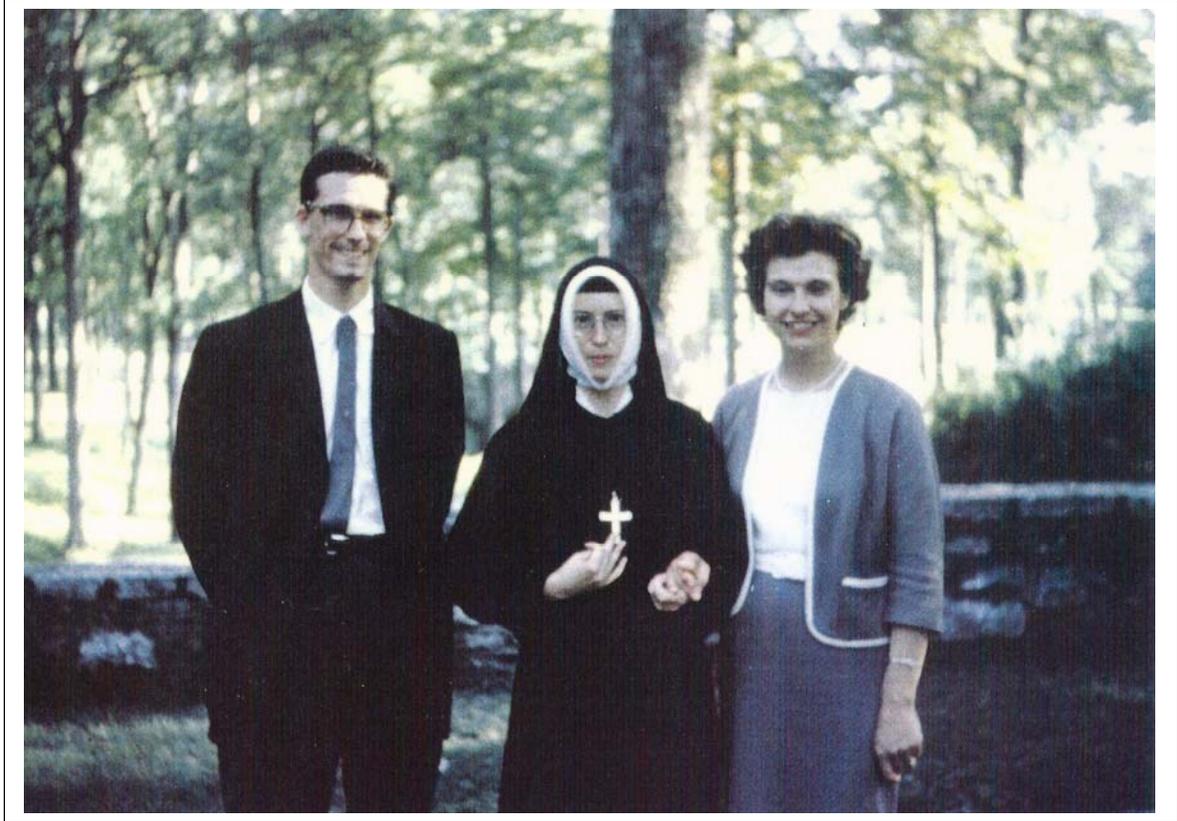
A YOUNG MICHAEL



BETTY GATES MORAN



THE HAPPY COUPLE



ROSE, MOTHER OF THE SACRED HEART,
WITH MARGARET AND JIMMY



ROSE IN SAINT LOUIS



MICHAEL, PAT, ME, MOLLY (1964)

A LOVE STORY

I first became aware of Margaret Kaelin as someone special when I was fourteen. She was only twelve. , At that time her older sister Mary Ann was day-caring our infant Rose, as Mom was in poor health after gall bladder removal. Sometimes Margaret would come by to see Molly, and then walk home with Mary Ann. I was attracted to her at once. So pretty, and with her warm smile and lively manner, she was quite the cutest girl I'd ever seen.

Since we went to different schools, she to St. Agnes, I to Highland Junior High, we didn't see each other often, so I just hoped that she would come again to the house to see Molly.

On my sixteenth birthday Mom and Dad gave me my own room. Until then I had been sharing with Mike. Well, at that time I had quite a crush on Deanna Durbin. Yes, the singing movie star, lovely, and my age. I promptly decorated the walls with several large pictures of Miss Durbin.

Shortly thereafter Margaret was visiting our house and I proudly showed her my new room. Ignoring my new Silvertone radio and small record player, her attention was immediately focused on my wall decorations. She made some disparaging remarks about the inanity of a teenager mooning over some movie star, and departed. The pictures quickly came down.

Your mother says that at the time she couldn't believe it. Here was someone she had thought was a serious person, and to find his wall plastered with pictures of an actress!

The Saint Agnes Carnival was an annual affair in August lasting two days, held on the school grounds, and was a BIG deal. A parade all through Louisville by parishioners and friends preceded the event, and it was always crowded. Besides dinner each night, frog legs on Friday, fried chicken on Saturday, there were booths aplenty: games, refreshment stands, and raffle tickets for an AUTOMOBILE each night. Mrs. Kaelin worked in the sweltering kitchen each night, and my Dad manned a sandwich booth some years.

It was during the pre-carnival parade that same year when Margaret and Molly, riding on the rear of a truck, were hurt. They were sitting side-by-side, their legs dangling off the back, and when their truck stopped suddenly, the one behind didn't stop in time. Their legs were burned by the hot radiator pressing against them, though no bones were broken.

Margaret was wearing the bandages on her leg when we ran

into each other at the carnival that year. She was now fourteen and I sixteen. Whoever we were with just sort of faded away. We had eyes only for each other.

It was in the evening, of course, and we had a fine time. Then, about 11:00, I suggested that since it was getting late I would escort her home. Margaret demurred a little about exiting with the carnival still going strong but came away with seeming good grace.

But the next day one of my spies informed me that Margaret had returned to the carnival and stayed until midnight, enjoying herself without me. I hastened to confront her with my surprise at such behavior, expecting contrition. But no, I was met with indignant unrepentance. If my curfew at carnival time was that early, it was my problem. She wanted in on the fun, if not with me then with others. Furthermore, who was I to tell her what she could and couldn't do? If I wanted to spend time with her, fine, but I was not suddenly her keeper.

Wow. So her combative streak showed itself early, and made her seem even more desirable.

instill some social
Around that time Mom, wanting to nice surroundings, would
graces in her older children, and in We would invite friends
host a dance/mixer once in a while. in Grandma's dining
over and dance to music from records in
room, which had a tile floor.

A critical event occurred when I invited Margaret to one of these dances. She came wearing a pretty blue dress (borrowed from Mary Ann, she says). She hoped that somehow no-one would ask her to dance, since she wasn't sure how to do it. While I was trying to steel myself to ask her out on the floor, my friend Dick Corley beat me to it. Your mother says Corley was an excellent dancer (grrr) who immediately put her at ease, and off they went around the floor. Well, this unexpected competition moved me to action despite my fears. I "seized the moment", cut in, and held her close at last. From then on I simply ignored any taps on the shoulder by would-be cut-ins. We danced the good old-fashioned way, embracing. Thrilling!

At the end of the evening I drove some five of the girls home, going way around and about to deliver everyone else before finally reaching Margaret's house, which was only two blocks from ours.

We then began to have dates, that is, we'd go out from time to time. But at first we certainly didn't see each other regularly, every weekend. That came much later. Even though Margaret was quite young, the fact that our families

knew each other certainly helped my cause. I was acceptable to Mr. and Mrs. Kaelin, and to her brothers and sisters.

Our early dates, always on weekends, usually consisted of going to one of the movies downtown on 4th street, followed by a soft drink at Walgreen's drug store. On Sundays we would sometimes listen to the radio broadcasts of the New York Philharmonic at Margaret's or my house, then walk to the Cherokee Dairy ice cream parlor on Bardstown Road. Both our memories are firm that the Cherokee ice cream was the best we've ever tasted.

We played two-handed card games together, went to Tyler Park for tennis, rode our bikes around Cherokee Park, took walks here and there, began seeing each other more frequently. About the time Margaret reached sixteen she seemed quite grown-up to me, both in her confident manner and her alluring figure. I was in love with this lively, dark-haired beauty.

One of the traits that made your mother-to-be enjoyable to be with was a definite attitude of "Don't just sit there, let's have some fun." I tended to be cautious and stodgy, but Margaret was always ready for a lark.

A very big date, on Margaret's sixteenth birthday, was our first visit to a really good restaurant. It was tops in Louisville: the Bluegrass Room in the Brown Hotel, at Fourth and Broadway the very center of downtown.

Seated in lovely, dimly lit surroundings, we studied the menu. There were many things listed I had never even heard of, but fortunately also some familiar dishes. Well, when the time came to order, I was astonished to hear your mother-to-be calmly specifying items which were totally Greek to me. Vichyssoise, marinated herring, sweetbreads a la Caen. Hey, this is one sophisticated young lady I'm with!

Not that night, but sometime later, Margaret told me she had gone to the Bluegrass Room determined to try things she had never known before. A great example of the fact that she was always more adventurous than I, in matters of cuisine as elsewhere

As time went on and I became really serious about trying to monopolize this Margaret Kaelin. I resisted vigorously all attempts of potential rivals to establish any position with my beloved.

One threatening situation got defused very quickly. My good friend Richard Corley, (the superb dancer, remember?), without so much as a word to me asked Margaret for a date and she accepted, pending talking it over with Mrs. Kaelin. However, in telling her mother about Corley she mentioned in passing that he considered himself an atheist!! Goodbye Richard. Margaret said that strange aspect of Corley's persona worried her too, and Mrs. Kaelin's strong reaction confirmed her own feeling of unease.

A problem in arranging our dates was the fact that the Kaelin's had no phone. So either I had to stop by sometime or Margaret had to visit one of the neighbors and call me. Occasionally we got cross-wise about whose turn it was to initiate contact, and so noses got out of joint. Once when I expected her to call me and nothing happened, I wrote a snippy letter. There was a popular song at the time which went "Careless, now that you've got me loving you, you're careless, etc." I paraphrased the song in my note. The next evening she was on the phone. "You write a letter, and all it has is some nonsense? What are you trying to say?" "It's obvious, isn't it? Why haven't you called?" "What do you mean why haven't I called? I've been waiting to hear from you!" And so it went.

One thing about no phone at the Kaelin's, we spent very little time hanging on the telephone with each other, the bane of so many parents and siblings while young sweethearts are chatting endlessly. Since Margaret had to talk on a neighbor's phone, with friendly but curious ears about, our conversations were terse and businesslike: what, where, and when, for the next date.

Occasionally in the evening we would drive out to Bowman Field hoping to see a plane actually come in. Then, circa 1940, the airport averaged only two or three arrivals and departures a day. We'd while away the time sharing a bag of popcorn while talking over anything and everything. Across the road from the airport was Air Devil's Inn, where we went a few times for dancing and a hamburger and coke.

As the years went on my thoughts and dreams were more and more centered on Margaret. I looked forward eagerly to each weekend. The humdrum days in between went very slowly. When we couldn't get together the disappointment was great.

Your mother-to-be was cheerful, laughed easily, and made the most of any entertainment we got involved in. She was one of those people who are liked by everyone; boys, girls, and the elders. Generous, warm-hearted, impulsive, responsive. Of course she was popular with her peers.

I could hardly believe my good fortune. Here was this bright, beautiful, luscious young woman, and she was really interested in me. She appeared to enjoy our times together as much as I did. Fate had brought us together, and I hoped it could be forever.

A lovely thing in Louisville in the summertime was performances of light opera in the outdoor amphitheater in Shawnee Park. The setting was superb: the greenery of the park; big oak and elm trees; the amphitheater itself, lit beautifully at night, with tier on tier rising toward the back. The "curtain" was a shimmering wall of water rising from fountains, screening the stage between acts.

We loved the romantic melodies of the great operetta composers. Romberg with Student Prince and New Moon; Friml with Rose Marie and The Firefly; Lehar's Merry widow; Victor Herbert with Naughty Marietta and The Vagabond King; Noel Coward's Bittersweet.

Wonderful evenings were spent there with Margaret, big dates. In those warm, soft, Kentucky evenings, we were ravished by the music, the setting, and the fine voices.

Your mother was an omnivorous reader, as you all are, much more so than I. She was miles ahead of me in knowledge of the classics, as well as who was who among the modern writers. My taste ran to history, and historical romances by such as G.A. Henty and Raphael Sabatini.

When I was nineteen we had a long separation. The engineering school at U. of Louisville had an all year curriculum. Starting in sophomore year two of the four quarters were spent working in industry, and my first assignment was at the Ashland Oil and Refining Company. Ashland is on the eastern border of Kentucky, a long way from Louisville.

I went with a heavy heart, worked in the refinery laboratory testing samples from the distillation towers, and counted the days until I could get home. It was twelve long weeks, during which I got to Louisville only once, for two days. Painful.

Once in a while our course of true love did not run smooth. One serious situation was caused by my mother. Mom felt we were getting much too serious for our tender years, and concocted a plan to part us between Christmas and New Year's. She sent me up to Detroit by bus to visit Bette Brown and her family, whom we'd known in Louisville. Of course Margaret took an extremely dim view of my leaving town during

the holidays, and to visit some girl! The fact that I didn't want to go, that it was a command performance, cut no ice with her. She was deeply offended, and no wonder.

The original plan was for me to stay through New Year's, but I made excuses, came home early and hastened to see Margaret about plans for New Year's Eve. Consternation! She was signed up for that festive occasion by Bill Young! Bill was the brother of Marcella, the beloved of Gabe, so he had some standing with the Kaelin's. My entreaties and angry expostulations got nowhere. "What's sauce for the goose etc." So the double date went forward, Marcella and Gabe, Margaret and Bill, on New Year's Eve!

