October 22, 1956

My daughter, Gertrude, has asked me to recall some of the events connected with my early life, so I may as well begin.

I, Thomas James Murphy, was born April 17, 1883, the son of Patrick Constantine and Elizabeth Gilchen Murphy, in a four room double frame house on Park Avenue (now Pankon), East Liberty, Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. This house had no running water inside. All water was obtained from a hydrant in the yard. Outside toilet, no gas or electricity. Our light was only from oil lamps, and my job, when I got big enough, was to fill the lamp bowls with oil, clean the chimneys and trim the wicks. My father at this time was bookkeeper for the Pittsburgh "Showcase Company". Later he became a partner with another man, on the death of the owner, T.J. Murphy, who I was named after.

Father was an only child. His mother died when he was very young, and he barely remembered her. Then he had a step-mother who he always spoke highly of. His father however, was a very strict Irishman, and from some stories he told me, his disciplinary actions, in my opinion were brutal. But he was never critical of his father's actions. Anyway, he turned out to be, in my opinion, the finest gentleman I have ever met, although he was pretty strict himself when occasion required.

Father's parents came from Ireland and settled in Quebec, Canada, but I have no record of them. My mother's parents also came from Ireland. Her father, whom I never saw, was a Catholic; her mother a Protestant. I was told her mother's brothers were greatly incensed at the marriage, and were determined to break it up. But they escaped from Ireland before any harm was done.

I recall my maternal grandmother when I visited Montreal at about the age of six. She had to scold me for sliding down the banister. She was pretty old at this time, but she never became a Catholic. However, all the children, three girls and I think four boys, were raised Catholics. I can recall only three of them.

Uncle Harry, who in my early days owned a popular tavern where people connected with sports used to gather, then later he was connected with the Government, in various positions. His wife, Aunt Bergie, was a lovely person and friendly as could be. After her death, Uncle Harry married another fine lady and Uncle Harry used to say she was his first sweetheart.

Aunt Annie, Mother's older sister, never married and lived all her life in Quebec. I think she lived with one of her brothers. I met her in Quebec on a trip I took with the family when I was about fifteen. I can't recall when she died.

The other sister was my Aunt Mary. Small of stature, but I always thought she was beautiful looking. She married a French Canadian named Eutach Hugh Lemay. They had only one child, who died in infancy, and never had another. Lemay prospered as a lumber broker and became a millionaire. In contrast to Aunt Mary, he was a big, attractive looking individual over six feet and two hundred pounds, and had the important features to go along. He was always known in Montreal as E.H. and cut quite a figure in

business and social affairs. I, sometimes think too much of the latter to suit Aunt Mary. I am not familiar with the whole story, but after Aunt Mary's death, his business and social prestige declined. And at the time of his death he was almost a pauper, and was buried on his sister's residence with only an insurance policy to cover the funeral.

Well, that's about all I remember of my ancestors, except that I never had any cousins. Seems all the other kids did.

I don't recall too much about my parents' life in Quebec. After their marriage Father was employed as a bookkeeper for a lumber firm. When the St. Lawrence River was frozen up in the winter, all traffic was stopped. No ice breakers in those days and most all were sailing vessels. He would go to Pensacola, Florida for the firm and return in the spring when the river was again open. He told me there was a great celebration in Quebec when the first sail was sighted in the spring, coming up the river.

There was one child born to them in Quebec. A girl named Gertrude, and she died in infancy. I have no further knowledge of their life in Quebec.

Father had a very close friend in Quebec by the name of T.J. McNulty. This gentleman migrated to Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania; must have been in the early seventies or before, I don't know. Also, I don't know how he ever got into the showcase business and became sole owner of the Pittsburgh Showcase Company, the largest in those days in that district. That alone, to me, must have been an interesting story.

He was, as I recall, a fine, big hearty man and my Godfather. I remember when I was a youngster on Park Avenue he gave me a Hobby Horse (with long hair) for Christmas. It must have been an expensive thing, and was the envy of the other kids in the neighborhood.

The showcase factory was on Vicroy Street (not far from Holy Ghost College). There was an alley in the rear, then McNulty's house which faced Bluff Street. They had a beautiful home overlooking the Monongahela River. When I was a young boy it was one of my great pleasures to visit with them and spend much time just looking through the iron fence bars. The other side of the street atop of the precipice, and watching the steam boats go up and down the river. Also, on these trips, I was permitted to ride on the wagon with "Casey", the driver from the factory, to downtown Pittsburgh to deliver some showcases to wholesale grocers or others. Also, at times, Father would have, I suppose with McNulty's consent, "Casey" bring out the horse and surrey on Saturdays, stable him in a nearby barn, and go for a ride on Sunday. This also gave me some importance among the neighborhood kids. And I must have felt it, because even then I recall I wanted to be the leader in whatever games we played, or what mischief we sometimes got into.

Well, my good friend, Mr. McNulty, in later years became an alcoholic and died because of this condition in Mercy Hospital. As I recall, this just about upset everything for us. The question then was, "What was Father to do?" For a while he kept the business going for Mrs. McNulty, but she wanted to get it off her hands. So, he got a friend of his, who had some money and was in the wholesale grocery business, to go in with him, and they bought out Mrs. McNulty's interest.

Then, it was that Father's troubles started. The company had previously made counter cases for whole wholesalers who delivered them to retailers; oval frames with small sliding doors, with looking glass in rear and different finishes of wood. But, about this time, other companies who had more capital were developing the plate glass floor case. Father and his partner didn't have the capital to make the changeover and compete. So, the firm went out of business. He then became connected with someone in the insurance business.

I don't think I ever saw a couple like my father and mother; never a cross word between them. He called her "Liz" and she always called him "P.C." He was always so polite to her and they had their troubles.

