

MEMOIRS OF BBB

These are going to be random notes, whatever comes to mind, and not in chronological order. There even may be repetition.

I was born and lived in Potsdam, New York, for the first eighteen years of my life. Potsdam, with a population of five thousand, is a school town--no manufacturing--located four hundred miles north of New York City and twenty miles south of the Canadian border. Its schools consisted of Potsdam State Normal School (now the University of New York at Potsdam), Clarkson School of Technology (now Clarkson College), Crane Institute, and the Hawthorne School of Music.

My schooling included kindergarten, another year in a so-called "connecting class," first to eighth grades, and the usual four years of high school. This entire school system, connected with the Potsdam State Normal School, was maintained and operated by the State of New York. The village had its own separate, but inferior, school system. My high school teachers were all members of the Normal School faculty, a few graduates of Yale and Harvard, and a few with doctorates. To obtain a high school Regents diploma, I was required to take three years of a foreign language and four years of Latin. Only a private school, with a greater incentive for learning, could have afforded a better education.

During all four years of high school, I was on the football and track teams. During my senior year, while playing quarterback, I made every touchdown made by the team that season. I took quite a beating, too, because I weighed less than one hundred twenty pounds. In track, 10-2/5 seconds in the hundred yard dash and 10 feet in the pole vault were sufficient to beat local competition, but not good enough to win district meets. We had two fraternities, the Delphics and the Franconians. Both were Normal School fraternities, but the members were all high school students. At the end of my first year in high school, I was elected President of the Delphics. A friend of mine and I attended a two-day Delphic convention in New Paltz, New York, and then visited New York City where we bought some clothes.

While in high school, our crowd of boys and girls, including Beulah, attended not only high school dances, but also proms and dances conducted by the Normal School, Clarkson Tech, and St. Lawrence University in Canton, ten miles away. As I look back, I cannot understand how Clarkson Tech and St. Lawrence permitted high school kids to attend these affairs. In the case of the Normal School, it was understandable because there were only two or three boys in the entire student body. White tie and tails were a must for the proms. My father frowned on dancing, so my mother, without his knowledge, bought me the required attire. He never saw me in a dress suit. He went to the store every night after supper, so was never home when I took off for an evening of dancing.

I first met Beulah at dancing school when I was twelve years old. Her family had moved from the farm to Potsdam the previous year so Beulah

could attend Potsdam Normal High School. Until my senior year in high school, when I was going steady with another gal, I had dates with several girls, including Beulah. Then one summer Beulah and I went on a four or five day house party at Joe Indian Lake with a few other couples, chaperoned of course. An out-of-town boy, who once resided in Potsdam, got his eye on Beulah and she went with him for a canoe ride. I was hopping mad. When they returned, I took Beulah for a long walk in the woods and told her she was to stick with me and pay no attention to any other fellow while we were on the house party. I also told her that when we got back to Potsdam, I didn't give a damn who she went out with and that I would never take her out again if she were the last gal on earth. Five or six years later, however, following my graduation from Fordham Law School, my close friend, John Yauch of Newark, New Jersey, was spending a couple weeks with me in Potsdam. We wanted dates and there were not too many gals available in the summer when school was out. I phoned Beulah on the farm and suggested she get her friend, Irva Franklin, who lived on a nearby farm and later did some modeling in New York, and we would get together. She said she couldn't because she had company. I doubted her excuse, so John and I hopped into a car and drove out to the farm, only to discover that Beulah's company was her brother Lloyd and his wife who were there for the summer. Beulah phoned her friend Irva and the four of us spent an enjoyable evening. In fact, we were together nearly every night for the next two weeks. When my father learned that I had been seeing Beulah, he said, "Why, she's engaged to be married. She stopped in the store to show me her ring." That was true, but in September, on her way to a new teaching position in Rockville Centre, Long Island, she stopped off in Hudson, New York, and gave back the ring to her fiance. I left for New York City a few days later to look for a job.