Well, about midnight, when Gabe's car carrying the four merry-makers turned into the Kaelin's long driveway leading up to the house, I was sitting on the porch steps waiting. I had determined on confrontation. No Bill Young was going to start making goo-goo eyes at my Margaret without hearing from me.

Gabe, however, defused the situation tactfully. Halfway up the driveway, seeing me there, he stopped. After a brief consultation, Margaret got out and came toward the porch, while Gabe turned the car around and took the Youngs home.

Well O.K. As she came up to the house I rather expected a friendly greeting, only to be greeted by a furious blast. How dare I spoil her nice evening by such a boorish display? Whose fault was it that this whole thing had come about anyway? Margaret forcefully read me the riot act and sent me hurrying home.

I don't remember how long it took to get back into her good graces, but certainly several helpings of humble pie were required.

There could have been a serious challenge for me because of some Presentation friends I called the Crescent Hill gang, after their neighborhood. Jean Repetto and Virginia Luvisi from there were Margaret's best pals at Pres. I worried a lot about those chums and their friends when Margaret would visit over there. Their church had a youth club which met about once a month on Fridays for dancing or a movie, maybe hamburgers, and general bonhomie. I feared the possible consequences, especially because Margaret resolutely held me entirely out of her Crescent Hill social life. She just kept saying there was nothing for me to get jealous about.

The youth Club would also meet from time to time at a summer cottage on the Ohio River outside of town, owned by one of the parents. There was swimming and boating.

There was one boy in the group whom I never met, George Scott, who was smitten with Margaret, and who, she told me

later she had liked a good deal. "A really nice boy," she said. He had asked for dates, but they had not yet gone out alone when real tragedy occurred. George Scott was drowned in the Ohio River. Your mother then told me about him.

For me and your mother-to-be there were a few occasions when one or another boy or girl might have made a difference to our increasingly whole-hearted mutual commitment. But very few, and certainly no-one I ever met could compare with my sweetheart.

You've seen the large photograph of your mother at about twenty. Such an open face, with its level gaze, showing intelligence and hope, and beauty to make the heart ache.

Of course we had such good times together, lots of things to talk about, enjoying just being with each other. At the same time, and importantly, from the beginning there was intense physical attraction between us.

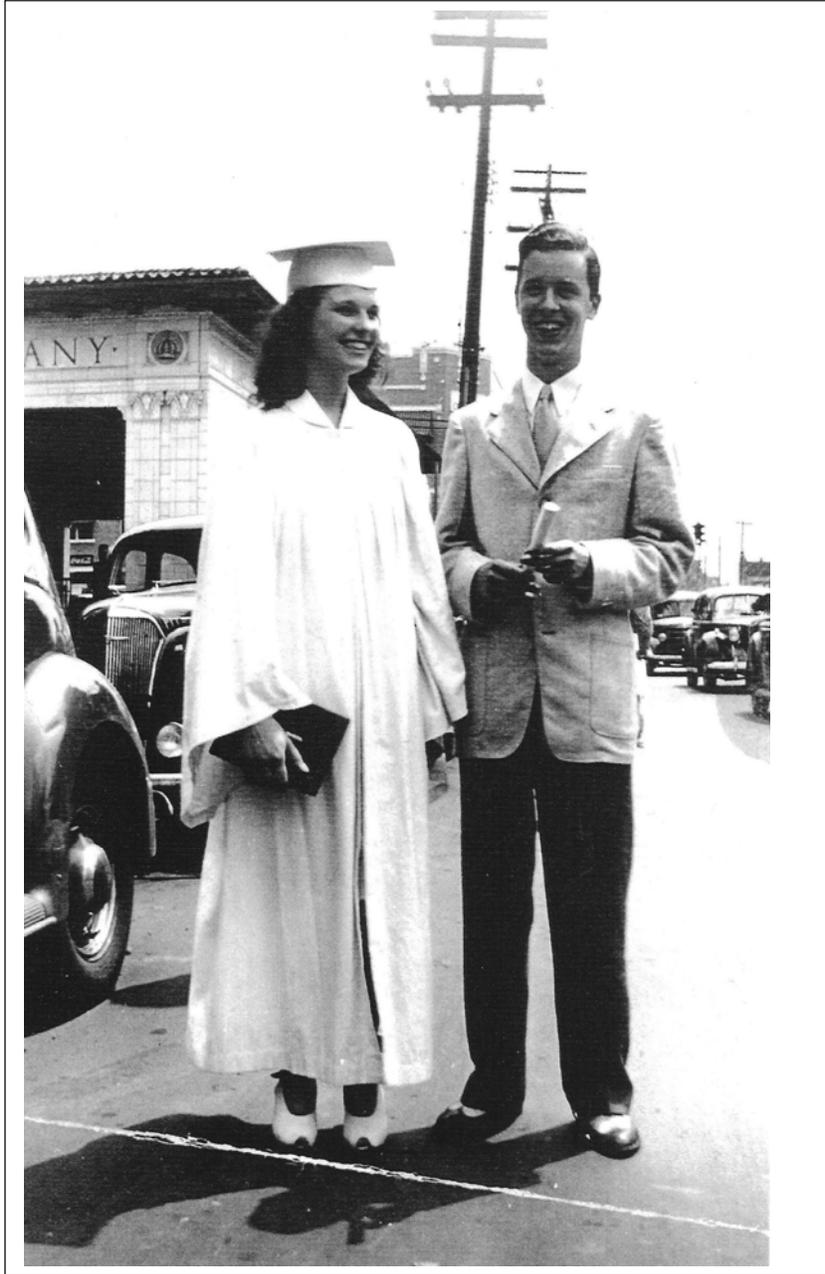
Still, with the shyness of youth, after we really began going together it was some six months before we even began exchanging a goodnight kiss. Then, as time went on, I couldn't get enough of those sweet kisses. So our mutual affection gradually developed into a passionate relationship.

But understand that this didn't happen quickly, or all at once. Remember that our love grew over a period of almost five years of courtship. During all that time I longed increasingly for the day when we could be united forever in marriage.

The great day finally arrived, Jan. 23, 1943. Margaret was nineteen, I twenty-one. Fr. Walter officiated, with my sister Pat's fiancé Joe Richardson as Best Man, and Pauline as Maid of Honor. We then had a luncheon at 1824 Rosedale and departed on a very brief honeymoon. It consisted of a three hour train ride to Lexington, and one day there before my classes began. I was enrolled in an electronics course which led to active service in the Army Signal Corps.



MARGARET KAELIN AT SIXTEEN



HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATION
FROM PRESENTATION ACADEMY



MARGARET AT TWENTY



THE WEDDING PICTURE, WITH JOE RICHARDSON
(BEST MAN), PAULINE KAELIN (MAID OF HONOR),
AND FR. WALTER KAELIN (OFFICIATING)



THE SOLDIER



THE AIRMAN (COUSIN MILTON YUNKER)

COUSINS

MILTON

Arthur Milton, Uncle Syl and Aunt Izzy's son, seemed to me to be the fair haired boy in the family. Milt was even better looking than his father, tall, slim, athletic (he played golf at a three handicap) and charmed everyone.

Milt was several years older than me so we didn't pal around a lot, but we hit it off well when we were together. -At his house I'd watch and help a little as he made model airplanes.

-While driving in his car he would play the radio and educate me on what made a popular song really good or otherwise, e.g. the first time we heard "Where or When", Milt pronounced it a classic, which it has become.

-Milt was quite a ladies man and had a keen eye for feminine pulchritude. He liked to point out prime examples whenever they came into view.

- He had a paper route for the Louisville Herald, which, once a week delivered a free paper to every house. I would help carry all the extra papers. We played a question and answer game, heavy on military history, as we walked along, he on one side of the street, me on the other.

When I began high school at Louisville Male, the English teacher noted my name and asked, "Are you related to Milton Yunker?" "Yes." "Well, you'll have to go some to match his record." Gulp.

In World War II, Milt enlisted in the glamour service, of course, the Air Force, and became a pilot. He didn't go overseas, but trained candidate pilots at airbases in Florida and Texas.

After the war, Milt got his chemical engineering degree and went to work for Dupont. This despite his Dad asking him to stay in Owensboro and become his partner. As often the case, Milton wanted to be on his own and show he could make his own way.

However, after several years he thought better of it, returned to Owensboro, and lived happily ever after. Following Uncle Syl's death, Milt carried on the business and proved himself a good oil man in his own right.

Right after the war Milton married Pat Robertson, a striking blond whom he had dated before going into the service.

After some years during which they despaired of having any children of their own, they adopted a boy, Larry. Then they proceeded to have two sons of their own, James and Tony.

Milton was the first, and so far the only, of my cousins to leave this world. He always smoked heavily, and lung cancer carried him off at sixty-five.

THE C.A. YUNKERS

Uncle Carl and Aunt Marie had five children; Yvonne, Betty, Charley, Syl, and Ruth, named after my mother.

Vonnie was my age, Betty, Molly's. We saw a lot of these two cousins, especially while they lived close by, on Shady Lane. Yvonne was a natural take-charge person, forceful and lively. Betty had a milder, sweet disposition, but was no less ready to join in all our fun and games.

Just before we started kindergarten, Grandmother Yunker organized a pre-school at our house for Yvonne, Pat, and me. Whether to get us off to a fast start, or just to take us off Mom's hands for a few hours, I don't know. But she did it, so Yvonne and I began kindergarten together at Longfellow School with some rudimentary knowledge of the ABCs.

The younger three were more like Michael and Rose, in that the age differential meant we didn't share activities with Charley, Syl, and the baby, Ruth, as we did with Betty and Vonnie.

Then, when the C.A. Yunkers moved out to the first of their two farms, we saw much less of each other, except on holidays, especially Christmas and Fourth of July.

YVONNE

Vonnie met Bill Bass in Korea, in January, 1946. He was in the army, in Pusan, in charge of confiscated enemy material.

Some Red Cross personnel, Yvonne among them, were coming to operate a bloodmobile, and furniture was needed for the Japanese-style house they were to occupy. Bill agreed to

furnish suitable material ... provided that he and his colleagues got to meet the young ladies first, before any, other military men. The ploy was eminently successful, with Bill and Vonnie hitting it off immediately.

Yvonne says that she was impressed by the courtly good manners of the gentleman from Virginia, and liked his soft southern accent. He further ingratiated himself by going over first thing each morning to the cold, thin-walled house the Red Cross girls occupied, and starting their fire! How many would-be swains would have thought of that?

Bill says everything about Yvonne captivated him. Her energy, take-charge attitude, sense of fun, and her beauty. Vonnie says that there certainly is such a thing as love at first sight, because it happened to her with Bill.

Almost immediately Bill asked for a date. "What do you have in mind?" asked Vonnie. "Let's go hunting!" So they did. Leaving at 4 A.M., they went pheasant shooting in the fields outside Pusan. Very few first dates can top that one.

Then they began to see each other regularly, but Vonnie started to worry. "We had been dating steadily for a month, and he hadn't yet popped the question! What's the matter with this guy?" But the very next month he did. So this whirl-wind romance lasted all of two months before their engagement.

They were married in Seoul in 1947, with the officiating priest, a chaplain, being one the C.A. Yunkers knew from Holy Trinity in Louisville. Small world.

Yvonne and Bill have four children, all of whom were born outside the U.S. Bill Jr. and Carla in Tokyo; Tom (always called Sam, after Sam Bass, famous western outlaw) in Manila; and Robert in El Salvador.

BETTY

Betty met Woolsey "Buzzy" Caye in high school. She was a year behind Buzzy, but in her sophomore year became very aware of this handsome fellow. Buzzy was quite an athlete, becoming co-captain of the varsity football team though only a junior. He was, Betty says, "the most popular junior, a real heart-throb."

On his part, Buzzy had also noticed Betty Yunker. "She was charming and vivacious, though being a year older, I thought she was quite young." A year later, their romance started when in the spring Buzzy asked her to the Junior-Senior Dance." "My heart did flip-flops", says Betty.

Woolsey states that the chemistry was certainly there, and Betty remembers three romantic months of dating following the dance. Then Buzzy graduated and went into the Air Force, while Betty went on to Ursuline College.

Buzzy served in Europe as a tail gunner on a B-17, and was in action for eighteen bombing flights over Germany before the War's end.

Coming home in 1945, he went to U. of Louisville for his degree, and then on to its Law School.

He and Betty began dating again intermittently, with some hiccups because both he and Betty were seeing others. However in 1947 they began going steady, and in July Buzzy popped the question.

They were married in June, 1948, after Betty graduated from Ursuline, with Woolsey still in college, they lived first with Buzzy's mother, and then with Uncle Carl after Aunt Marie's death.

In the next three years they had three sons: Kit, Keith, and Kevin, while the proud father was still completing his education, getting the law degree, and passing the Bar exam! Four years later daughter Melinda arrived, completing the family.

Charley and Mary Rose boast ten children.

Sylvester has two children. He is married to Carol Graham.

Ruth, youngest of the cousins, is the mother of six.

MUSIC

Music, next to human love, is God's greatest gift world. It is a magical language, able to lift us out ourselves into a sensing of higher and nobler realms is our faithful companion for all moods, all occasions

My introduction to these glories happened fortuitously when I was about fourteen. At our neighborhood movie theater one night the "coming attractions" featured a movie starring Grace Moore, a fine soprano, and Nino Martini, possessor of that glorious Italian tenor sound everyone loves. I was bowled over by the brief singing parts included in the preview.