The oldest child, Patrick, died when he was ten. I believe from what was then called blood poisoning. It came from a cut in his foot while running around bare footed.

Stella came next and, at about the same age, she died from diphtheria. They said her heart gave out. Dr. McNeil was there during the day and I recall them saying he thought she was getting along fine. But she passed away that night, and I believe it was Christmas Eve. This was a terrible blow to Mother. She and Stella were greatly attached to one another.

The next child was Paul, who was younger than Joe and I. He died when he was a baby. I can recall the neighbor ladies coming in just after he died and trying to console Mother. Neighbors were a friendly lot those days, and a great help to one another when any sickness arose.

That left Joe and I remaining of the six [include Gertrude from earlier]. And Joe died in September 1952.

Until I was about six Park Avenue was unpaved; just dirt and wooden sidewalks. Later it was paved with asphalt. Then we could have_____ races, also on our velocipedes. I have often wondered what amusement we kids had then and a few years later.

It must have been just after I started at school that I got my first job. My brother, Patrick, carried milk for an old Scotsman named, Musgrave, who had about six cows. They were stabled on Mayflower Street, about three blocks from us. Can one imagine a cow farm in a residential section? Well, when Patrick died I took over at fifty cents a week. After school I would go along with Musgrave down to the field where he pastured the cows and we would drive them home. He would milk them, strain the milk through some cheese cloth, pour it into pint and quart cans, and then I would deliver some to the housewives in the immediate vicinity. They would meet me with a pitcher or have one on the porch for me to empty my cans. Then I would return for another trip. The cow pasture was about a mile away from the barn.

About this period I another job, in addition to my milk route. A Mr. Petkin, who lived on Auborn Street, was in the art glass business; corner of Penn and Frankstown Avenues. Somehow he contacted me and had me carry his lunch box, which looked like a metal cash box, down to him at noon each day at twenty-five cents a week. It didn't give me much time for my lunch.

Getting back to the milk: I have often wondered since, why there was not more sickness from this cause. None of the people around there, I recall, had refrigeration. A few may have had ice boxes, but we just had ice in a tub to keep some things cool.

Mother used to send me to Friedman's grocery (corner of Park Avenue and Mayflower Street) for a gallon of coal oil, as they called it then, and a quart of New Orleans Molasses, among other things. The molasses was my favorite, spread on a big piece of bread, when I returned from afternoon school. Occasionally, a few of us kids would swipe several potatoes from Friedman's stock, go up in a field nearby, start a fire and bake or cook the potatoes. They would come out all black and our faces showed the effects after eating; no salt or butter, but somehow we enjoyed it. (But it sounds silly now.)

I got to be nine or ten and in the summer we'd get a ball of cord, wind it around a piece of rubber, shape it into a ball, and have the shoe maker sew a cover on. This was our baseball.

The winters, then, were certainly different - more snow. One pleasure we had was to fasten one end of our sled rope through the rear frame of someone's sleigh when he wasn't looking, and get a free ride as far as we wanted to go. Also, in regards to snow, almost every Sunday afternoon some of the wealthy men, who had good horses, would have sleigh races on Center Avenue. No traffic problems those days.

When I was about ten we moved to Flavel Street, a short distance from Park Avenue, but close to Sts. Peter and Paul school, where I was going then. About the first thing I remember here was the neighborhood kids calling me "Mickey". "Mickey" because I was Catholic. It was the first I heard of this. Must have got it from home. Well, I either had to take it or fight. And I chose the latter. I soon put a stop to this and we got along well afterwards.

One of the boys I went to school with was John Hartman. His father had a saloon, small hotel and stable in rear where farmers put their horses. This property faced on Frankstown Avenue and extended in rear to Flavel Street. They were considered fairly wealthy. Mr. Hartman had several trotters and pacers. These would run on the "Homewood" track about two or three miles away. I would usually go along. After a race I considered it a privilege to rub their legs with a solution they called "Slim Jim." And after, I would wind the handbags on, pack their hoofs with clay, and cool them off by walking them around with a blanket on for about ten minuets. Often I would walk out and hitch hike a ride on a wagon if the Hartmans weren't going out. In those days there were real good races at the track.

Flavel Street was a short one, running from Station Street on one end to Everett Street on the other. All the people here were middle class, respectable and fairly well to do. One was a Captain Tim, who had an umbrella store on Wood Street downtown. I recall he was Captain of the National Guard company in our neighborhood, and the only service I know of that was at "Homestead" during the big strike.

Well, at the end of Flavel Street and located on Everett Street was a slaughter house owned by Delholm brothers, who had a meat market on Frankstown Avenue. They

would kill about four steers a week, along with some hogs and sheep. Not having much to do during vacation, this place attracted my attention when I was about ten. So, I got looking around there and the next thing I knew I was helping Joe the butcher. The steers were located in a fairly large pen. When he wanted to kill one, it would be driven into a small enclosure he called the Kitch pen. He would throw a heavy rope over the steers' head, open the door and I would start pulling it out by use of an old creaky windlass. I can still see those animals looking at me as I pulled them closer to the large iron ring. I ran the rope through this and when I got his head down close to the floor, Joe would strike it one or two blows with a special shaped axe. This would crush its' skull and cause it to fall over. Joe would then cut its' throat and let it bleed. Then, he would cut the tendons on the back legs near the hoof, put two hooks into this and raise the steer up with a set of chain blocks. He would then cut it open and let out the entrails. My job was to open the stomach and wash out contents with a hose. This, I believe, was thoroughly cleaned later and sold as tripe. (One reason I never fancied this as good eating.) While I was doing this, Joe was removing the hide and was very careful not to cut it. After the killing was done, he would load the hide on an old wagon and take them over to the stockyards for sale.