When I was fourteen, I started working part time at my father's store and continued to do that, except for the summer months, throughout my high school years. I opened the store at 7:00 a.m., took trays of watches, diamonds, and other jewelry out of the safe and put them in the show cases. I swept the store and dusted everything in sight, including several sets of china. I think my present aversion to dusting dates back to those days. My father would arrive at the store at 8:00 a.m. and I would leave for school. I would report back at 5:00 p.m., unless it interfered with my school activities, and was on duty until closing at 6:00 p.m. I would wait on customers, take mail to the post office, and do other errands. Whenever I got groceries, my father would estimate the amount, give me the cash, and I was permitted to keep the change. His estimates were always generous.

My father's store was decorated year around, sometimes with lattice work suspended from the ceiling and intertwined with artificial greenery. During World War I, when the jewelry business reached an all-time low, he converted half of the store to pianos and musical instruments. In the back, he partitioned off a room exclusively for victrolas and records. It was the first such room in northern New York and it received publicity, including a picture, in one of the trade publications. My father also was an optician, having devoted three or more months to schooling in New York City.

Two summers I worked at Paul Smith's, a fashionable summer hotel in the Adirondacks, ten miles from Lake Placid, first as an elevator operator and then as a bellboy. When I went there looking for a job, Paul Smith told me nothing was available. I was determined to stay, however, and asked a man, putting awnings on the hotel windows, if I could help him. He said, "Sure." It was a huge building and it took us three weeks to put on all the awnings. Then walking across the lawn one day, I met Paul Smith. He recognized me and wanted to know why I was still there. I told him what I had been doing and he asked me if I would like to stay and run the elevator for the summer. I was thrilled and, at the end of the summer, went home with a hundred dollar bill.

I worked two summers in the law office of Millard F. Tompkins in New York City and lived in his house in Brooklyn while the family was away. I was alone except for a black maid who prepared my meals.

Another summer I sold pianos for my father. We would put a Gulbranson player piano on a truck and I would drive to a small country village outside Potsdam and set up the piano in the general store. I would stay a week at each location and spend most of my time pumping the player piano. I sold seven or eight pianos during the summer and, on a ten percent commission, earned \$400.

In June 1918, after my first year at Fordham Law School, I enlisted in the Air Service that was then part of the Signal Corp of the U. S. Army. I did this very much against my parents' wishes and the advice of Rev. Bernard Marron, our Catholic priest, after whom I was named, and my father's closest friend. The morning I enlisted my weight was not up to the required one hundred twenty pounds. I was told to go out and eat a dozen bananas and drink a gallon of water and come back in the afternoon. I complied, in so far as was humanly possible, and reached the required weight. I also was required to have an operation, that cost \$300., to remove a piece of cartilage from my nose. A black chauffeur, employed by Mrs. Tompkins' parents, drove me from Brooklyn to the doctor's office in New York City and back home, in a big, black limousine. The operation was performed with a small chisel and a wooden mallet under a local anesthetic. I could have had it done by an Army doctor at no cost but a lad, next to me in a line, told me he had the same operation by an Army doctor and it took him six months to completely recover and get back to normal.

While waiting to be called for the Air Service, I worked for two weeks, as a steel worker, in the construction of a water tower about one hundred fifty feet high. There was staging around the iron ball at the top of the tower. The boards were quite far apart and I had to be very careful where I stepped. I had a wrench three feet long and it was my job to tighten the nuts on the bolts put through by a man inside the ball. There was a wooden platform, about three feet square, with ropes attached to each corner and coming together six feet above the ground, where they joined a single rope hanging from a pulley at the top of the tower. This contraption was used to hoist me and other workers to the top of the tower and lower us to the ground at the end of the day. It was operated by two men pulling on the rope to raise it and letting the rope slip through

their hands to lower it to the ground. This job paid the then phenomenal wage of \$14. per day. I got the job because it was difficult to find men to do it.

Getting back to Beulah and her new teaching position on Long Island, and me in New York City looking for a connection with a law firm, it developed that Beulah had no duties to perform for the first few weeks. The building, a new one, where she was to teach, was still under construction and would not be finished for several weeks. Every day Beulah would meet me in New York. We would go to Wall Street and take the elevator to the top floor of the various buildings and work down. Whenever we saw a law office, I would go in and apply for a job while Beulah waited in the hall. At noon we would take the ferry to Staten Island--the fare was five cents--just for the ride. We would get a sandwich on the ferry for lunch.