Going home and enthusing about what I had heard to my Grandmother, who was of 100 Italian ancestry, it turned out that she knew a lot about opera. Grandma suggested that I listen to the Saturday afternoon radio broadcasts from the Metropolitan Opera in New York. As great good luck would have it, that very Saturday the opera was "La Traviata", with Nino Martini and that magnificent baritone, John Charles Thomas. One could not have a better start with grand opera. Verdi's lovely melodies, sung by such fine voices, entered my heart and I was totally captivated.

At just about the same time I was walking along Richmond Drive one evening and heard the most marvelous music coming from one of the houses along the street. I hastened home, turned on the radio and searched for the right station. The symphony, for that is what it was, was still on, so at the end I heard the name. It was Schubert's Unfinished.

With introductions such as Verdi and Schubert, opera and symphonic music seized me completely and from then on were a big factor in my life. I began listening to the best musical programs available: Saturday afternoons the Metropolitan Opera; Sunday mornings one hour opera highlights, conducted by Toscanini himself; Sunday afternoon the New York Philharmonic; Sunday night light opera and concert songs by Nelson Eddy; and Monday evening the Firestone Hour, with the great American tenor Richard Crooks.

My dedication to these times and programs was total, nothing could interfere. That's the reason Mom and Dad got the table-top radio for my room, to spare the rest of the household from having to hear all "my" music programs. A cigar-box size record player came with the radio, and they started my collection with Brahms 5th Hungarian Dance and

Caruso singing Pagliacci.

Margaret entered into the love of good music with equal enthusiasm, frequently listening to the radio broadcasts with me, and to records of our favorite singers. The first Christmas present she gave me was a recording of Musetta's Waltz from La Boheme. Later she gave me Rachmaninoff's Piano Concerto No.2, one of our top all-time favorites.

Because of the tremendous impression opera had made, I conceived my first career ambition: I would be an opera singer! Rather than hoot my parents made efforts to help the dream. Mom got an upright piano and I began teaching myself to play using Czerny and Clementi exercise books. Eventually I could play well enough to accompany singing efforts and to limp through the simpler pieces by Chopin, Haydn, and Mozart.

Dad arranged for me to spend a week in Cincinnati (I had never been so far away from home before) so I could hear some live opera performances. There was an annual season there in the summer, done outdoors in the Zoo, of all places. I have no memory where I stayed or with whom (they were friends of a friend of Dad), but I do remember the l-o-n-g streetcar rides to and from the Zoo, and the operas. They were some of the best of the favorites: Pagliacci and Cavaliere Rusticana; Carmen; Faust; La Traviata. A great week.

Dreams of operatic fame filled my head, and during dull high school classes I sometimes entertained myself by planning opera programs utilizing the best singers of that time: tenors Gigli, Bjorling, Melton; sopranos Pons, Ponselle, Flagstad; baritones Tibbett and Thomas. At my desk in school I was an impresario. No doubt such day-dreaming did not improve my grades.

Mom also set up singing lessons with Mrs. Bohn, the organist and choir director at St. Agnes church. Mrs. Bohn decided I was a tenor and the lessons began. Then she put me into the choir at St. Agnes, and there I was introduced to the wonderful music great composers had written for the Mass. We sang several Haydn and Mozart Masses, Von Weber, Gounod's glorious St. Cecilia Mass, Mercadante, and others.

To see the diminutive Mrs. Bohn, seated at the console of that big organ, her fingers and feet flying over the keys and pedals, especially in the grand Masses like Gounod's, was nothing short of inspirational.

Mr. Bohn was our bass/baritone soloist. He sang the Mass every morning, and on Sunday's he would do the lovely

baritone solos while holding a hand over his left ear, to better hear his voice production.

Margaret Raque, Margaret's cousin, was the top soprano soloist. She had a large, confident voice. Bob Bohn and John O'Toole were the fine tenor soloists.

I did the short tenor solo in the Agnus Dei of the Gounod Mass, and at Christmas Midnight Mass the solo which begins Yon's lovely "When Flowers Blossomed Amid The Snow".

Molly and I sang an Ave Maris Stella duet. And on special occasions Juliette Bisig would play her violin, adding an extra sweetness to the choir and organ tones.

The fasting regulations before receiving communion were tough in those days. You were to neither eat nor drink anything from midnight the night before. As a choir member I hated that dryness before trying to sing. Sometimes all I could seem to manage was some weak croaking.

A great occasion with the choir was a performance of Beethoven's Mass in C with the Louisville Philharmonic at the Memorial Auditorium, the venue for all the big musical events in Louisville at that time. The choirs of the Cathedral and our St. Agnes joined forces for the event before a full house. A treat.

Stimulated by the lovely church music we were singing at St. Agnes, I tried composing, writing an O Salutaris, a Tantum Ergo, and an Ave Maria. In her kindness, Mrs. Bohn played the O Salutaris at Communion a couple of times, and did the Ave Maria once as an Offertory, with my sister Molly singing it solo. And Mother wrote a Hymn to St. Agnes and asked me to set it to music. I did, but don't believe it was ever performed.

In my youthful hubris I also decided to compose some symphonic music. Picking themes out on the piano and studying a book on orchestration by Walter Piston, I worked on a Symphonic Dance. I learned the hard way about the difficulty of writing for the various instruments, since some of them have their own key, e.g. horns in F or C, or the violas, whose notation is neither in the bass nor soprano clef but the in-between tenor clef.

When I finally finished this "opus", one of Dad's friends took the score to the conductor of the Louisville Symphony for his comments. Finally getting up enough nerve, I made the journey all across town from the Highlands to the West End, walking to the streetcar, going downtown, transferring

to another streetcar, finally getting off and walking to the conductor's house.

With trepidation I rang the bell and waited. When the conductor came to the door, I began, "I'm James Yunker, the composer of the Symphonic Dance which you kindly " "Oh yes" he interrupted, "just a minute", and closed the door. When he reappeared he handed the score to me, saying "You knew what you wanted to say and you said it."

So I made the journey in reverse back home. Sniff.

A surprise sequel. In Schenectady my Symphonic Dance was actually performed ... in a four-hand piano version. My guru, Doug Turpen, learning of the existence of the work, told me that two friends of his, a husband and wife team, played classical music in four-hand piano arrangements. If I produced one, he was sure they would play it for me.

I worked it out as time permitted and finally finished. The performance took place in the Turpen's apartment, with the two pianists playing with verve and sympathy before an audience of four, the Turps and the Yunks. It was a nice moment, though I was certainly aware that my composition was, let's face it, mediocre.

It was at that time Jimmy, six, took an interest in the piano. Seeing me working there and making cryptic marks on music paper, he began to do the same. He would play some notes and then make marks on his music paper. His notations had no connection whatsoever with the music he was making at the keyboard. I know because he would ask me to play what he had written, and then would be quite irritated because what I picked out sounded nothing at all like what he was hearing in his head.

At Male High I joined the glee club. We were fortunate in having a Mr. Harmon as music director. The energy and enthusiasm of this man carried us happily along with him. Our chorus worked hard, joining music festivals here and there, including a performance or two in Indiana and Ohio. Mr. Harmon possessed a fine tenor voice and led us with vim, singing along as he faced us giving the beat.

My BIG musical success came via Gilbert and Sullivan. Each year Male High joined with Atherton Girl's High in putting on one of the G & S light operas. In my senior year it was Iolanthe and I coveted the male lead. As soon as the opera was chosen I hastened to the library, took out the Iolanthe score, and went to work at the piano. I memorized

not only Strephon, the lead, but every other solo part and the choruses.

When Mr. Harmon began our work on the operetta, with us seated in the auditorium singing from the music he handed out, I was ready. As we tried out the various pieces, our leader would walk up and down the aisle, listening as well as directing. I sang out lustily, making up in volume what I lacked in beautiful tone. And Mr. Harmon noticed this Yunker who learned with such speed rather than stumbling through the music, which we were seeing presumably for the first time. It worked. I got the part. Later, in rehearsals if some principal was absent, Mr. Harmon would have me sing that part also.

When the big moment arrived we did the operetta two nights in Atherton's auditorium and it was a success. How could it be otherwise, since the audience consisted of parents and boy and girl friends? As I dressed for the first night, someone came in and handed me a TELEGRAM. It read "Congratulations and best wishes. Margaret." My heart was bursting.

Iolanthe was the pinnacle of my singing career. The problem was that my voice was light and only fair. Nor could I really master the essential E-F-G bridge in the tenor range, which defeated me even if my tone had been more melodious. Your mother loyally says I had a sweet voice.

Reality finally had to be accepted after the BIG annual high school music festival at University of Kentucky in Lexington. Choruses and soloists from all over the state participated. It was a glorious affair for choral music lovers. Three days of competitive singing by some forty high school glee clubs and choirs. Plus solo competitions for soprano, alto, tenor, and bass.

In my senior year I sang in the tenor solo competition, doing Purcell's "Lady Sweet and Kind" and Handel's "Where Ever You Walk." When the results were posted I had finished far down the honors list. So I bowed to the inevitable and "retired" from all those operatic dreams.

SAINT AGNES

Our parish church was an important influence in our young lives. It was st. Agnes, staffed by Passionist priests. Next door was the monastery, which contained some thirty Passionists: some were missionaries, some teachers, some being prepared for ordination, and of course the priests handling the parish duties.

The church was and is about the most beautiful mid-size one I've ever seen anywhere. It is built of red brick in the Italian style, with a separate campanile, rose window on the front, triple doorways, and three decorative niches with statues in the facade.

Inside it is spacious, with an ornate marble-canopied high altar, tall pillars along the side aisles making the space very open, and five large and colorful Della Robia style medallions around the semi-circular back wall behind the altar. The stations of the cross are unique in that the figures are life size. Each station stands above a side altar, making St. Agnes a church with eighteen altars besides the main one. Finally, along the front of the choir loft is a frieze which is a copy of Luca Della Robia's choir frieze of singing and dancing children at the cathedral in Florence.

Those many altars were needed on special feast days. At such times the many priests in the monastery couldn't celebrate Mass in the chapel there, not enough room. So they would come over to the parish church some time during the morning and say Mass at anyone of the side altars. It was impressive to see so many of these dedicated men celebrating the Mystery of the Eucharist here and there around that church. Each man would start at a different time, whenever he showed up. So any lay person in attendance could follow a particular priest, or just meditate in that aura of holiness.

The Mass was said in Latin, of course, which didn't bother me because we sang in Latin, so understood what the words meant. Many people followed along in their Missals, which had Latin on one page and English on the facing page. However it is good that English is used now in the Mass and other rites. Hearing the Good News in the local tongue is better for everyone.

In those days there was the custom of "pew rent". A family would contribute a certain amount each year for a pew, their name was printed on a plaque at the end of it, and that family sat in "their" pew. The Kaelins had such a pew, and Mr. Kaelin always sat there. But not Mrs. Kaelin. She preferred and used another spot, near the side entrance,

During Holy Week, especially Holy Thursday and Saturday, all the priests were on or around the altar, singing the Gregorian chants. Holy Thursday was a long service, celebrating the institution of the Sacrament of the Eucharist, and the ceremony of Christ's washing of the apostles' feet. At the end, while the candles were extinguished one by one, the priests suddenly broke into glorious polyphony. After the monody of the chants, lovely though they are, the concluding hymn in polyphony just took one's breath away.

In Holy Week the organ was silent, and all the statues were draped in purple shrouds. A large purple curtain was hung all across the sanctuary, obscuring the high altar. Then, Holy Saturday, when the Mass reached the Gloria in Excelsis Deo, all the lights came on, the organ and choir resounded, the curtain was dropped, bells were rung, and we exulted together in that great song of praise to God.

The Good Friday observance of the Tre Ore, the three hours of Christ's Passion, really meant three hours at St. Agnes. The service started at noon, lasted until 3 P.M. It was a long time, especially when we were young. Didn't seem so onerous as we got older.

Mrs. Kaelin, to keep her young children from getting too restless during long services, told them that if they kept very very still, and looked intently above the high altar, they might see a soul ascending to heaven. Margaret remembers as a child trying not to move a muscle as she stared at the sanctuary hoping to see a soul. Afterward she would say to her mother, "I think I saw one." "Perhaps you did," her mother would say, "Perhaps you did".

We were fortunate in having many good Passionist priests at St. Agnes over the years. Fr. Aloysius, the pastor for as long as I can remember, Fr. Bernard Mary, Fr. Egbert, Fr. Bennett, Fr. Neil. And of course Margaret's brother, Fr. Walter, the exemplar par excellence. The memory of those good men has always been an inspiration for me.

Several young men from our neighborhood were sufficiently impressed by these priests to enroll in the Passionist Seminary in St. Louis. Jack, of course, but also Gabriel, and both Charlie and Jerome Bisig. In the event, only Jack persevered to ordination. The others decided, no doubt rightly, that a family life would be best for them.

The Feast of Corpus Christi was a very big celebration for the Catholics from all over Louisville and surrounding areas. Some ten thousand people attended, the Archbishop officiated, and numerous priests and sisters took part. It was held near St. Agnes and our homes, on what is now the grounds of Bellarmine College.

It was in June, the weather warm to hot, and a festive air prevailed. There was a long procession from our church to several temporary altars. The marchers from each parish were preceded by colorful banners with their church's name, as were the men of the Holy Name Society and the Knights of Columbus. Benediction was celebrated at each altar.

The Archbishop carried the Monstrance containing the Sacred Host, which was shielded by a canopy held over it by four men. At special Feast Days in St. Agnes, Mr. Kaelin was one of the four who had the honor of carrying the canopy.