When killing hogs, he would hold them by one ear, strike them with the axe and cut their throats. Afterwards, he would drag them over to a submerged tank of boiling water; top was about flow level. After he got the hog in I would take the long handled hook, which was fastened to the hogs' jaw, and I would proceed to swish it around in the water. Joe would then pull it onto floor and I would scrape the bristles off with a metal tool, shaped like a saucer with a wooden handle on it. After this Joe would shave all the remaining hair off clean with a knife.

Well, my day started about 6am and we finished about 2pm. For this, I was given a ring of bologna or liver pudding. When I went back to Lincoln School I finished my career in the butcher business.

One thing I forgot, when Joe would kill sheep, he would just throw them on a wooden rack and cut their throats. Often he would take an old dirty glass, fill it with the blood and drink it. He said it kept him in good health. Well, after watching him, I got so I would do the same thing. But I don't recall it made me any stronger. I had mentioned this to Dr. Laughlin recently and he said he had done the same thing on his father's farm.

I never did any fishing when I was a boy because there was no place to fish. Anyway, I had no money. And I never learned to swim because the only place was the Allegheny River about five miles away, and we were given strict rules to stay away from this.

In my early days there were horse cars on Frankstown Avenue. We had some fun hopping on the rear steps and wouldn't get off until the driver stopped the car and chased us off. Later they installed cable cars to go downtown. This was a jerky sensation when the operator started or stopped. The first electric cars were some better for the passengers, but the front and rear platforms were open and unprotected from the weather. In the winter the Motorman was so bundled up because of the cold, wind and snow. One could

hardly tell what he was. Eventually, the Humane Society, or some other body, made them close the front end in.

In the evenings, when cars would be crowded, more passengers were allowed on. They would push their way up through the crowd. Then, the conductor would would push his way through and called the fares. Later, naturally, the fares were collected when passengers got on.

Our neighborhood, those early days on Park Avenue, was made up of respectable, middle class people. Dr. Rhinehart, who lived in the big house next to us and owned the double house we lived in. The Walters, Edwards, Woolslayers, McChesneys, Petkins, and others who I recall - all nice people. But recently on a trip back there, after years away, I found it more like a slum section all occupied by Negroes.

Well, when I was about six it was time to start school. So, Jim Woolslayer, my chum, and I began the trip to the Lincoln School. At the intersection of Frankstown and Lincoln Avenues, when about half way, Jim started to cry and returned home. But I went on by myself. Jim later followed. I had the nicest teacher and, strange to say, her name was Miss Reed. I don't recall the next grade, but the third I do. Here the teacher was a little person and very nice. She wore something that looked like a vest to me, tight fitting and must have had about twenty buttons in front.

Well, it was in her room that I showed the first tendency to get in with the wrong boys. (Maybe the others thought the same of me.) I got away from Jim Woolslayer, who seemed to me, I guess, too studious, and teamed up with three others. How I can remember their names: Frank Duncan, whose father had a milk depot on Frankstown Avenue. Gill Hilty, whose father was a carpenter and Harry Cyphers, whose father was some sort of night foreman in the stockyards over on Penn Avenue; back of East Liberty RR Station.

I don't recall who originated the idea, but anyway it was decided that we could get a more rounded out education at the stockyards than listening to dear, little Miss Keppel (that was her name). So, for the next week (I still think it was two) that was where we spent our time and it was during the winter. There was no truant officer those days. We would ride the back of cattle cars, being shifted around the yards and just watching the sales of steers and hogs. We would return for lunch, then back to our new operations. I still can't understand how it was accomplished, but finally our dear, little teacher called at our respective homes. That ended that episode and, also, our close companionship.

The next room I can recall as the first time I got a severe licking with a rattan stick over my legs and rear end for not reporting promptly from recess.

The next year I entered Sts. Peter and Paul school. Here, they were all German and I started to study German, but gave it up after about a year. I can still recall how I was taunted and laughed at by the other kids on St. Patrick's Day. Mother insisted I wear a piece of green ribbon on my coat.

Well, I got along here without any trouble. I became an altar boy and enjoyed serving at weddings when a tip was always coming. Also, at funerals when we would accompany the priest in a closed-in carriage to the cemetery. A nice, long ride those days.

When I was twelve I received my First Holy Communion. The rule, those days, was that you had to be twelve, and not one month less. Oscar Meyer, a neighbor boy and in later years a well-known attorney in Pittsburgh, was my candle bearer. I don't know where they got this idea; probably came from Germany.

Our Pastor, Father Stuehr would come in the room each Friday to hear our catechisms. He would start by taking a big sniff of snuff, lay his pearl snuff box on the desk, sneeze several times, and then start asking questions. (I have after thought since, why this habit wouldn't damage the membranes of one's nose.)

This school, I believe, only had six grades. Although, in those days, I never heard of grades. You just kept going from one room to another. Maybe skip a couple and go right on to the last. Well, when I reached the last room in this school my teacher was Sister Lucy. An elderly, little bit of a person, but what a teacher, and how I liked her. She always seemed to me to be a saint. I recall I cried when I had to leave her for good. But years later when I returned to Pittsburgh, on several occasions I visited her at the Mother House on Lincoln Avenue. I still have a little oval rosary case she gave me.

Being an altar boy with these Germans wasn't all pleasure from a boy's standpoint. Especially Vespers on Sunday afternoons, when I would rather be in Highland Park or elsewhere. Nearly all those German kids walked long distances to school, and they carried school bags. I think they were made at home out of pieces of carpet.