After a week or so, I had three offers of a job. Not being too happy with any of them, one day I stopped in White & Case, a prominent law firm, and talked with my friend, Henry Mannix, a Fordham classmate. He told me that Arthur Cunningham, office counsel for Textile Banking Company, was looking for an assistant. I called on him and was well impressed. I wired my father to have each of the presidents of the two banks in Potsdam send Cunningham a telegram recommending me. They did and I got the job. The first day I seemed to know so little about things he expected me to know, and it all seemed so confusing, I doubted I would last, but I did and for twenty years. During the first three weeks, I spent most of my time reading factoring agreements and other contracts. I was in the board room, not well lighted, and by the end of three weeks I had to consult an eye doctor. He told me I had double vision.

I enjoyed every minute I worked for Textile Bank. The first ten years I did legal work exclusively. The next five years I supervised the Legal Department, but devoted most of my time to the financial end of the business. The last five years I spent some time as sort of a good will ambassador, calling on textile mills to help with any financial problems and to make sure they were happy with their factoring arrangement with Textile Bank. Twice a year I took a trip down south and a trip to New England. Beulah usually went with me. We always took the car. Sometimes I would take my guitar and always a few bottles of Scotch. We were entertained lavishly, particularly in the south, and our entertaining was not hampered by any limit on my expense account. We were fortunate to have my mother and sister Marion take care of our children while we were away. We always had help in those days so my mother could devote her time to the children. Marion was teaching school.

When we lived on Long Island, Beulah and I spent a lot of our spare time entertaining our children. We took them to the beach, to polo games at Westbury, hockey games, the circus and rodeos at Madison Square Garden where we always sat in John Ringling's private box, and Lord only knows where we didn't take them. We enjoyed it all, however, just as much as the children. We all spent a few weekends skiing at Speculator, New York, and Bear Mountain. One New Year's we all went to the Chateau Frontenac in Quebec for ten days.

When I was twelve years old, Tommy Perrin, a friend of mine, and I published a monthly paper called "The People's World." We each had a small printing press. We operated under the firm name of Perrin & Butler. The paper sold for two cents a copy locally and four cents out of town. Advertising was twenty-five cents a page. The paper was published for six months and reached a circulation of three hundred including several out-of-town subscribers.

Tommy had an aunt and uncle in Good Ground (now Hampton Bays), Long Island. Two summers, when we were thirteen or fourteen, we went there for a few weeks. They gave us a small motor boat and Tommy's uncle had a sizable yacht. Weekends six or seven of us would take overnight trips on the yacht. Once or twice Tommy and I visited Brooklyn where his aunt and uncle had a home. We would take the subway to New York City and spend our time wandering about the place, shopping and going to the theatre. I recall buying a tennis racket at Macy's.

When I first went to law school, I lived for a month or two in a very small skylight room in a rooming and boarding house at 22 W. 16th Street, New York City. My father visited me, slept in my room and complained that he couldn't kneel to say his prayers because his feet hit the wall. Shortly thereafter, a friend of mine from Potsdam, and a classmate at Fordham, and I moved to a better house uptown at 174 W. 86th Street. A month or two later, I moved in with the Millard Tompkins family in Brooklyn where I lived for two years. I was working for him, at that time, in his Wall Street law office. He had a son, three or four years younger than me, and thought I would be a good influence for Millard Jr. The family was well fixed financially, had a black maid, a beautiful home in an exclusive section of the city, and a summer home in Bellport, Long Island. On Sundays, we usually took trips in their car, a Case, often went to the Crescent Athletic Club, Wheatley Hills Golf Club, and invariably had Sunday dinner at Silsbies, Brooklyn's best and most fashionable restaurant. When anyone in the family had a birthday, we always went to New York City for dinner and the theatre. Millard Jr. and I often played tennis, saw many movies and generally had a good time together. My two years with the Tompkins family were most enjoyable. I got my first taste of how the other half lived and I liked it.