The whole affair lasted most of the afternoon, was quite inspiring, and one felt the Almighty must have been pleased by the reverence paid the Host.

(Years later Margaret and I were in Oberammergau, the site of the famous Passion Play held every ten years. Her mother's Bavarian forbears came from that area. We went into the parish church, not very large, ornately decorated in the rococo style, all white and gold. At one side of the church a man was singing sacred chant beautifully, accompanying himself on a small organ. As we knelt your mother caught sight of a canopy by the altar, just like the one Mr. Kaelin used to carry in St. Agnes. Tears filled her eyes.)

LEXINGTON

In Lexington we stayed at first in a one room apartment in a home. We took meals at a boarding house nearby. The food was O.K., but the atmosphere was stiff as a board. After just a few days Margaret said, "Enough of this. I'll cook in our place." She had never yet cooked a meal in her life.

Our apartment had a kitchenette at one end, with a little table and two chairs. Well, that was the beginning of your mother's journey from rank beginner to master chef. Progress was rapid. When Margaret decided to do something it got done and stayed done.

Today, as you know, your mother cooks and presents tasty meals in quite a variety of cuisines: German; Italian; good old American like pot roast, turkey with all the fixins', steak and potatoes, and seafood; as well as Mexican; Chinese stir-fry; just name it.

I was happy in our little domicile simply because we were together as husband and wife at last. Any place was O.K. with me as long as my sweetheart was there.

The electronic courses were interesting and I understood them, so unlike chemistry. We had no car, so I walked to school. On Sundays we took the bus to Mass.

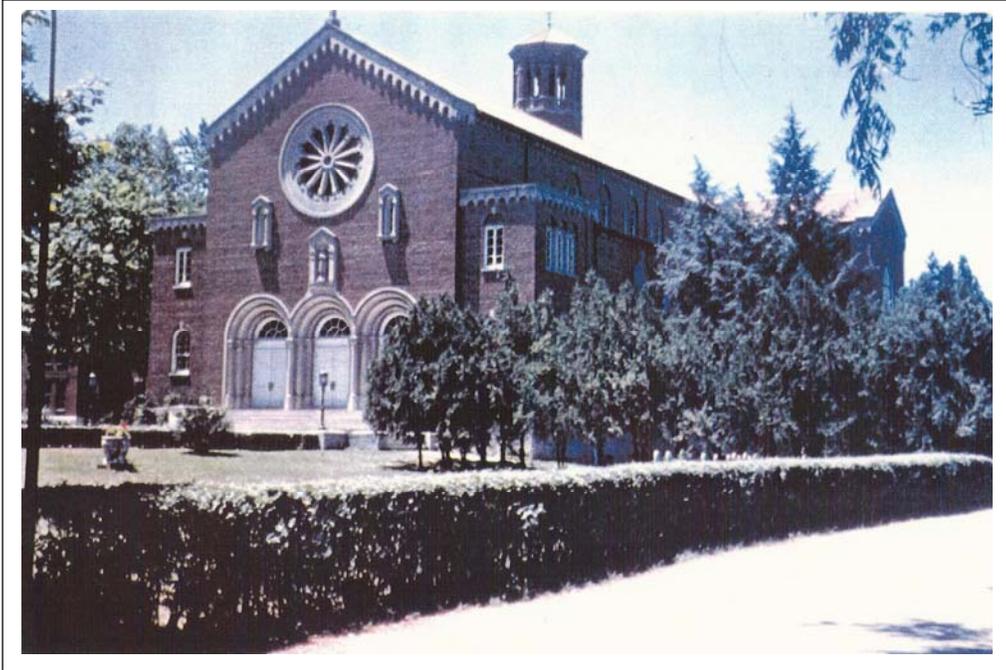
Our entertainment consisted mostly of taking walks around the neighborhood in the evenings, and picking up an ice cream cone at a Mom and Pop place nearby.

We did get to Louisville every fourth weekend. Our friend Paul Wathen, whom we already knew from home, was in the same program and had a car. He would take us and one or two other Louisvillians along for those visits.

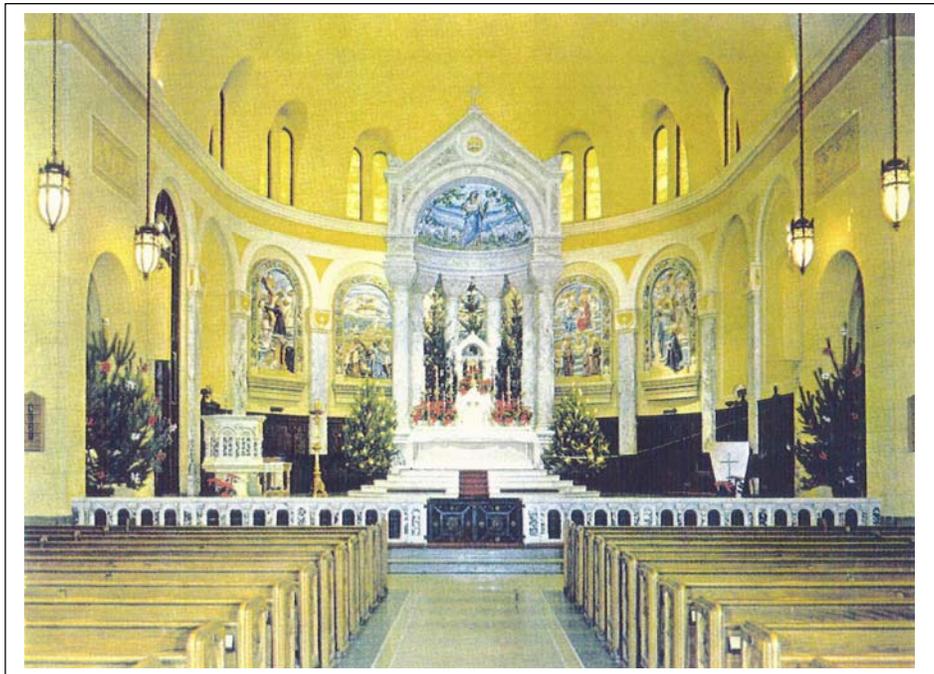
About March or April we moved into an apartment on Limestone St., closer to downtown. We could walk from there to the main drag. The new place was larger, two rooms with a kitchen, in an apartment building.

We were expecting our first-born, but still, to bring in some extra money, your mother took a job in a shoe store. She liked the work O.K., but had to give it up eventually when she became unable to continue the necessary stooping and kneeling to fit shoes to customers.

When the electronics course was completed, I was sworn into the Army on July 1, 1943, and left Lexington. The parting was painful, with Margaret smiling bravely on the station platform as the train pulled out. She stood there waving. A sad day.



SAINT AGNES CHURCH



INTERIOR



FR. WALTER KAELIN, C.P.

MILITARY SERVICE - 1

I enlisted in the Signal Corps Reserve in Louisville, on Oct. 27, 1942, beginning instruction and training in telephone and electronic equipment, then was transferred to Lexington, KY in January. The entire course was nine months, ending in June, 1943.

Induction into active service was on July 8th. Saying a sad farewell to Margaret, I went by train to a processing center in Covington, Ky. Several days later, along with others, we went, again by train, to Miami Beach (!) for basic training.

This was a relatively painless introduction to army life. We were housed in hotels, three to a room, in the now famous Art-Deco area of South Miami Beach. I was in the small, two-story Ocean Blue. Only one block away was the lovely white sand of Lummus Park, and beyond it the ocean ... pastel shades of blue and green in the water, glorious sunsets lighting up fluffy white clouds overhead. Continuous roar of surf during the night.

The ABCs of basic training: manual of arms, rifle instruction, marching in formation, were easy for me because I'd been in the ROTC in high school. The major drawback was the brutal heat in which we did the training. Though from Louisville, which can be quite hot and humid in the summer, I found marching, exercising, and even just sitting listening to a lecture hard to take under that broiling sun. From time to time we were marched into a theater with lovely air-conditioning, to see training films. Needless to say, at such times gentle snoring could be heard all over the theater, despite the efforts of our instructors, who prowled up and down the aisles poking the somnolent back into attention.

A small triumph during the training was receiving the Sharpshooter medal with the M-1 rifle. Only one ranking is higher, Expert. For a year or so when sixteen, I belonged to a rifle club which shot every Saturday in the basement of the National Guard Armory. That previous experience paid off.

Though the physical surroundings were attractive, and the training not too onerous, my mental state was bad because of our separation at that critical time. Pauline came from Louisville to be with her sister for the birth. The suspense ended on Aug. 5th, with a phone call from Pauline. Our son was born with everything intact.... wonderful!

KNOXVILLE, TENN.

After four months in Miami, a group of us were sent to the U. of Tennessee, where we took courses as part of ASTP, Army Student Training Program. This was meant for guys with respectable IQs, to develop a cadre of better educated men than just high

school for the army of the future. I was now- housed in a barracks for the first time. Not as pleasant as a hotel room, of course, but O.K.

Margaret came from Lexington and I got my first look at our son. We had hit the jackpot. This baby was not only beautiful, but obviously very intelligent.

We rented a room for Jimmy and his mother from a nice Baptist couple in town. The husband was a truck driver. I could get home most weekends, so happy days were here again.

The couple we were with sang in their church choir, and the wife played the piano. We loved to hear them practice the good old Baptist hymns, so melodious, and many resembling Negro spirituals.

It was at the U. of Tenn. that I learned how good college-level teaching can be. The engineering college at Louisville had been a pale imitation of the real thing. At Knoxville we had Timbie himself, from Cornell, the top electrical engineering textbook author. We had Shipton, from Ohio State, who taught us differential equations and made it seem easy. Others, whose names I forget, were just as impressive.

It never occurred to me to wonder how come these stars from universities all over the country were gathered in Knoxville to teach lowly ASTP men. After the war, light dawned. Oak Ridge, where plutonium for the atom bomb was just starting to be made, was outside Knoxville. The stars were there to solve the engineering problems at Oak Ridge, and as we know, they got the job done. Teaching at U. of Tenn. was the cover.

In February 1944, Margaret's father died, and we were able to get to Louisville for the funeral.

Mr. Kaelin was a good man who had to work very hard to maintain his family. He worked a farm for the Sisters of Charity, located next to the Kaelin House. His day began at 5:30 A.M., when he went over to the Sisters' women's mental hospital to stoke the coal furnaces, then on to milk the cows and attend to his myriad other duties. He was allowed Sunday afternoon off every other week.

Like my father, Mr. Kaelin had only one good eye. The other was put out accidentally by a hat pin which had been left on a window sill. It flipped into his eye as he pushed the window up.

During the big depression the bank the Kaelin's used failed, and they lost all their savings. When he learned of the disaster, Mr. Kaelin went out and purchased a fine Victrola console record player for the family. It was an intentional extravagance which represented a noble gesture of contempt for fate.

CAMP CROWDER, MO.

Just after our return to Knoxville, ASTP was discontinued and I was transferred to Missouri, while Margaret and Jimmy returned to Louisville.

Crowder was a signal corps camp located way out in the boondocks where Missouri meets Kansas. Joplin, Mo., was the nearest town. Various training courses in telephone and radio took place, but my memories of the six weeks there are sketchy.

I remember two things: never leaving the camp; and attending a Catholic mission at the base chapel conducted by, what else, a Passionist priest, Fr. James Patrick. He was one of the many fine Passionists who somehow turned up wherever Margaret and I were located, providing a link with home.

FORT MONMOUTH, N.J.

About May 1, a transfer to another Signal Corps installation. The training courses at Monmouth also covered radio and telephone, and of course we also marched and exercised.

A strange thing happened to me one day after a series of grueling physical events... We were standing in ranks waiting to be dismissed for return to barracks. I remember clearly the order, "Fall Out", being given, and then I blacked out. We were on an assembly ground, with barracks on all four sides. When I recovered consciousness, I found myself down on one knee, and no-one was in sight! Why I didn't keel over is surprising, just sank down on one knee. Even more surprising is why absolutely no-one noticed my distress! And how in the world did all those guys disappear into the barracks so fast!!

In contrast to Crowder, I remember the six weeks at Monmouth very well indeed, because it was only a short bus ride from the Big Apple itself. Almost every weekend I was able to get into New York. A big event for a young man from Kentucky.

I'd sight-see Saturday afternoon, with the museums, especially the Met, as first choice, then Fifth Avenue, Rockefeller Center, St. Patrick's Cathedral. Quite a city. In the evening a pleasant time at the Catholic USO near the cathedral. Then an overnight stay at the Paulist Fathers near Columbus Circle. A cot plus coffee and doughnuts was fifteen cents. Late afternoon Sunday, back to camp.

On June 6th, we learned of the invasion of France, D-Day. The Allies had already been in Italy for a year, fighting their way up the peninsula from the initial landing at Salerno, near Naples. Rome was reached at the same time as the D-Day landings took place.

Shortly after D-Day, a visitor to our classes asked for volunteers. He couldn't tell us the details about a secret project, he said, but could promise any who enrolled that we would get overseas. I signed up out of boredom, and also because of a feeling that I didn't want to return home without having left the country.

PINE CAMP, N.Y. (Now Fort Drum)

A group of us entrained at Monmouth and went to northern New York State, near Watertown and Lake Ontario.

The secret outfit turned out to be the 3133rd Special Signal Unit, whose mission was to use tanks equipped with giant loudspeakers. The idea was to be able to make a LOT of tank noise at night in front of the enemy, to induce them into believing a tank attack 'was imminent. Deception!

This was part of a secret operation called the Army Experimental Station, brainchild of a Col. Railey. The Smithsonian Magazine of April, 1985, describes four deception units of the AES which were used in Europe. Three which trained in Tennessee, and the 3132nd, which preceded us, from Pine Camp. Two were used to deploy dummy equipment and camouflage; one for phony radio transmissions; and one for "sonic" deception. Those four all went to France. Our 3133rd went to Italy. The article, unfortunately, only mentions the units in France.