When I finished at this school, I had to go right back where I had started: the old Lincoln School and, strange to say, in the same room with Jim Woolslayer. I settled down here and became sort of a goody-goody. I studied pretty hard. Not, as I recall, because I liked it or was ambitious, but simply because I was ashamed to get poor marks.

My last teacher at Lincoln was a Miss Butler. The first woman, I believe, I ever saw with real short, curly hair. Some said she had her hair cut off after an attack of typhoid fever. Well, anyway, that hair and that stern face was well known to kids before they reached her room. She was strict and sarcastic as hell. I recall when Florence Woolslayer, the eldest Woolslayer girl, was in her room. She was almost a nervous wreck and her parents went to the School Board about her, but nothing came of it. And, later after, Florence became a teacher. Her and Becky, as Miss Butler was called, became good friends. Strange to say, I got along fine with her and still believe she was the best teacher I ever had.

I went onto the last room in this school, but I don't recall much about it. After this was the question whether I would go to High School (only one in Pittsburgh at the time 1898), or go to work. Most boys at that time, unless their parents were well fixed, went to work. So, my father put it up to me to decide. And my decision was that I wanted to get a job. Strange how things happen in one's life. This decision, on my part, changed the whole future course of my life. For better or worse one will never know.

Well, anyway, my father used his influence with a Mr. Reitz, manager of Bindley Hardware Company, the largest wholesaler in Pittsburgh. And I got my first job as an errand boy with this company at three dollars per week. It was considered a privilege to

be permitted to become associated with this distinguished company. John Bindley was considered a very successful business man and a tight wad, if even in those days. He was very short, bald headed, wore a frock coat, and came and went to his place of business in a carriage.

When one started here he was supposed to be in training to learn the hardware business, and for this privilege you got an advance of fifty cents every six months. Well, I continued this for three years until I was getting six dollars per week. At this time I was, what they called a city buyer. However, prior to this I was an order clerk. A man in charge would give us a customer order. We would take this along with a big box mounted on four casters, study the items on the order, then proceed to the particular floor where the items were obtained. When we had the order filled, we would take the items to the third floor, place them on a stand about five feet square, with the order. Here they were checked by two men called checkers, and the items Bindley didn't have in store were then to be purchased from other wholesalers in town. This was where I came in as a buyer. There were two of us.

Large items were delivered to Bindley by wagon; small ones by us in a two wheeled cart which we pushed over the cobble stone streets in Pittsburgh at the time. The buying was something. The head of the department, each morning, would give us a book showing customers' name and items to buy. After each item he marked the discount at which we were to purchase. Sometimes four of these discounts on one item, especially wood screws. First, we would stop at J.C. Lindsay. If they didn't have the item or give us the requested discount, we would next visit Logan & Gregg. Go through same procedure. Sometimes we would argue with the salesmen, and occasionally got what we wanted. It would save us a lot of walking and cart pushing. There were, I think, four wholesalers, and the last was "Joseph Woodwell Company"; corner of Second Avenue and Wood Street. If we couldn't get our items at the others, generally we could at Woodwell's. They carried a greater variety than the others.

But going back to errand boy days, I sometimes took small packages on a street car out to around 33rd Street and Penn Avenue. Whenever this occurred, I would walk back and look in at all the steel mills along the way. I believe this is how I got the idea I would like to work in a steel mill.

The six dollars I made wasn't by any means the same as six today. I could go into the rear entrance of a saloon, which faced on Liberty Street; was too young for the front entrance, and get roast beef, mashed potatoes, bread, and something to drink for fifteen cents. Also, at that time "Goetman's Bakery" put out a paper box lunch for ten cents. In this was a sandwich, piece of pie or cake and an apple or banana. At noon time men were on corners downtown selling these from large clothes baskets.

Well, many things happened during my stay at Bindley's. One time Mother got word to me to come home quickly. Father had pneumonia and was delirious. I'll never forget the look in his eyes, and the ridiculous things he would say to me, but he recovered. Pneumonia was considered deadly those days. I don't recall how it was treated. Also there was a lot of typhoid fever. Probably from the poorly treated water and raw milk.

I recall when I was about six, Father took me to Highland Park where we could look down on the Allegheny River. The purpose was to see the tremendous amount of houses, household goods and all kinds of material coming down the river from the Johnstown flood. Terrible tragedies caused by heavy rains and dam break above Johnstown. Your mother's Aunt Lizzie was in the midst of this and was lucky to save her life. All her worldly goods were lost.

Well, to get along with the story, when I had reached the six dollar stage, I began to feel I wasn't getting along in the world very fast. So, one day I saw an ad in the paper, stating they wanted young men to learn the steel business. So, over I went to 15th Street on the South Side and signed up to become a "screwboy" at nine dollars per week. Mother objected. She thought it terrible, me going to work in a dirty old mill. This one happened to be a tin plate mill, although at the time I didn't know one from another. It belonged to the American Tin Plate Company, later the American Sheet & Tin Plate Company. And later part of US Steel Corporation. The manager was E.T. Weir, now Chairman of the Board of National Steel Corporation and, in my opinion, the most successful steel man in the country. Also, the most cold blooded and ruthless, but that's what it took to become a success. I guess at that time (after I was here a short time) I learned there was, or had been, a strike on. And as I look back, I may have been hurt physically, but no one bothered me going in and out. Anyway, in my vocabulary at the time, a strike meant to hit at a baseball and miss it. However, the strike ended shortly after I started.