My law school hours were 4:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m. During the day, I worked in the Tompkins' law office for \$6.00 a week. I quit after two years because I was not getting good experience. He had only eighteen or twenty wealthy clients. His legal work was mostly advisory and all the clients wanted to talk with him and him only. I was little more than an office boy. When I told him I was about to leave, he did not ask me to stay on, but every week my salary increased two or three dollars. It went from six to fifteen by the time I left. In later years Millard Jr., when he became a lawyer, worked as my assistant at Textile Bank.

During my third year in law school, I worked for United States Guaranty & Trust Company, investigating accident claims and taking affidavits from the people involved. I got \$25.00 a week, was pretty much on my own, reporting to the office only three times a week, so I had more time to study. That year I lived with a boy from Potsdam who was in New

York working for another insurance company. We rented the top floor of a brownstone house at 494 Third Street in Brooklyn and prepared our own meals. We took in other fellows we knew and charged them by the week for their room. When we had three roomers, we collected more than enough to pay our rent. When we had two, our rent was nominal. One of the fellows was a genius on the piano and I often accompanied him on the mandolin. He taught me to play chords.

The Fall following my graduation from law school, I lived with my close friend, John Yauch, and his family at 112 N. 4th Street, Newark, New Jersey. His mother was dead. His father, operating a restaurant and bar in downtown Newark, was prosperous. He had a Cadillac, that John and I used, and a summer home we often visited on the Jersey sea coast at Belmar. John had three sisters. We had a cook, a German woman, who had a habit of entering John's and my bedroom, unannounced, and while we were dressing or undressing, she would always say, "Don't mind me; I have seen lots of naked mens." I paid no board and room and living with the Yauch family was very pleasant. The only problem was frequent traveling from New Jersey to Long Island to see Beulah. Finally in November 1922, we decided that I should rent a room in Rockville Centre. Beulah found a room for me and I was all set to move when the landlady learned that a relative from out of town was about to visit her for an extended period and, for that reason, she could not rent the room. It was difficult, if not impossible, to find another in a private home and Beulah and I were puzzled as to what to do. Right out of a clear sky, Beulah said, "Why don't we get married?" It sounded like a good idea so, right then and there, we set the date as Thanksgiving Day. Beulah took instructions from Monsignor Quealy and we were married, as planned, in the Catholic Church. John Yauch was best man and Irva Franklin was matron of honor. After the wedding, the four of us drove in to New York in John's father's Cadillac and we had dinner at the Biltmore Hotel. Beulah's parents were very nice about Beulah turning Catholic. They were Methodists, but said Beulah and I certainly should have the same religion. Beulah's brother Lloyd, however, was very upset about it; thought Beulah had lost her mind.

After dinner, Beulah and I took the train to Atlantic City. We stayed at the Strand Hotel until Sunday. Going up in the elevator, we met Jack Maguire, President of Textile Bank, and his wife. He suggested that we join them that evening for cocktails. I think all the excitement had been too much for Beulah. She had an upset stomach and we had to turn down the invitation. We had photographs taken that are now in our bedroom here at the cottage. When we boarded the train in Penn Station for Atlantic City, a black porter took a look at us and said, "Somebody done got wed." We still had confetti on our clothes. Not more than twelve or fifteen of our friends attended the wedding. We sent out no invitations, only announcements later.

When we returned to Rockville Centre, I moved into Beulah's room at her rooming house. She had previously arranged to shift her roommate to her landlady's bedroom where they were required to share the same bed. We lived there for two or three months. Some friends of ours, Bill and Ferrell Gallagher, also a newly married couple, suggested that the four of

us rent a furnished bungalow at 70 Cedar Street in Rockville Centre, vacated by a family that had moved to California. The rent, \$150.00 a month, was twice what we or our friends could afford, but all right when shared equally. Beulah and I lived with them for six or seven months until Ferrell was about to have a baby.