The company consisted of three platoons of six tanks each; a reconnaissance platoon in jeeps; a motor pool; a supply platoon; field kitchen; and two 2 1/2 ton trucks which carried sound recording equipment, blank tapes, and the pre-recorded tank noise tapes we would use.

The tanks were the M-10, intended as tank destroyers, with an open turret and a 105 mm gun on the front (ours were fake). We had a 50 mm machine on the turret; a 30 mm machine gun on the front; and personal weapons of M-1 rifle for the gunner; sub-machine gun for the radio operator; and carbines for the driver and the tank commander.

A regular army major, Williams, was company commander, a good man. The other officers had all been civilians. First Sergeant Pankonin was also regular army, a most impressive and effective man. Everyone wanted to stay on the right. side of Sergeant Pankonin.

We from Fort Monmouth, being Signal Corps men, were intended to be radio operators in the tanks. However, during the training I was promoted to be one of the tank commanders (Ahem), and became a three-stripe sergeant.

My crew was a good cross-section of America. The driver was Bethel Crowe from Tennessee; gunner Walt Weiss was an Oklahoman; radioman Bob Kuhry was from Syracuse, N.Y.; commander a Kentuckian. We made a good team.

Being in the tanks was claustrophobic at first, but it was surprising how the interior seemed to expand after a while, and you stopped bumping your head, or hitting your arms and legs on all sorts of hard protuberances.

The sound equipment consisted of a large array of speakers, some four feet wide by six feet high, mounted in the open turret. Normally the speaker array lay flat inside the turret, covered by canvas. When time to sound off, the array was pivoted up to the vertical, becoming visible from outside the tank, pointing forward. The tape playing and amplifying electronics were housed in a steamer-size trunk mounted on the floor of the tank. This was before transistors and micro-chips, of course, so the electronics were chiefly lots of vacuum tubes connected by lots of wire.

Three other men and I became great buddies: Bob O'Donnell, Andy Anderegg, and Dave Slepian. We found ourselves congenial in many ways, especially Bob O'Donnell and me. The major once asked if we were brothers, saying he thought we looked alike. a remark which didn't please either of us.

O'Donnell and Anderegg were part of the reconnaissance platoon, while Slepian and Larry Goldmuntz were the keepers of the "library" of tapes and spare electronic parts.

The training was good, I think. We fired all our weapons, as well as hand grenades, rifle grenades, and the bazooka. Rode the tanks over hills and through woods, and practiced getting into position and making our ear-splitting noises. Starting training during the day, we later shifted to night operations, which was when we were expected to operate.

In November a group of brass arrived to observe us put on a demonstration. The first night we went out, got into position and did our stuff. After several hours we returned, feeling we'd done O.K. However, in the morning we got an eye-opening critique from the visitors. It seems they had a few ideas of their own. Some mile or so away from where we were lined up, stationary, making our noise, they had set up two kinds of detection equipment.

One was earth-tremor sensors, pushed into the ground, which told them that there was no heavy vehicle movement in front of them, ergo, our noise was just noise. The other was more dangerous for us. It was a bank of sonic "ears", operated in widely separated pairs, which could zero in on noise in front of them very accurately.

We were told that if the enemy had mortars where the visitors were located, they could have destroyed many of our tanks before the demonstration was over. Ouch!

Our leaders conferred during the day, with the heartening result that the second night had a different outcome. This time, while two platoons, including mine, remained stationary, sounding off, the third platoon drove backward and forward just behind us. The visitors allowed as how their earth tremor sensors registered tremors, and their sonic "ears" couldn't pinpoint anything. Well, O.K.

There were both German and Italian prisoners-of-war at Pine Camp, and clearly there were a fair number of local people of Italian extraction in Watertown. This was demonstrated once a month on Sunday, when the Italian prisoners were cheered by locals of every age, bearing picnic baskets full of goodies. No such luck for the Germans. Also, no such luck for us. I admit being irritated at this bonhomie, with the war still being waged.

On the other hand, most of the local citizens were all for us soldiers. We could get into town most weekends, and every Saturday night the Watertown equivalent of a USO was hosted by the good people of the town in the high school gym. There was dancing and refreshments.

In mid-December Margaret came up for a visit of about a week. We hadn't seen each other since March, nine months. Then a really good break, most of us received leave until New Year's. So we returned home together and enjoyed the Holidays with the family. A happy time.

As real winter came on I was exposed to cold, ice, and snow, such as I had thought existed only in the Arctic. An unforgettable experience was the Major taking us out into the extensive woods of the camp in early January. We had to pitch our tents and survive for a week. The temperature hit fifteen below at night, and warmed up to about zero about noon. I thought I'd DIE. Our tanks didn't think much of it either. Getting them started and operational was a major project, and just keeping alive took up the rest of the time. The project made vivid to us just how horrible the Russian-Finnish winter war of 1939-40 must have been.

Then, on Jan. 31, we and our equipment were loaded on a train bound for the West Coast, destination the Far East. Where, we didn't know, but that turned out to be irrelevant because when we reached Wichita, Kansas, the train turned around and took us right back to Pine Camp. SNAFU.

After returning to Pine Camp, our fake 105mm guns were changed to fake mortars. The idea was that the mortars didn't project out nearly as far as the 105s, so there was no danger of bumping into anything when swinging the turret to the side, as could happen with the 105s.

Then, some two weeks later we entrained again, this time for Norfolk, Va., and shortly thereafter boarded a troop ship bound for Italy. We sailed on Mar. 1, 1945.

TO ITALY

We were in a troopship, part of a convoy of three vessels, escorted by three destroyers. The destroyers were fun to watch as they did their guard duty. We were in the lead transport, and one destroyer weaved back and forth in front of us. The others were on either side of the convoy, racing forward to the front and then back to the rear, sometimes close alongside, sometimes far away.

Below decks at night was not pleasant. - It was crowded. The skimpy bunks were four high, with the bottom about six inches off the deck, and about a two foot space between bunks. I avoided thinking about what would happen if a torpedo came through the hull.

Bob O'Donnell and I tried our best to entertain the guys bunked near us by playing our recorders before lights out. Our favorite, on which we harmonized well, was the Civil War song "Just before the Battle, "Mother". We thought it very touching and appropriate, but our feeling was not shared by the majority of soldiers near us. About the fourth night out, in a brutal display of artistic censorship, First Sergeant Pankonin confiscated our recorders. We never saw them again.

We were at sea for fourteen days, first going far south and then northeast toward Europe. Toward the end we entered the Mediterranean Sea. Magnificent was the scene going through the Straits of Gibraltar; on the left Spain, with the Rock looming up impressively; on the right Africa, with the snowtopped Riff Mountains in the background.

Our destination was Naples, and we arrived at the bay just at sunrise. The Isle of Capri was on our left; the sea was a lovely light blue; the air filled with a pink glow; and one fleecy cloud clung to the summit of Capri; colored rose by the light. The whole was as romantic an entry to the old world as anyone could wish.

ITALY, MARCH-MAY, 1945

At that time the front line was far north of Naples. It was between Florence and Bologna, running east-west across Italy.

Our tanks had been unloaded at Livorno, near Pisa, so we were loaded into trucks to go north and rejoin the tanks.

The trip took two days, and began our first contacts with Italians. The people were basically friendly, although wary of soldiers in general. Americans, indeed the Allies as a whole, were certainly preferable to the Germans for most Italians.

Our company had two Italian-Americans, Joe Bocchicio and Joe Salerno, both New Yorkers. They could interpret and taught us some basic words. The ethnic origin of

many American soldiers, with their knowledge of at least some of the "old" language, was a good secret weapon our armed forces had.

Some Italians would tell us they had "famiglia" in America. "Dove?", where. New York, Boston, Cleveland. Also in another America; Argentina or Venezuela.

On the second day, after we had gotten north of Rome and approaching Pisa, people lining the roads would wave and shout "Caio! Caio!", the cheerful word used for both "Hello" and "Goodbye". To my untutored ears, though, it sounded like they were yelling for "Chow." My God, I thought, these people must be starving.

On Mar. 24th, at Pisa we were reunited with our tanks, and moved to a field near Lucca, at the tiny town of Vorno. We parked our vehicles there, and moved into a manor house nearby, the Villa Minutelli, which was bare of furniture, and waited for action.

The short book "Finito", published after the war by Headquarters, 15th Army Group-Italy, generously sent to me by Dave Slepian, sets forth numerous details about the last campaign in Italy before the German surrender. It covers the period from April 2nd until the end of the war in Italy on May 5th. Though I had no clear idea during this campaign of exactly where we were when we made our two, battle-star, front-line actions, the book enabled me to find the locations fairly closely.

The general plan was to start the final offensive on the right flank at the Adriatic Sea, Lake Comacchio, the English 8th Army area. This to be followed immediately by a diversionary attack toward Massa on the west coast. Then the main assault by the U.S. 5th Army in the center would drive toward Bologna.

We first got into action during the diversionary attack toward Massa. The book states that the assault got underway on April 5th. The 442nd Infantry, the Nisei, fought northward through mountainous country east of the coast. At the same time the 92nd started up the coast from some ten miles south of Massa, Two regiments of the 92nd were detached for defensive action in the Serchio valley.

We left our villa at Vorno and rolled up along the Serchio River into the mountains north of Lucca, set up a tent encampment near Bagni di Lucca, and prepared to do our best to make the Germans think a tank attack was imminent in that area, to draw some enemy units away from Massa and the 442nd Nisei attack. The 442nd action was about seven miles to our west. Massa, the 92nd Division objective, was some twelve miles farther west.

We operated in tandem with an English deception unit which used inflatable tanks, so in daylight the enemy would have something to look at to reinforce the ruse. They didn't put their decoys right out in the open. Too obvious. They would be peeking out a little from behind a ruined building, or some trees.

Going out from our campsite after dark, about a mile from the front line, our tanks, in single file, went over the hill which represented the Allied front line, and into the valley which was no-man's land. Then, spreading out along a road, each tank about a hundred yards from the next one, we faced the German front line ridge and raised hell for about an hour with our loudspeaker tank movement noises.

There was plenty of firing going on, mostly from our side as part of the diversion: loud whumps and flashes from mortars; long strings of colored lights from tracer bullets which looked pretty, especially since they were going toward the German held hills. The noise must have been made by units of the 92nd Division in the Serchio valley.

We were out in front of the infantry back on our hills, and for some reason our reconnaissance platoon wasn't with us. I remember thinking uneasily that if an experienced German combat patrol happened to share the valley with us that night, 'we could be dead ducks.

There was a mild crisis in my tank the night we went to the front. At Pine Camp we had trained using radio communication between the tanks. However, on arrival in Italy we were told that radio would not be used, instead we would use telephone wire. For this, a large wheel of telephone wire was mounted on the rear deck of each tank. The idea was that once in position at the front, each radioman would run the wire from his tank to the one behind, connecting the platoon together, so orders could be given by telephone.

Anyway, once I had gotten us into position, as near as I could make out, I told our operator Kuhry to get going with the wire to the next tank. Remember that it was dark, illuminated only by the flashes of shells and tracer bullets, noisy, and the nearest tank couldn't be seen at all. Well, Kuhry froze, and despite being pummeled by Bethel Crowe, seated beside him, he just sat staring blankly ahead.

So I climbed out on the deck, took the end of the wire and ran it down the road toward the next tank. It was scary. Outside our steel skin one felt much more vulnerable, and I hoped that no-one in the tank I was running toward would prove trigger-happy. The connection went off just fine, however, and I ran back to our tank to find that the wire from the tank ahead had arrived, been plugged in, and Bob Kuhry was back on the job, once again his old self.

We raised our noisy hell for an hour or so, and then when the order to pull out came, it was very welcome. We were supposed to neatly wind back up the wire between the tanks before pulling out. To hell with that! I sliced through ours with Walt Weiss' bayonet and we took off. Back at camp a couple of hours later we felt mildly heroic and greatly relieved.

The next morning I found that everyone had gotten rid of the wire in a hurry, just like us. The result being that almost all tanks had picked up strands of telephone wire in their tracks, so we spent a good part of the day picking pieces out of the tracks.

The day after, two tank commanders were relieved for dereliction of duty. One I remember well. The road down into the valley was wet and muddy, and his tank was stopped, blocking the way. Everyone was yelling at the bastard to get out of the way, but he maintained his tank was disabled and couldn't move. Just as we got there, our platoon sergeant, Cummings, a good man, came up in his jeep and ordered the crew out. He then got in and moved the tank off the road. There was nothing wrong with it.

The other delinquent tank got into position, but then the crew froze and didn't do their stuff. The major himself found them cowering inside, hors de combat.

Why some soldiers crack up at the critical time is a mystery. Most just do their jobs and hope for the best.

We rather expected that our performance would be repeated, but no. A day or two later we struck camp and returned to Vorno and our villa.

Apparently the thinking was that our effort was intended to get the Germans to shift some units away from the Massa defenses. If it worked, fine. But repeating the tank noises again in the same place with no evidence of a real attack, would probably have no further effect.

Were the Germans fooled by our sonic deception efforts? After the war, according to the Smithsonian article, enemy officers were interrogated on the matter. The results were inconclusive, and remember that the report was written by people who wanted to show that the deception effort produced results. On the plus side is the fact that the Germans did throw some shells into the valley the next day.

My belief is that the enemy, being short of ammunition and everything else toward the end of the war, saved their serious fire for attacks which clearly were for real.