My job was to work the long handle fastened to the screws. After each of the two bars, 8" wide, were given a pass through rolls, I would move the screws down to give each pass more pressure on the bars. After five passes the two bars had elongated to about 36". They were returned to the furnace in two sets or pairs as they were called, and reheated. When hot enough, I would take one of my shoes off and put on a clog. This was a leather upper with an inch thick wooden sole and a steel plate on bottom. The roller would give each pair two passes through rolls with screws down tight elongating them to about 72". I would pull these off top rolls from the catcher. With my tongs, find an opening between the two sheets, hold my clog on the bottom one, and pull the top one free. The doubler would then fold these over making four sheets and squeeze the folded part under a mechanical squeezer. These four sheets were then reheated, rolled, opened by me, and doubled into eight sheets to be finished by a roller into required length which determined the sheets' thickness.

Well, this was hard work in the summer time, and many a day I resolved if I got out alive I would never come back. But this wore off in time. I went from screwboy to catching, then roughing. And when I was about twenty-two was given a rolling job. As I look back, I must have had some desire to get ahead, because instead of leaving, I stayed.

When I was working on the South Side, the three shifts, or turns, were from 5am to 1pm, 1pm to 9pm, and 9pm to 5am. These ridiculous hours were later changed to 7am to 3pm, 3pm to 11pm, and 11pm to 7am. When I was on the 5am to 1pm shift, I use to get a street car at 3:22am, corner of Station Street and Larimer Avenue, get off at Forbes and 22nd Streets, walk over the 22nd Street bridge, cross the Monongahela River, then

down to South 15th Street. One didn't get much opportunity to run around in the evenings on any of these shifts.

Home after the turn finished. In cooler weather, I would hang around for an hour or so. When the next turn or shift started, I'd watch how the fellow on the next advanced job would do his work. For instance, while I was a screwboy I used to watch the next turn catcher, then get his permission to catch a few pairs of the bars coming through the rolls from the rougher. When I got a catching job, I did the same thing in regard to the next job: roughing.

When I look back, it appears to me one's future depends a lot on the fortunate breaks one gets, as one goes along and assistance or boosts one gets from one's superiors. Of course, I guess in most cases one's ability to do the job helps attract this attention on their part.

In my case the hot mill foreman was a big, tough Scotsman named Jim Hunter, and it was he who advanced me from one job to another. He was later given the job as "superintendent" of the Star Mill on 13th Street in Pittsburgh. When our plant, the Monongahela Works, shut down, I got a job roughing in the Star Mill. Shortly after, Hunter gave me the job as night hot mill foreman. The day foreman was Bob Banfield. (I just bring these matters up to show how things turned out later.) Banfield and I became good friends and I was good enough to get all the information from him I could.

Soon after, he was fired and a man named Tom McDonough was brought down from the Delmer plant in McKusport, Pennsylvania, and given the job. Tom was a different type of millman than I had formerly been associated with. A good, clean living Catholic gentleman. One of the finest I ever met. Never heard him use any kind of swear word. Well, Tom and I became good friends.

The mill shut down and while Tom and I were cleaning up I got word to leave right away for Cresson Works in Cleveland, to take the place of the night foreman, John Griffin, who had been called home to Connelsville, Pennsylvania on the death of his father. He was away about two weeks and on his return I took turns rolling for a while. During this time the Star Mill was down for good. Hunter was given the job as superintendent of the Niles plant at Niles, Ohio. And Banfield had got the job as superintendent at Zug's Sheet Mill; about three blocks from the Star. (The connection of all this will be seen as we go along.) Tom McDonough had gone back to Delmer. I, next, got a call from Hunter to come out and take the night foreman job at Niles, which I did.

I think it was while I was at the Star Mill that I met your mother. Some young fellows in the group I ran with in East Liberty got the idea we should all learn to dance. And the place recommended was "McInerny's" in Wilkinsburg; about four miles out by street car. (Your mother lived in Wilkinsburg at this time.) So, out we went and signed up.

This McInerny was a character. He thought himself to be the best dance teacher in Pittsburgh. He wore velvet knee long pants with buckles, long black stockings and patent leather slippers. But there was no fooling about him. You either behaved or you were out.

Your mother and some of friends could dance and helped McInerny with beginners. Well, from that time on we were never really separated until her death.

It was while I was at Niles that we became engaged and a date set for the wedding. (August 6, 1907) But the mill shut down and I was out of a job. I came back to Pittsburgh, broke the news to your mother, but we decided to get married anyway.

At this time, our family was again living on Park Avenue in a brick row house. Your mother was living on Long Avenue in Homewood, about two miles out; right close to the old Homewood race track where I use to watch the trotters and pacers run. But at this time it was a new residential section called Belmar.

Well, on August 6, 1907 at 7am we were married in Holy Rosary Church by Father Melady, and after a breakfast at Mother's home, we drove in a carriage with rubber tires and a team of horses down to Union Depot. And hence by train to "Conneought Lake"; close to Meadsville, Pa. Quite a place those days for Pittsburghers to go. We spent two weeks there and returned to Mother's home, where we set up housekeeping in two rooms upstairs; a kitchen and bedroom. It was at this time we bought the dresser and chiffonier now in the front bedroom. I had to get one at the J.C. Lindsay Hardware Company, in Pittsburgh, which I used to visit as a buyer while with Bindley.

I got the job and it paid ten dollars a week. About the second week while we were at my mother's house on Park Avenue, it was on a Sunday afternoon, Jim Hunter came out to see me. He told me he had been made superintendent of the two mills in New Kensington, Pennsylvania, about twenty miles up the Allegheny River from Pittsburgh. And he wanted me to take the day hot mill foreman job. I readily accepted. I was only about twenty-four years old and felt it was going to be some responsibility to boss a gang of strange men and all much older than I.