Then we bought furniture, including the desk, upholstered davenport and two chairs, and dining set and tea wagon now here at the cottage, and rented an unfurnished bungalow at Baldwin Harbor, Long Island, a community of artists, actors, actresses, models, and bootleggers. John Lagotta, an artist, drew covers for Cosmopolitan. Our next door neighbor was an ex-follies gal and her husband was a model for Arrow collars. We joined the Baldwin Harbor Beach Club, and in the summer, I went for a swim before breakfast. One day, while I was at work, Beulah practised diving. When she demonstrated her dive for me, I laughed so hard, she never tried it again. Shame on me! We did a lot of weekend entertaining during our Baldwin Harbor days and our guests never ceased talking about Beulah's roast beef dinners. Our first car was a 1924 Model T Ford that cost \$650. We lived in Baldwin Harbor for three years. During one winter, coal was scarce and obtainable only in one hundred pound bags. Beulah would get one of those bags at a coal dealer's, drive to our bungalow, take it out of the car trunk and dump it in a coal bin in back of our house. The coal weighed more than Beulah.

Beul quit teaching in 1926 and, with a baby in the offing, we were anxious to get away from a Saturday-night-drinking and party-going Rockville Centre crowd of young people, five or six couples--most of them married--so we moved to an elegant apartment in Garden City, an exclusive Long Island suburb of New York. It was a brand new elevator building and the only apartment building in Garden City, a residential community of beautiful homes and few stores.

We lived there in peace and quiet for fifteen months. We were there when John was born on January 6, 1927. Some Saturdays, when Beulah went to New York shopping, I would spend the afternoon on a big lawn in front of the Garden City Hotel with John in a baby carriage. I was surrounded by nursemaids with their baby carriages. Beulah would wheel John to the hotel lawn before boarding a nearby train to the city, but I always waited for her return to get John back to our apartment. I was self-conscious about wheeling a baby carriage. By the time Beulah returned, it always would be dark and the lawn deserted except for John and me.

Going back to our wedding, I neglected to mention that following the ceremony, Beulah's landlady had a wedding cake and coffee for the wedding party at her home. Then the four of us joined the wedding guests who had assembled at the home of our good friends, the Corwiths, for hors d'oeuvres and cocktails.

As early teenagers, Beulah and I went around with an exceptionally good group of kids, seven or eight boys and the same number of girls. We did many things together--corn roasts, sugaring-off parties, snowshoeing, skiing, skating, picnics, chaperoned overnight house parties, and dances.

Sometimes the boys, and other times the girls' group, would arrange a dance. We would rent a hall for \$5.00 and engage a piano player for \$2.00. We would decorate the hall with crepe paper and balloons. "Cozy corners" were a must. They were partly screened-off corners of the hall with a bench or davenport and pillows. Couples could be a little more intimate than was possible in the chairs around the hall. We always had programs for these dances, showing your partner for each dance. The highlight was "Home Sweet Home," the last dance, for that determined who was to take whom home. It was very upsetting when your favorite girl gave that dance to someone else. After high school, nearly all of the kids went on to college. That was unusual in those days.

In my younger days, I was an altar boy for several years, served at one or two masses every Sunday, always vespers and sometimes at funerals. We were excused from school for funerals. Sunday mass has been routine for me all my life. I seldom miss.

I don't know how old I was when I started to play pool. As I look back, it seems like we always had a pool table. My father was a good player and taught me how to draw a ball, follow, apply english and play position. When I was in high school, I reached the semi-finals in a village tournament and withdrew from the competition. I did not want to risk the possibility of publicity because many people, in those days, frowned upon playing in a public pool room. My parents didn't like it either.