BOLOGNA

Just a few days after returning to Vorno, we were loaded onto tank carrier trucks and hauled eastward through Florence and northward toward Bologna. Well short of the front we disembarked from the carriers and set up a bivouac on the north side of a gently sloping mountain. We were there for about a week. Looking northward at night provided quite a spectacle. The Allies were throwing a lot of rockets at the German mountain lines from multiple-rocket launchers. The flashes from multiple rockets hitting in a cluster, one after the other, was awesome. I was thankful for being on the right side.

According to "Finito", the main 5th Army offensive toward Bologna pushed off on April 14th. The 1st Armored Division moved north on the left of Highway 64 toward Vergato. The 10th Mountain Division, attacked from Castel d'Aiano toward Montepastore. The Brazilian Expeditionary Force on the left of the 10th Mountain, moved toward Montese.

The 88th, 91st, and 34th Divisions, and the Italian Legnano Group, attacked north along Highway 65. Our second action corresponds with that Highway 65 drive.

It was just before the main attack that we left the bivouac and drove northward toward the front. For awhile we were on flat country, going along in a long file. A few times I was surprised to see an enemy shell exploding off to our right. They were landing a good hundred yards away, so no real threat. Still, it was an unpleasant feeling to be that close to enemy fire. Apparently the road we were traveling along was a well-known route to the front, and the Germans would throw a few shells that way to keep us aware that they still had some teeth. A reminder that a battlefield is indeed a dangerous place.

As we climbed into the mountains toward Bologna the road became steeper and degenerated into a track. It was now night, with no moon, when an outcry arose from up front. The commander in the lead tank, Bob Bryson, standing up in his turret, had caught a wire under his chin which flipped him right out onto the rear deck. Fortunately, no real damage had been done.

It was Allied telephone wire, strung at just the right height, no doubt unintentionally, to decapitate a man standing in a tank turret. It had obviously been some time since tanks had passed that way. Well, as we were the lead tank of our platoon, we proceeded cautiously. Getting out of the turret, I crouched on the front deck, Walt Weiss' bayonet in hand, looking up at the dark sky, against which the wires showed up as a black line. When we came to one, I cut through it with no compunction.

Just after clearing that hazard, we reached our camp-to-be. It was now after midnight and we were all very tired. So not pitching a tent, we threw down our tarp and went to sleep on it alongside our tank. Later there was a hell of a racket. Whumps of mortars, cracks of artillery, but feeling only "To hell with it", I went right back to sleep. The firing was surely ours.

Here, as at Bagni di Lucca, the front lines were along ridges running east-west, with the valleys between being no-man's land. But here the mountains were higher, more rugged. We were located just behind a front line ridge.

That morning there were Signal Corps men all over the place, repairing the numerous breaks in their telephone wires. We felt bad about it, but not too bad.

We shared the area with a company of Indians: small Ghurka soldiers, big Sikh non-coms, and English officers. I felt quite safe with those fellows near at hand.

Far down the steep mountain-side behind us was Brazilian artillery, with their spotters on the ridge top near us. We could see their big guns below, and the puffs of smoke when they fired. Several seconds later we'd hear the shrill sound of the shells passing overhead, seemingly too close for comfort. I sure didn't like the possibility of a misfire or faulty shell not clearing our side of the ridge.

One night at dusk a patrol of the Ghurkas with a few Sikhs went over the ridge into no-man's land. The Gurkas were armed with rifles, but aside from a nasty looking dagger in their belts, the Sikhs carried only a swagger stick. Late in the night we heard German burp guns being fired, meaning the Indians had worked their way very close to the enemy. At dawn they re-appeared. We were mightily impressed.

The "Finito" book has a map which shows the 10th Indian Division to the right of the American 91st and 34th Divisions and the Legnano Group which were driving on Bologna from the south. That may explain the Indian company we were near, and place this second action of ours as being some fifteen miles south of Bologna.

By that time the skies belonged entirely to the Allies. During the day we would see flight after flight of our bombers going over toward the German lines, and then hear the thud of many bombs.

There was a lower ridge in front of us which ran out almost directly toward the enemy lines. To do our stuff, we moved out at night along a narrow dirt road on that ridge in single file. We stopped about fifty yards apart and blasted our tank noises at the Germans.

The real attack was going forward in the valley to our left with American and Italian infantry. (Yes, Italian. After the Badoglio government surrendered, there were Italians fighting on both sides for the last year of the war.) The action sounded so ferocious that almost all of us at one time or another left our tanks and climbed some fifty yards above the trail to the top to look over. There was immense noise, flashes from heavy guns, and the ubiquitous tracer streams. An intimidating scene.

That offensive was the last of the war, though we didn't know it at the time. Once the allies broke through the final mountain defensive line below Bologna, and got out onto the Po plain, the war was quickly over.

A day or two later we decamped and rode forward and down into Bologna. We passed through Bologna in the middle of the night. There was no one visible, buildings were shattered in every direction, and a terrible stink permeated the air. A nightmare of a place.

Our company rode north to Poggio Rusco, some six miles south of the Po River, passing columns of German prisoners marching south, and set up camp in a field outside town. The German surrender in Italy took place on May 2nd, and that night in the little town I got falling down drunk on beer and wine. O'Donnell and Anderegg were with me, and Bob was in as bad a shape as I was. Andy, a very big man, got us both back to camp, me under one arm and O'Donnell under the other.

MILITARY SERVICE - 2

Italy, May- December, 1945

Lake Garda

We stayed in the field for a couple of weeks, with the Major asking permission to move on north to Lake Garda. When the formal O.K. was not forthcoming, we simply left the tanks in the field with a guard, trucked up to a glorious spot, and pitched our tents. We were across a small bay from Salo, on that largest of the beautiful Italian Lakes.

Fifth Army headquarters was just north of Salo, in Gardone Riviera, and now some six of us were detailed to the HQ because of our signal corps credentials. Anderegg and I were included, with the job of looking after the telephone equipment at HQ. A very soft assignment.

Between the gorgeous lake before us, hills all around, and the happy fact that the war here was over so we could look forward to getting home in one piece, we were very happy on Lake Garda.

After a couple of weeks across from Salo, four of us were sent to Desenzano, twenty miles south, to do the same job, telephone maintenance, at a less exalted location than Army HQ. Desenzano was not as wealthy looking as Salo and Gardone Riviera. However it had a small, colorful harbor, a castle on the hill above, and suited us just fine.

We were resident in a small apartment building, us in two bedrooms, our equipment in another room, entirely free of supervision. We came and went as we pleased, made our own schedules for duty, and enjoyed the little town and the marvelous blue lake.

It was here that I learned some serviceable Italian, because we were in contact with the local people more or less all the time. The lady who took care of our apartment; people at the harbor where we rented a boat from time to time; patrons of the little bar down the street; folks young and old who just wanted to chat a little with these foreigners. I learned to say a phrase or two which always got a good reaction: "My father's mother was Italian. Her family came from Genoa."

Now the Italian words I remember can be counted on fingers and toes. Yet then I conversed with people ... slowly. No high-falutin' philosophical discussions, of course.

(Some forty years later I saw Desenzano again, and the place was unrecognizable to me. It had grown tremendously, the waterfront now had a broad promenade and big hotels which certainly weren't there in 1945. I couldn't remember where we'd stayed, where we ate, or anything else. Lake Garda was still there, though, a BIG lake, surrounded by hills, a most exceptional place.)

Rome

The war in the Pacific was still being waged, and our Major wanted to get our outfit over there. Strange man. The strong feeling among us soldiers was leave well enough alone, but he obtained orders to get us back together and bring our equipment to Rome!

That's how I had the great good fortune to spend the month of August near the Eternal City. We were billeted in a currently unused agricultural school some five miles outside the city, and there was ample opportunity to get into town and explore. I was bowled over by St. Peter's, of course, the Vatican museums, the Sistine Chapel. The Rome of the Romans themselves, of the Renaissance, of the Church, all there jumbled together, layer on layer. Anyone with a sense of history has to be enthralled by Rome.

While there I was also able to hear two operas at night in the magnificent setting of the Baths of Caracalla. I saw *La Gioconda*, featuring my 1930s tenor idol, Beniamino Gigli, and then a spectacular *Aida*.

A special occasion was attending a Papal Audience, along with several hundred other soldiers of various nationalities. The Pontiff then was Pius XII, a very ascetic looking man, tall and thin. He spoke to us in about six languages, using no notes. I recognized Italian, French, and English of course.

At the end he approached the barrier separating he and his attendants from us *hoi polloi* and stretched out his hands to the soldiers, who crowded close to touch him. His retinue regarded this behavior with obvious distaste, and attempted to hurry the Pontiff along. But the Pope is the Pope, and Pius XII took his time before leaving us. I didn't try to reach him, believing as the Hindus do that just seeing a holy man gives you some good Karma.

Goritzia/Cividale

The Japanese surrender in August was followed quickly by the disbandment of our outfit. I had to say a sad farewell to O'Donnell and Anderegg, since we were sent on separate ways. A group of us signal corps men were put on a train, and sent northeast to Gorizia, right on the Yugoslavian/ Italian border, and became part of the 88th Division.

That's why, to my chagrin, my service record at discharge lists me as Telephone Repeaterman, 88th Division, rather than a tank commander of the 3133rd of glorious memory. The service record, though, does list our two battle stars: Arno River and Po Valley.

The situation at the border was somewhat tense because the Yugoslavs, now Communist under Tito, had staked a claim to a chunk of Italy as war booty. They especially wanted the big port, Trieste, as well as Gorizia and other parts north and west. Their claims were based on various historical events, whether justified or not, who knows? Anyway, the Allies said "Forget it", Tito threatened to march in and take over, and the 88th Division was at the border to maintain the status quo.

We really didn't think Tito would be so foolhardy as to attack us, but vigilance was the order of the day.

Almost immediately after arriving in Gorizia, I and two other signal corps guys, along with a half dozen German prisoner signal corps men, were sent north to Cividale, to maintain telephone communications in the area. As a three stripe sergeant I was the senior man, so in charge.

We were housed outside town in part of a orphanage for girls. It was managed by nuns, and was lively with five to ten year olds. On Thanksgiving Day, the U.S. army cooks from Cividale came out with a feast of turkey and all the usual trimmings for the orphans, the nuns, and us. A nice gesture.

I was younger than the Germans, but relations were amicable. Between their little English and my high-school German, we communicated, especially since our job was maintenance of telephone lines and equipment, and we all understood that.

One might wonder why the Germans didn't just walk away from our billets. They weren't under guard or restrained in any way. But where would they go? It was a long walk to Germany, and they couldn't expect sympathetic treatment from any Italians they might run into along the way. With us they had food and shelter, were treated with respect, and worked

away at something they knew. They, like us, looked forward to the day when they would be shipped home.

The maintenance was more complicated than it should have been because of the Yugoslavs' dirty tricks. Tito obviously decided that direct attack was out of the question, but that bluster and harassment might work. For us the harassment took the form of interrupting our phone lines. Several times a week our wires were cut, here and there, no particular pattern, but a royal pain.

The first time it happened after I was there was a surprise and so a considerable worry. The line to a border post east of Cividale went dead, and for all I knew the damn Yugoslavs had gone bonkers and were overrunning our position. It was at night, of course. I called the duty officer at Udine, Division HQ, and reported my worries. He was relaxed. "So the bastards are at it again, huh? Well, in the morning find the break and fix it." "Yes, sir."

Usually the wire between two or more poles was simply gone, so we'd string new wire. More subtle was the pulling apart of a connector, just enough to break service, and then re-wrapping the connector in its tape so there was no obvious indication of the break. To find those, we had to tramp along the line, feeling each connector for the small separation which meant it had been tampered with.

(In retrospect I believe that much of the wire pilferage was just to get hold of some good telephone wire, and that probably the local Italians were stealing as much or more than the Yugoslavs.)

Not all Italians were happy with our presence after the war, especially the Communists. They were strongest in Northern Italy, and the towns all had one or more banners with the Italian equivalent of "Yankee go home". I witnessed one march of Communist supporters in Cividale. A sad looking rag-tag bunch, waving hammer and sickle flags. Onlookers watched in silence, neither cheers nor jeers.

The Communist Party thought they could take Italy over, and in the first free election, December, 1945, they very nearly did, getting 40% of the vote. Fortunately the Christian Democrats won with 51%. After Mussolini and the war, obviously many Italians wanted change, and the leftists promised their usual pie in the sky. But the good guys won.

While in Rome I had seen a different type of Italians get their comeuppance, namely smart-asses. A number of us were in an open truck, going somewhere, happily eating watermelon. Just behind us was a racy convertible, top down, occupied by two young sports. They were talking animatedly in decidedly

unflattering terms about us. Luckily, Joe Salerno was in the very back, munching on a huge chunk of melon. getting the gist of their remarks, Joe stood up and threw his watermelon down on their heads, scoring a bulls-eye. The sports car stopped abruptly, and so did their chatter.

I was at Cividale, an ancient hill town, some two months. On the whole it was a good experience. And one week was memorable: I became eligible for a week's leave to one of several places. I chose Switzerland, and went off with a group of soldiers and a few officers for a train tour which left from Milan. We visited Andermat, Brig, Montreux, Geneva, Meiringen, and so back to Milan and then Cividale. Switzerland, with its magnificent mountains and well-kept villages and cities, untouched by the war, made an indelible impression.

Return Home

Then about the middle of December a jeep from Gorizia came up to our orphanage. Sgt. James Yunker was to leave immediately for the Udine airport to fly to Naples, and from there to sail back to the States for discharge! Hallelujah!

Arriving at Naples, though, I found departure was not to be immediate. It was after Christmas, two weeks later, that we got underway, and then the return was swift.