This mill also belonged to the American Sheet & Tin Plate Company. Well, I was there about two years, but we never moved. Still calling home the two rooms at your grandmother's. I would come down Saturdays and return early Monday mornings. I had a room at Harry Krick's small hotel close to the mill. After a year this mill shut down and the men from this mill were given two weeks on and two weeks off at the other mill, about half a mile away. They permitted me to take turns rolling and this helped out, but while the lower mill was down, Hunter got fired and again our hopes to settle down, I thought, were gone.

A man by the name of George Stone was brought up from Delmer to start the mill again. I was greatly surprised to get a phone call from him at your grandmother's. He told me to to come up the following day to see him and, sure enough, he kept me on the same job. And, by the way, this paid ninety dollars a month. Well, I found Mr. Stone to be a fine man, much better character than Hunter, although I owed a lot to the latter. Not long after this they moved Stone to the upper mill and brought a Welshman by the name of Jenkin Howels from Morgantown, West Virginia to take his place.

Once again I felt my job was in jeopardy because he was hobnobbing with the Welsh workmen, and I heard rumors he was going to put one of them on my job. But it

turned out my fears were groundless, and apparently my work was satisfactory to him. Nevertheless, the rumors kept bothering me, so one Friday night I went over to his office and wrote out my resignation. The next morning he came out to the hot mills while I was changing rolls and told me how surprised and disappointed he was to find it on his desk.

Well, it looked as if I had pulled another boner. Never gave it a thought where I would get another job, and quitting the largest corporation in the business I have often thought what my future would be like, had I reconsidered. The hot mills men presented me with a nice watch when I left and I still have it, but it is out of date now.

I went back to our two rooms at your grandmother's house, and I went to work for your mother's father, who was in the stone mason contracting business. And it was hard work mixing concrete by hand or wheeling big stones from the street up onto a scaffold for the masons to lay into position.

(Whenever I stoop over for any length of time, I notice a pain in my back and I have to straighten up slowly. After I am upright I don't notice it, but I used to tell your mother that was when I first got this trouble; mixing cement or concrete for her father. She always thought this was so much blarney, but the work sure was a back breaker. And the hardest I had ever done. Her father was not a tall man, but broad and strong as a bull. He could pick up those big stones and place them on a foundation; ones that I could hardly roll onto a wheel barrow.)

Well, we weren't getting very far this way, so in July, when it was hot as blazes, I went down to Zug's sheet mill to see my old friend from Star Mill days, Bob Banfield. He was now superintendent of this mill. (Another instance where connections were to help me.) Bob gave me a job roughing. I had never before worked in a sheet mill. Here the bars were much heavier than in a tin mill, and I had one heck of time, being away from this kind of work for several years. But somehow I got good enough at it, that in about six months I was promoted to a rolling job. And again started to make good money. This was a union mill and I joined the Amalgamated Association of Iron, Steel and Tin Workers (Iron City Lodge). And later was elected President of our lodge. But before we held any meetings the mill shut down. I think this was about June 1910. So, once again, I was out of a job just when things for us started to look better.

There were four of us now. (When Stella was born, sometime in the early morning hours, I got on your mother's brother, Gus' bicycle and rode about two miles into East Liberty, to notify my mother and father. Anyone seeing me at that hour, riding furiously on a boy's bike must have thought I was mentally deranged. Helen was very sickly as a baby. I recall we carried her around on a pillow and fed her nothing but barley water for a while. But she eventually came around alright.) Stella and Helen had arrived. Also another baby had been born: Irene. But she died in about a week or so, from some stomach ailment. The night she was born, I had to locate our Dr. Yorty. I found him up in the Belmar plan, where he had just delivered twins. By the time we got home, Irene was born, with the help of your mother's grandmother, Suhre. I have often wondered why your mother wasn't getting disgusted about this time. But she didn't complain.

When we finished our last turn at Zug's at 3pm, our crew went up to Jack's Saloon on Penn Avenue to talk over our misfortune, on account of the mill closing. As a

result I didn't get home until about 7pm. Soon as I arrived your mother said there was a call for me from Waynesburg, Pennsylvania. This sounded strange to me, as I didn't know anybody in this town, or just where it was at the time. But later in the evening they called again and it was from Hugh Scanlan. He wanted to know if I would take the hot mill foreman job in the tin mill there. What a break this was for me. I had a meeting with Scanlan and Asterberg the following Sunday at the Elk's Club in Washington, Pennsylvania. And I agreed to take the job. (This was another case where passed connections helped me.)

Asterberg and Scanlan both had worked at Delmer, also Tom McDonough. When the two of them formed a company to take over the small tin mill in Waynesburg, they asked Tom to take the job as hot mill foreman, but he decided to remain at Delmer. But suggested they get in touch with me. At the same time giving me quite a boost as to my ability. Well, here another period of our young lives started. We moved to Waynesburg, a very nice small college town. Many of the residents were well off, having sold or leased their farm land to big companies.

We moved the small amount of household goods we had to Waynesburg, but how I don't remember. It must have been by rail road, as there were no trunks. Besides all freight had to be transferred at Washington, Pennsylvania onto narrow gauge cars. As the narrow gauge rail road was the only one entering Waynesburg. [He notes here, "This is mistake. We didn't move our goods."]

Your [Gertrude] first residence was a small furnished cottage. This was damp and unsatisfactory otherwise, so we moved into a second story furnished apartment. The mill was a small hot mill affair, which had been built years previously, but had been idle for a long time. And at the time was operating on a shoe string. They had very little capital and bought their tin bars from a broker named Kelly in Pittsburgh. When their payments were not forth coming Kelly would stop shipping until he got some money. And we would go fishing in the creek nearby. The company was called the Asterberg Tin Plate Company. Asterberg, a very nice Swede, had some good connections with users of tin plate. And got some orders because of his friendship with these people. Some Saturday pay days we had to wait for the first train to arrive to see if they brought in any paychecks, so the men could be paid. However, we couldn't compete with the larger companies and it appeared from time to time. This is where I first met Harry Wade, who had the job as "Annealer".