When I enlisted in the Air Service in World War I, I went to Ground School at Princeton and the University of Texas at Austin. Flight training was at Park Field, Memphis, Tennessee, and Carlstrom Field, Arcadia, Florida. At the start of the war, only college graduates were accepted for flight training. At the time of my enlistment, men in college were accepted. I found Ground School very difficult. Many of my classmates had been to private schools. I made up my mind, then and there, if I ever had any sons, they would go to prep school. Ground School was a ten weeks course. At the end of each week, we had exams. Failure in any subject meant expulsion and no flight training. At Princeton, we ate in one of the clubs on huge mahogany tables with sterling flatware. I recall sticking our heads out the dormitory windows and singing, "If this is war, it just suits me." I was still in Ground School when the armistice was signed and my flying was limited to twenty-five hours, ten dual and fifteen solo. I never had any sense of direction. When I flew solo, I always kept a railroad track in sight, so I could find my way back to the flying field. The planes we flew solo had been used throughout the war for training and were not in good condition. In fact, the instructors refused to fly them. There were many accidents, injuries, and a few deaths. I recall once flying a plane with no center section. I had to pull real hard on the stick all the time, to keep it from nose-diving. Figure eights, loops and tailspins were easy. Turns and landings were more difficult. One of the fellows would skid or slip as much as fifty feet on a turn and not realize he was off course at all. He was assigned ground duties. I was in the Air Service, or rather the Air Division of the Signal Corp of the U. S. Army, only six months and enjoyed every minute of it. With no separate, large Air Force like today, the Air

Division then was rather exclusive. Out of a town of 5,000 like Potsdam, only one lad, in addition to me, was ever accepted for flight training.

Following a nervous breakdown, and on the advice of two psychiatrists that I quit working in New York City, we moved to Newport, New Hampshire, in January 1939. I was admitted, on motion, to the New Hampshire bar, and practised law for six months. I took care of ninety-eight legal matters and took in only \$210. A country lawyer, in those days, received only \$2.00 for drawing a deed or mortgage; fees for other services were extremely low. Beulah said it was the most expensive hobby I ever had. I rented an office in the Richards Block (now Newport Savings Bank Building) for \$15.00 a month, bought law books and office furniture. A school girl, living with us and doing housework, did my typing.

In November 1939, two of the Trustees of the Newport Savings Bank, including John Condon, called at my law office and inquired whether I would be interested in running the bank that required new management. They gave me a late report of the Bank Commissioner to study. It showed that a third of the bank's mortgages, both in number and amount, were in default, no interest on a few having been paid for as long as fifteen and eighteen years. Some of the bank's securities were worthless and others valued at far less than cost or book value. As a result, the report indicated that the bank was \$12,000. in the red, its liability to depositors exceeding by that amount the total value of its resources. Carroll Johnson, Treasurer of the other local savings bank (Sugar River), warned me that the situation was hopeless and strongly advised me to take no part of it. The Bank Commissioner told me it would take ten years to restore the bank to sound financial condition. In any event, I took the job on December 1, 1939, upon the definite understanding with four of the Trustees that I would be elected treasurer at the next annual meeting in April. By that time, I had foreclosed several mortgages, collected a substantial amount of past due interest, charged off worthless securities, and sold others of questionable value. In fact, the bank's condition had improved to such an extent that several of the trustees felt that they did not need me any longer and would not vote for my election as treasurer. I had three strikes against me when we came to Newport and should have worn a bell around my neck to warn the natives that I was a Catholic, a democrat, and a city slicker. At the annual meeting, John Condon fought furiously for my election as treasurer. He even threatened to disclose to the public certain dishonest acts on the part of George Lewis, then Treasurer of the bank. To cite one instance--George was supporting a grown son, incompetent and unmarried, who was living at the Winston Hotel. George permitted the hotel to offset against its mortgage payments to the bank, the amounts he personally owed the hotel for his son's room and meals. When George was faced with a copy of the hotel's records, that I had obtained, he paid the bank \$2,400. Well, I was finally elected treasurer. I worked three and a half years without a vacation, restored the bank to sound financial condition, without a mortgage in default, and \$1.10 in assets for each dollar of deposits. I received warm congratulations from the Bank Commissioner and praise from the officers of the New Hampshire Savings Banks Association which, at that time, like FDIC, guaranteed the bank's deposits. I stayed at Newport Savings Bank for twenty years and saw deposits increase threefold.