We sailed back on the baby carrier Bataan in five days. Coming over had taken seventeen. Landing was at Norfolk, from whence I had departed, and after several days there some of us entrained for Ft. Knox, Kentucky, to be mustered out.

At Ft. Knox, who should I run into but Gabe Kaelin! He was just back from the Pacific, having spent time in both Europe and Japan.

On January 5th, 1946, almost exactly two and a half years after beginning service, I had my discharge papers in hand and was waiting impatiently in the reception center. I happened to glance at the door just as my beautiful Margaret burst through it smiling happily, and we were in each other's arms again at last. It had been a full year apart.

Arriving home, amid the hubbub of the family greetings, Jimmy, now almost two and a half, asked "Is your tank parked outside?"

MILITARY SERVICE DOCUMENTS

DAVE SLEPIAN'S NOTES

MAP OF 3133RD SPECIAL SIGNAL UNIT OPERATIONS

HONORABLE DISCHARGE FORM

Dave Slepian's notes

FACTS ABOUT 3133rd SIGNAL SERVICE COMPANY (I think)

July 13, 1944. Formed at AES, Pine Camp

Dec. 27(?), 1944, day of bivouac at -22 degrees F.

Jan. 31, 1945 Boarded train for West Coast. Got as far as
Beaumont, Kansas, received orders to return to Pine
Camp.

February 7, 1945. Arrived back in Pine Camp.

March 1, 1945. Embarked from Newport News for Italy.

March 14, 1945. Arrived at Naples. Stayed there 2 days. By
truck to Pisa via Rome. Staging area near Pisa
several days.

March 24 -April 5. Villa Minutelli at Vorno near Lucca.

April 5 - April 25. Bivouaced on Gothic Line near Bernetti in
the Apennine mountains.

*NO
MUCH CONCERN
AT SALO*

April 26 -May 25. At Poggio Rusco, near Po, north of Modena
and Mirandola.

May 25 - May 30. Lake Garda near Salo.

June 1 - June 9 Company split up into small groups sent on
temporary duty with other Signal Companies. 14
including Anderegg, Goldmuntz, O'Donnell, ds
assigned to 51st Signal Battalion on Garda near
Madero, near Salo.

June 11 - July 8. Lived in field near Castel Franco, Veneto
tending relay transmitter. One other guy! Lots of
interaction with locals, poor and wealthy.

July 8 - July 12. Back to Poggio Rusco to join reassembled
3133 and on to Cecchignola 6 km south of Rome.
Company housed in old Agricultural School

July 12 - Aug.18 Killed time at Cecchignola. Visits to Rome.

Aug 18 - Aug.28. 10 day furlough at Nice. By boat from
Leghorn.

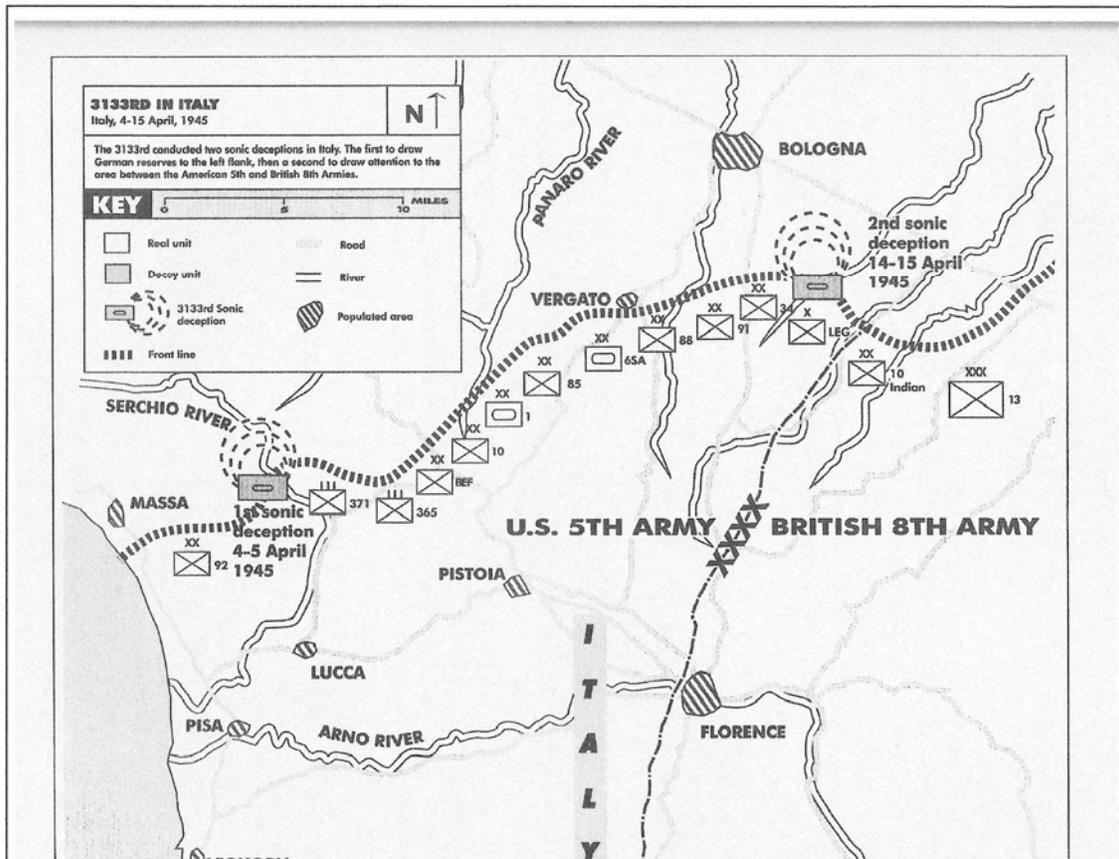
Aug. 28 - Sept 6. Cecchignola

Sept. 6 - Nov.17 At GI school in Florence for 2 semesters.
Lived in main RR station on the quays

Nov.17 -Nov.29 At Stars & Stripes in Rome through pull with Larry Goldmuntz.

Nov.30, 1945 - Feb. 14, 1946. With 977 Signal Service Co, at first near Caserta, then moved to Transmitters to Washington located in old huntin lodge of King 10 miles away. Furlough to Bari. Hospital in Naples with pneumonia.

Feb. 14, 1946 Start home from Naples on troop ship Marine Carp. Many other guys from 3313 aboard, but 3133rd now done for (as far as I know).



Bl 23
P426

ENLISTED RECORD AND REPORT OF SEPARATION
HONORABLE DISCHARGE

1. LAST NAME - FIRST NAME - MIDDLE INITIAL YUNKER JAMES A JR		2. ARMY SERIAL NO. 15 372 306	3. GRADE SGT	4. ARM OR SERVICE SIG C	5. COMPONENT ERC
6. ORGANIZATION 88TH SIG CO 88TH DIV		7. DATE OF SEPARATION 9 JAN 46	8. PLACE OF SEPARATION SEPARATION CENTER FORT KNOX KY		
9. PERMANENT ADDRESS FOR MAILING PURPOSES JEFFERSON CO 1824 ROSEDALE AVE LOUISVILLE KY		10. DATE OF BIRTH 18 AUG 22	11. PLACE OF BIRTH LOUISVILLE KY		
12. ADDRESS FROM WHICH EMPLOYMENT WILL BE SOUGHT SEE 9		13. COLOR EYES BLUE	14. COLOR HAIR BLACK	15. HEIGHT 5'9 1/2"	16. WEIGHT 130 LBS.
18. RACE WHITE <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> NEGRO <input type="checkbox"/> OTHER (specify)	19. MARITAL STATUS SINGLE <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> MARRIED <input type="checkbox"/> OTHER (specify)	20. U.S. CITIZEN YES <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> NO <input type="checkbox"/>	21. CIVILIAN OCCUPATION AND NO. STUDENT X-02		

MILITARY HISTORY

22. DATE OF INDUCTION	23. DATE OF ENLISTMENT 27 OCT 42	24. DATE OF ENTRY INTO ACTIVE SERVICE 8 JUL 43	25. PLACE OF ENTRY INTO SERVICE LOUISVILLE, KY
26. REGISTERED YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	27. LOCAL U.S. BOARD NO.	28. COUNTY AND STATE	29. HOME ADDRESS AT TIME OF ENTRY INTO SERVICE SEE 9

30. MILITARY OCCUPATIONAL SPECIALTY AND NO. REPEATERMAN TELEPHONE 187	31. MILITARY QUALIFICATION AND DATE (i. e., Infantry, aviation and marksmanship badges, etc.) SHARPSHOOTER M1 RIFLE
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32. BATTLES AND CAMPAIGNS NORTHERN APPENN NES PO VALLEY
33. DECORATIONS AND CITATIONS EUROPEAN AFRICAN MIDDLE EASTERN THEATER RIBBON WITH 2 BRONZE SERVICE STARS GOOD CONDUCT MEDAL WORLD WAR II VICTORY MEDAL

34. WOUNDS RECEIVED IN ACTION NONE

35. LATEST IMMUNIZATION DATES				36. SERVICE OUTSIDE CONTINENTAL U. S. AND RETURN		
SMALLPOX 22 JUL 43	TYPHOID 9 SEP 43	TETANUS 9 SEP 43	OTHER (specify) TYPHUS 21 FEB 45	DATE OF DEPARTURE 1 MAR 45 26 DEC 45	DESTINATION EAME USA	DATE OF ARRIVAL 14 MAR 45 2 JAN 46
37. TOTAL LENGTH OF SERVICE				38. HIGHEST GRADE HELD		
CONTINENTAL SERVICE		FOREIGN SERVICE		SERVICES PREVIOUS TO A CERTIFICATE OF ELIGIBILITY NO. 78790-1 WAS ISSUED BY THE VETERANS ADMINISTRATION TO BE USED FOR THE FUTURE REQUEST OF ANY GUARANTY OF INSURANCE BENEFIT UNDER TITLE III OF THE SERVICEMEN'S READJUSTMENT ACT OF 1944, AS AMENDED, THAT MAY BE AVAILABLE TO THE PERSON TO WHOM THIS SEPARATION PAPER IS ISSUED.		
YEARS	MONTHS	DAYS	YEARS	MONTHS	DAYS	
1	8	0	0	10	2	

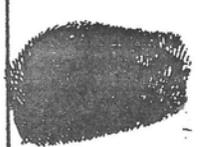
39. PRIOR SERVICE NONE

40. REASON AND AUTHORITY FOR SEPARATION CONVENIENCE OF THE GOVERNMENT RR1 1 (DEMOBILIZATION) AND AR 615 365 15 DEC 44	42. EDUCATION (Years)
41. SERVICE SCHOOLS ATTENDED UNIVERSITY OF TENNESSEE KNOXVILLE TENN	GRAMMAR 8 HIGH SCHOOL 4 COLLEGE 2

43. LONGEVITY FOR PAY PURPOSES							44. MUSTERED UNIT PAY		45. SOLDIER DEPOSIT		46. TRAVEL PAY		47. TOTAL AMOUNT, NAME OF DISBURSING OFFICER	
YEARS	MONTHS	DAYS	TOTAL	THIS PAYMENT	NONE	\$	\$	\$	\$	1 55	167 66	E M BUKER MAJOR FD		
3	2	13	300	100										

INSURANCE NOTICE

IMPORTANT IF PREMIUM IS NOT PAID WHEN DUE OR WITHIN THIRTY-ONE DAYS THEREAFTER, INSURANCE WILL LAISE. MAKE CHECK OR MONEY ORDERS PAYABLE TO THE TREASURER OF THE U. S. AND FORWARD TO COLLECTIONS SUBDIVISION, VETERANS ADMINISTRATION, WASHINGTON 25, D. C.									
48. KIND OF INSURANCE M.A.I. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> U.S. Govt. <input type="checkbox"/> None <input type="checkbox"/>	49. NOW PAID Allocated <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Direct to V.A. <input type="checkbox"/>	50. Effective Date of Allotment Discontinuance 31 JAN 46	51. Date of Next Premium Due (One month after 50) 28 FEB 46	52. PREMIUM DUE EACH MONTH 6 50	53. INTENTION OF VETERAN TO Continue <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Continue Only <input type="checkbox"/> Discontinue <input type="checkbox"/>				

54. RIGHT THUMB PRINT 	55. REMARKS (This space for completion of above items or entry of other items specified in W. O. Directives) LAPEL BUTTON ISSUED ASR 2 SEP 45 54 INACTIVE SERVICE ERC 27 OCT 42 THRU 7 JUL 43 8 MONTHS TIME LOST AW 107 NONE 11 DAYS
	56. SIGNATURE OF PERSON BEING SEPARATED James A. Junker Jr.
57. PERSONNEL OFFICER (Type name, grade and organization - signature) F B CURRICK 1ST LT CAV FB Currick	

WD AGO FORM 53 - 11
1 November 1944

This form supersedes all previous editions of WD AGO Forms 53 and 55 for enlisted persons entitled to an Honorable Discharge, which will not be used after receipt of this revision.

LOUISVILLE 1946-1947

For two years after the war, 1824 Rosedale was occupied by twelve people: Grandpa Yunker; Mom and Dad; Pat, her husband Joe, and Martine; your mother and me and Jimmy; and Molly, Mike, and Rose. This large ménage got along very well, considering how many we were.

Mom bravely announced that she would cook dinner each day for everyone. Margaret suggested that perhaps a better arrangement would be for she and Pat to use Grandpa's kitchen cooking for him and their families, with Mom cooking for Dad, Molly, Mike, and Rose. But no, Mom wanted to do it all. Well, of course it was too much for her. After two or three weeks, she threw in the towel. The arrangement then became what Margaret had suggested: the two young married couples, with Jimmy and Martine, ate with Grandpa. Pat and Margaret handling the cooking on alternate days.