So, about the time things looked blue, I began to wonder if I would be stuck in this God forsaken place with no job. We had many experiences in Waynesburg which can't be recorded here. Well, about this time I got another good break. I received a letter from my old friend, Bob Banfield, who was now superintendent of the sheet mills at the Stark Mills in Canton, Ohio. This belonged to the Birger Manufacturing Company, makers of metal furniture and all kinds of sheet products, but was run as a separate operation. Bob offered me the job as night hot mill foreman at one hundred twenty-five dollars a month. This would be a big jump for me, as the Stark Mill had 18 sheet mills in contrast to the four tin mills in Waynesburg. Asterberg and Scanlan tried to induce me to stay, painting rosy pictures of the future of their company. But I couldn't see it their way and accepted the job in Canton.

(When I come to think of it we must not have moved our goods from Pittsburgh to Waynesburg, but had rented the cottage and furnished flat, because when I went to Canton, your mother and the two girls, Stella and Helen, went back to her mother's in Pittsburgh.)

Banfield changed the organization he found there, and gave the day job to a man named Blockinger, who had been a roller at Zug's. He succeeded a fellow named Buster Saunders whose home was in Martin's Ferry, and whose son now is a big shot, according to Lawrence Stahl, with Wheeling Steel. Bill Hemmgray, who I formerly knew at Zug's, a paymaster, was Banfield's clerk. At first some of the hot mill men were not too friendly towards me, but this attitude later changed. How I managed to handle this job I don't know, but apparently I did to all concerned. Among the eighteen sheet mills, were two jobbing mills which rolled sheets 72" wide and from ten to sixteen gauge. I had never seen jobbing mills before, but I had to get acquainted, which I readily did. Harry Bartholomew was one of the rollers on the jobbing mills, and strange to say, his home was in Martin's Ferry, Ohio. And this acquaintance strangely helped me out later through his father when we eventually landed in Martin's Ferry.

Well, these eighteen mills kept me busy. I found a room and boarded with a nice couple by the name of Kelly. The lunches she packed for me, however, were nothing to brag about. Quite often the main course was two thick slices of bread, between which was concealed a thin slice of chipped beef. My hours were from 6pm until 6am. The first winter there was very cold, and I wrote your Mother to buy and send me some heavy long underwear. She did and I think they were solid wool. The first and only night I wore them I almost went crazy with the itch, especially when I got near the hot rolls or furnaces. I was scratching all night.

I sent for your mother, and when she came up she found a house on Bluff Street, which we rented. Mother returned to Pittsburgh and made the arrangements to move. So finally, we felt ourselves settled down. But once again something disturbing happened. Banfield either quit or was fired, and a new superintendent by the name of Elmer Kline. He was brought in from Vandegrift, Pennsylvania. He replaced Blockinger, the day man, with another by the name of Bill Taylor, and I felt shaky. But strange to say I got along fine with both of them. One of my friends here was a roller named Dan Kenny and it was he who got Bill Hemmgray and I to join the K [?] of Company.

We had some good times in Canton and were getting to like the place. After a time on Bluff Street, we moved again to a more desirable house and location downtown, and across form St. John's Church. Here, one Sunday, your mother met a girl friend of hers whom she had known years before in Janetle, Pennsylvania. Either before Bluff Street or the other (probably before), we lived in a three story apartment; stores on first floor. This was owned by an elderly lady, by the name of Martin. She was considered somewhat of a grouch by others, but she took a liking to Stella and Helen, and wouldn't permit the maid to wash off their finger marks from her windows. She lived on the same floor as us, and they visited her quite often. I recall it was while living here, that I bought a newspaper coming home one morning and read about the sinking of the "Titanic", the unsinkable ship. This was sometime during 1912.

It was while working in Canton, I first met Ed Tarr, the night roll turner whom I later brought to Yorkville. Just about the time we were settled here and getting acquainted, it was I think in late September 1913. I got a phone call from a Mr. McNulty, asking me if I would take the hot mill superintendent job in a new plate mill, building at the time in Yorkville, Ohio. Well, I didn't know at the time where Yorkville, Ohio was, but I arranged to meet him the following Saturday. After a long ride on the Wheeling and Lake Erie RR, I found my way to Yorkville from Martin's Ferry, which was the closet stop. I went over the situation with McNulty and told him I would let him know the following week if I would accept. I talked it over with your mother and she thought I should take it as it would pay about one hundred dollars more a month than I was getting. I told Elmer Kline, the superintendent, about it and he advised me to stay, also that prospects looked good for me to get the day job. I got cold feet and called McNulty and told him I had decided to stay in Canton. Your mother and I continued to discuss it from all angles and she still felt I was making a mistake by not accepting. She finally persuaded me, so I called McNulty back and told him I would take the job if it was still open. He informed me it was and I could have it.

Before leaving Canton, the hot mill men asked me to come up to the Cortland Hotel, and there presented me with an engraved diamond ring, which I have worn ever since. So, about the middle of October 1913, we left for Martin's Ferry. We shipped our goods in a freight car, but we didn't arrange to find a house to place them when we got there. Harry Bartholomew had told me his father was in the Real Estate business and would find us something, but we got there ahead of the furniture. So, Mr. Bartholomew got us a room with a Mr. Westwood on 4th Street. The Westwoods were very nice people and treated us fine. Mrs. Bartholomew would watch the girls while Mr. Bartholomew and mother went house hunting. Through his influence we finally engaged one side of a four room double brick on 4th Street, but before we got this, our goods arrived and we had no place to put them. But thanks to Mr. Bartholomew, his friend Marshall Cropper permitted us to store them in his bar room; vacant at the time because Martin's Ferry was dry, and he hadn't put the room to other uses. Well, we were once again located. When I look back, I often wonder how your mother put up with this uncertainty. And I suppose living in hopes that one day we would finally get settled.