For six months after getting home I did absolutely nothing useful, a period still painful for your mother to remember. In those days it was called "readjustment" for veterans. My loafing consisted of playing chess, reading, playing more chess, and listening to music.

Margaret didn't take my lack of initiative lightly. She would urge, "You've got a wife and child. Get going . . . do something . . . get a job . . . or go back to college." At the same time, her well-founded worry about the future didn't change her affectionate nature. She was as sweet and loving a wife as anyone could desire.

Molly was happy to have Margaret there, like old times when teenagers. Her romance with Charlie Bisig blew hot and cold. He would present a ring, which Molly would wear until the next battle, then throw it back at him.

We went out together a few times, once losing money we could ill afford at a gambling club on Poplar Level Road.

At hamburger places, Charlie, now an MD, would remove the top of the bun, examine the contents, cut in a bit with his knife, looking closely, then usually push the hamburger away and just drink his beer. This performance didn't help the appetites of the rest of us.

At that time the art glass business was going well. Dad would bring the wares over from Corydon and store them in the cellar. Then we all helped with the packing, filling orders. Those colorful things made our dirt-floored cellar beautiful.

Jimmy was coming along just fine, a good three-year old, though a worrier. Once Mike and I were cleaning the wallpaper in Grandpa's kitchen when Jimmy walked in. Seeing us up on ladders he began literally wringing his hands. "Get down! Get down!" He feared we might fall. His mother had to take him away.

Rose, to my surprise, remembers me as treating her mean. "You were a basket case, Brother, when you came home. And you were especially hard on me. You didn't even want me in the room when you were listening to music. Once you picked me up bodily and carried me out, then shut the door." I have no such recollection, but it could have happened.

Eventually I had to get active. I had come home with \$1,500 mustering out pay, but though we paid no rent our funds were diminishing daily. Very fortunately, the GI Bill was now law. This enabled any veteran who was accepted by a college to have his tuition paid for four years, plus \$50 a month for living expenses. And U. of L. announced that any veteran who had not completed degree work could come back to finish under the Bill. Margaret and Dad both leaned on me, I took a brace, and signed up.

There was no question of trying chemical engineering again. Hopeless. But I had enjoyed electrical courses in the army, so applied for electrical engineering and was accepted. The problem was that you had to carry on with the GPA you had when you left, and mine as you know had been dismal. So an eighteen month struggle began to bring my GPA up to the graduation requirement ... a C average!

U. of L. operated on a four quarter year, no summer vacation. I began in June, 1946, and at the end of my first quarter back the GPA had slipped a little more!! But then I began to gain, especially in the courses not directly related to engineering: English, Contract Law, etc., all A's. In electronics also I was making the grade. But it was close. After four quarters I was still too low, but in the fifth I nosed above the C GPA. Hooray! At the end of the sixth quarter, December 1947, I had my graduation requirements for an EE. Prayers of thanksgiving were definitely in order.

I remember my time at engineering school both before and after the war as periods of stress and strain. They were mitigated by some good friends there, and by a welcome athletic triumph. Yes. U. of L. had fraternities, and the one for engineers was Triangle, to which I belonged. I was the

pitcher on Triangle's softball team (fast pitch, I hasten to add), and we played in the intra-mural league. In the golden year we won every game, thirteen of them, and then defeated the all-stars from the other teams in the final hurrah!

In order to bring in a few dollars, I took a job as a Pinkerton detective. Not like Bogey as a private eye, though. I was a hotel guard, in uniform, working at the Kentucky Hotel, a nice one downtown. I worked the 4 P.M. to midnight, or midnight to 8 A.M. shift. When I had the late late shift, I sometimes had to go directly to classes after work, trying to maintain concentration while my eyelids kept drooping.

We had to be careful with money, but were not in really penurious circumstances. We had good times with the family and relatives, got out and around enough, and both of us were happy now that the career path was shaping up.

With the EE degree almost in hand, finding a real job became paramount. Now Dad wanted me to go into business with him in his consulting work, which had really taken off since the end of the war. But I knew nothing about gas systems and equipment, or the economics of installing same. Dad said he'd teach me, but it was not a prospect I looked forward to. My father was brilliant and experienced, and I feared trying to keep up with him.

Dad hoped mightily that Margaret, his special favorite, and I would stay in Louisville and live at home. To that end he began building, by himself, what was intended to be an apartment for us in the attic!

At the same time we were hoping to find an opportunity which would take us away. The bottom line was that we didn't want to be dependent on Dad and Mom's hospitality forever. Also, even though the gang in the house was friendly, we did look forward to having more space of our own than just one room. I knew I'd be happy with my little family anywhere, and we both thought we'd be better off on our own, wherever it was.

As related earlier, Uncle Carl came to the rescue and got me into General Electric at Schenectady. A big break in my life.

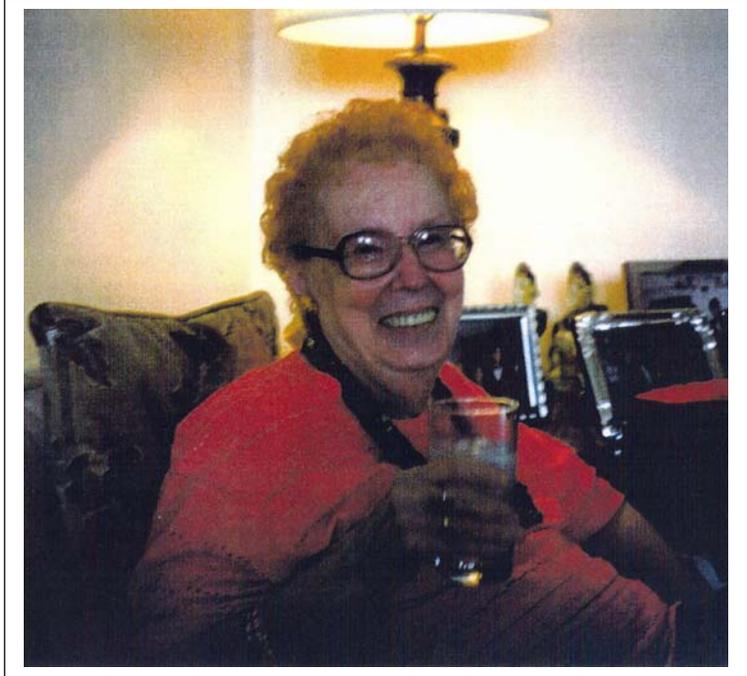
I had finished my courses in mid-year, December, and began with G.E. right after New Year's, taking the train to Schenectady. I took a room in a boarding house, going to and from work on the bus, and looked for an apartment. Housing

was really tight even two years after the war, but I finally found a place. On the phone, Jimmy had told me, "Please get something on railroad tracks." Well, I did, though that was not my original intention.

A really bad memory for your mother was the day she and Jimmy were to take the train to join me. My mother insisted that Margaret go over to say "Goodbye" to Aunt Lizaboo. A totally unnecessary disruption to getting ready to go.

While she was gone, the Salvation Army truck had stopped by and Mom gave them a dresser which was in our room. The dresser contained all of Jimmy's clothes. Coming back, Margaret was frantic. She drove to Mom Kaelin's and poured out her anger and dismay. Mrs. Kaelin said, "Find that truck." So your mother drove around and around the Highlands looking for the Salvation Army truck, and found it! She retrieved the clothes, repacked, and barely made the train.

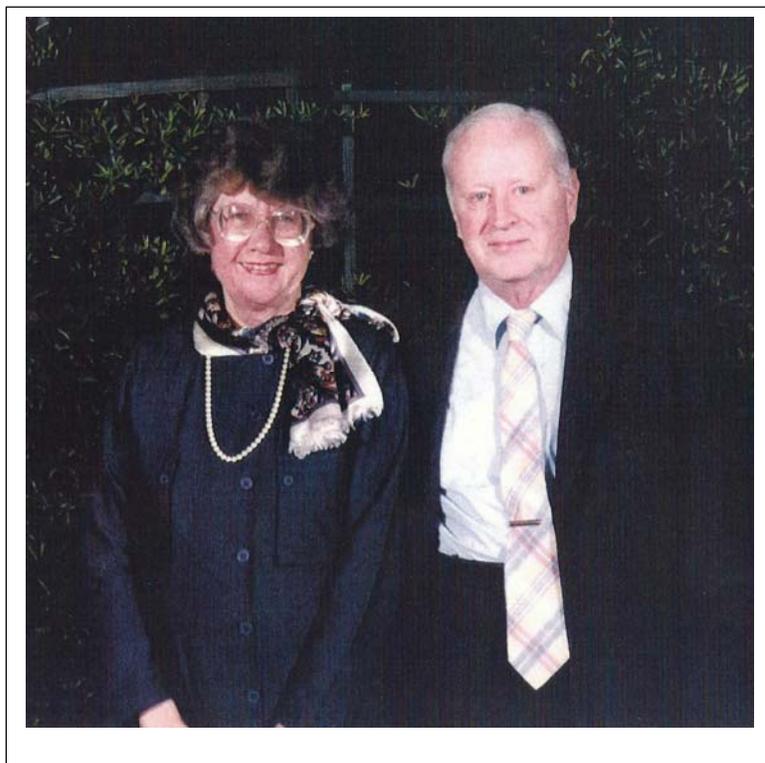
In early February Margaret and Jimmy arrived in Schenectady at night, snow four feet deep on the ground, temperature ten below zero. There were no taxis at the station, so we lugged the baggage to the main street, finally caught the bus, and got to the apartment. Once we'd thawed out things looked better. Our new life was beginning, and the three of us were together!



PAT



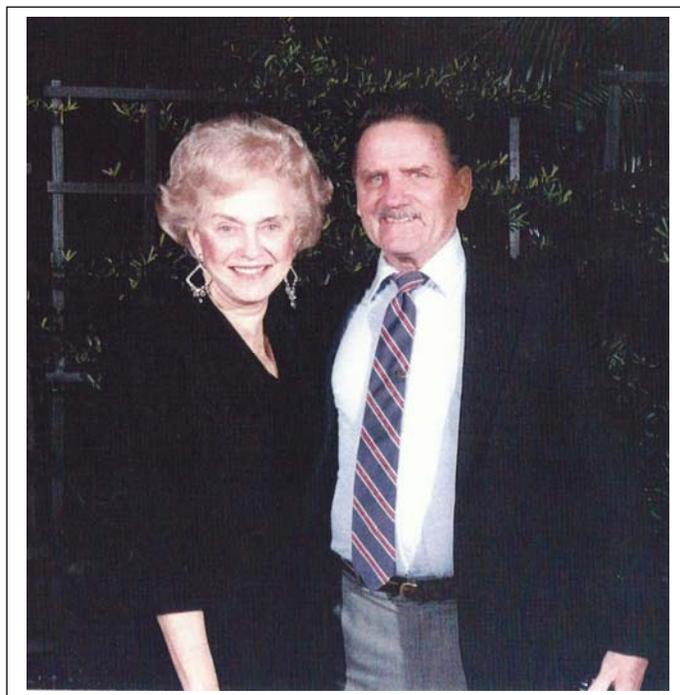
MOLLY AND CHARLEY



MIKE AND BETTY GATES



ROSE AND PETER



SYLVESTER AND CAROL



BETTY AND BUZZY



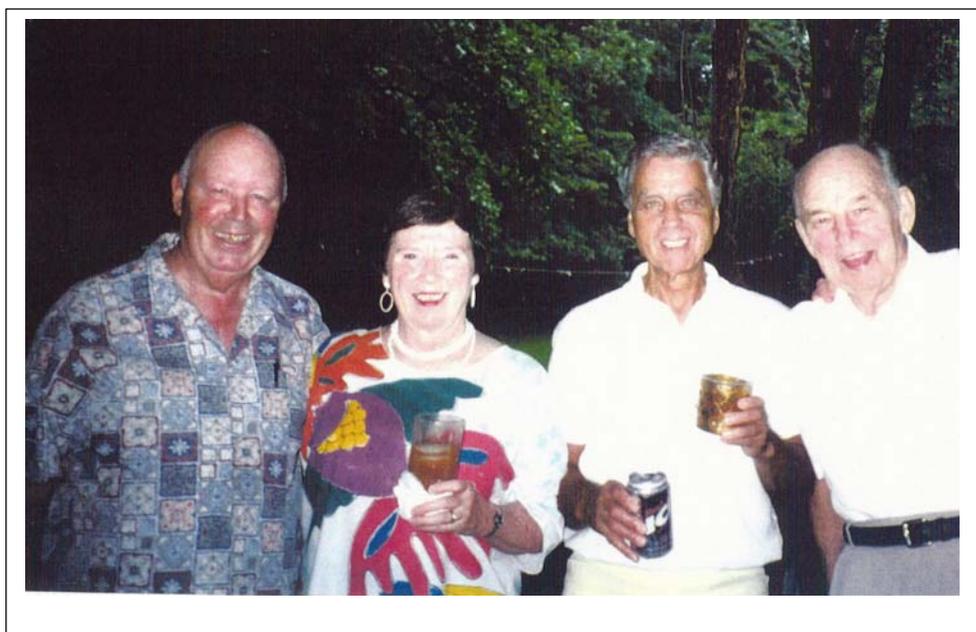
MARY ROSE YUNKER, CHARLEY BISIG, YVONNE BASS
AND CHARLEY YUNKER



RUTH YUNKER



BUZZY WITH MARGARET



JIM Y., MARY ROSE, CHARLEY AND BILL BASS