The house on 4th Street wasn't too good. Your poor mother did her washing with a tub and wash board. She was some girl those days and had far more courage and initiative than I. Without her I would have been lost. It was while living in this house that of all things our little Gertrude (who was born here) started wondering away. One day we missed her and Father Mulhearn discovered her sitting in a small wagon in Petit's Hardware Store, down on the next corner.

After awhile I got another break. While I was at the Stark rolling mill and things were going okay, I would stroll across the P. RR tracks and visit a tin plate mill, known as the Carnahan Tin Plate Company. Here I met the night foreman, William Lewis, an old time Welsh tin worker. When he learned I was going to Yorkville he asked me to take him along as his home and family were in Martin's Ferry and he wanted to be with them. Well, I did and gave him the job as night foreman. His children had grown up and left for positions elsewhere, so the house was too big for just he and his wife. So, he asked me to

buy it. With the past uncertainties lingering in my mind, I hesitated about this, but once again your Mother insisted we buy. So we did and it proved the desirable thing to do. So, here we were finally located and would be for the next twenty years.

Gertrude was born in the 4th Street house. She was the fourth girl and we just about gave up having a boy. I told your mother if we had another child, and it was a boy, I would buy her a diamond ring. And sure enough Tom arrived. We had a catalog from Jason Weiler Company of Boston, Massachusetts and Mother selected the one she wanted, which cost something like two hundred fifty dollars; a lot of money those days.

After Tom, Grace arrived on July 18, 1918, the day the "Marines" made a great attack against the Germans at "Chateau Thiery". And Agnes arrived last. All our children were born in our house, and I was with your mother with all except Irene. And I held the chloroform pad to her nose with one hand, and her hand with the other. It wasn't by any means painless those days. Our children were subject to at one time or another, but Agnes was crippled up more with accidents. A broken arm twice and a badly cut knee which required going to the hospital for attention. But they all came through apparently in good shape.

When Mr. McNulty left to organize a company in Washington, Pennsylvania to take over an old mill to manufacture charcoal iron sheets. Mr. Scott's son, Henry, was given the job as superintendent and I was made his assistant. About 1928, Henry left to become superintendent of a small tin mill in Sharon, Pennsylvania, where his father was the chief stockholder. I was made superintendent. This lasted until 1934 when Mr. Carpentar's job as District Manager was abolished and another person close to the new management was made Manager of Yorkville. I was to be his assistant, so I got sore and quit, without considering the consequences.

After a year I got a job as hot mill superintendent at Cumberland, Maryland. And later became the mill superintendent. This mill, owned by Republic Steel Corporation, was shut down by a strike about a year later and the corporation shut down for good.

My mill days were over. As I look back, I almost shudder at the close shaves from earning a decent livelihood I had at times, but somehow or other your mother never faltered. And I have a feeling that without her I would have been in hot water more than once. I was fortunate in having her for my wife and my children in having her for their mother.

I entered Government service in October 1942 and spent four and half years there with the "War Production Board". This was a new experience to me, so easy going and quite different from what I had for years been use to in "Private Industry".

Well, to repeat a saying I just heard came from old Sam Rayhurn, this life has been over all good to me, but I wouldn't care to repeat some of it, as it occurred in the past.

When I started to work in the tin plate mill. I was about eighteen and green as grass as to the ways of the world, outside of those I had been accustomed to. I soon discovered I was mixed up with some tough characters, many of them had been strike breakers and floaters, moving from one mill to another. And especially where there was

trouble and where they would, temporarily, get more pay. And after paydays they were broke and had to get an advance on the next pay.

The working conditions and toilet facilities were quite different than I had been accustomed to, and I had difficulty getting use to this. Our drinking water was obtained from a barrel on top of which was another one. Into this one was a pipe which conveyed steam from the boiler room. The water had the taste of the boiler compound used in boilers to prevent scaling. Into the lower barrel was thrown large cakes of ice for the purchase of which ten cents a pay was deducted from our biweekly envelope. A rusty tin cup was attached to the barrel with a chain and this is what they all used for drinking.

The toilet facilities were a wooden shed located out on the river bank. We had to cross the Wheeling and Lake Erie RR tracks to reach this. It was a cold experience in the winter and one didn't have much time between breaks to take care of one's necessities.

The tin cup I just mentioned was too much for me, so I carried a small glass back and forth in my pocket. Also, I couldn't stand the washing facilities, so I would come home pretty dirty, to my mother's disgust. At each separate mill, which employed ten men, there was a cast iron bosh, or box, about 8' long and 18" deep, about the same width. Into this was a small pipe with running water. The purpose of this bosh was for the heaters and others to cool their tongs, when they got too hot to handle. Well, I can't recall them ever being cleaned out, There was an accumulation of about 4" of scald and dirt in the bottom. And this was where most of the men washed after the shift was finished.

In later years when unions were formed, and had something to say about conditions, all these facilities were greatly improved. Also in those days there was no "Workman's Compensation". If one got cut, or burned, or had any other accident severe enough to cause a lay off, one didn't get any cash benefits, but also lost his wages caused by the accident. It was not until the "Workman's Compensation Laws" were passed and the companies had to contribute to the fund that they took an interest in "Safety". They were then concerned more about how it affected their earnings than they had been about the men's' welfare. In looking back, I sometimes wonder how I, a greenhorn kid, survived this period.