Before moving to Newport, Beulah and I took an extended tour through New Hampshire and Maine. I talked with several lawyers and bankers to determine the most promising location for me to practise law. Sam Lewis, President of First National Bank in Newport, whom I knew from my days at Textile Bank and his connection with Brampton Woolen Co., told me that Newport needed another lawyer. That, along with the fact that we were familiar with and liked the Lake Sunapee Region, where John and Bill had gone to Camp Wallula in New London, was the reason we decided Newport was the place to open a law office.

John and I visited Newport to find a house to rent. Our choice was limited. John was not too impressed with any house we looked at. We finally decided on the Metcalf house at 75 Cheney Street. It had eight rooms and two baths, including a sun room and a room for our pool and ping pong tables. I knew it would answer our requirements and thought it would be acceptable to Beulah. We moved on January 28, 1939 and the following morning, the temperature was thirty below zero.

In 1933, Harvey Gibson, controlling stockholder of Textile Bank, bought Manufacturers Trust Co. for nine million dollars. To raise part of the required cash, he sold his interest in Textile Bank to Commercial Credit Company for five million dollars. Two years later, Jack Maguire resigned as President of Textile Bank and started his own factoring company, John P. Maguire & Company, Inc. Nearly half of the officers of Textile Bank joined his new company. The remaining half, including me, stayed with Textile Bank. Several of the accounts Textile Bank factored likewise transferred to Maguire & Co. Alex Barth's company, Bear Mill Mfg. Co., was being factored by Textile Bank. Alex and I were puzzled as to whether we should stay at Textile Bank or go with Maguire. We finally decided to stay with Textile Bank. It meant an increase, instead of a cut, in salary for me and a slight decrease in the rate of factoring commission Bear Mill paid on its sales. Alex and I had a definite understanding that if either of us became unhappy at Textile Bank, we would both leave; I would take his business to another factor and get ten percent of the factoring commission the new factor would charge on Bear Mill sales. When I left Textile Bank, that is exactly what we did. I took the Bear Mill account to C. A. Auffmordt & Co., and over a period of years they paid me \$140,000. The monthly payments totaled \$3,000. to \$14,000. a year. Finally Bear Mill liquidated and the monthly payments ceased. That happened when nylon came on the market and Bear Mill was caught with a sizable rayon inventory that decreased substantially in value overnight. It meant that Alex Barth's personal fortune, a million dollar interest in the company, shrunk to zero. That was too much for Alex to take. He attempted suicide in the Biltmore Hotel by taking an overdose of sleeping pills. Fortunately, he 'phoned Bill Robertson, his attorney and a good friend of mine. Bill, realizing something was wrong, rushed to the Biltmore and Alex was taken to a nearby hospital and recovered.

With the monthly income from C. A. Auffmordt, \$12,000. Textile Bank gave me when I left, and a few thousand in a savings account, we were not too worried about finances when we moved to New Hampshire. We also had a brand new Buick Roadmaster, a four-door convertible, plenty of clothes for the entire family, including six new custom-made suits for me, and we were all in good health. Bill did have a broken arm.

Getting back to my childhood days, my father and mother, to my way of thinking, were ideal parents, intensely concerned about my sister's and my welfare and happiness. They were rather strict, but reasonable. My mother was a proud woman, almost over-conscious of her dress and appearance, and my sister's and mine, too. She even ordered from New York City stores the dark blue suits I always wore to school. She always knew the latest styles. She was a very sedate and proper person, too, but mellowed in her old age after my father died and she lived with us. My father was a prince. He had a good sense of humor and was well-liked by everyone. His suits, always dark gray striped trousers and black jackets, were made by a local tailor. The front and cuffs of his white shirts were stiffly starched. The cuffs were detachable and reversible. My childhood and teenage days were extremely happy. I do not recall ever asking, either my father or my mother, for anything I did not get. I had friends on both sides of the track. We lived in a house with six bedrooms and two baths, on a large corner lot in a good neighborhood. I gave Barb a brochure picturing ten or fifteen houses in Potsdam, including ours. My father had a horse and buggy long after most people had cars. Every day after dinner at noon, my father and mother went for a ride; in the winter, of course, in a sleigh. Some summers we took a vacation, renting a cottage for a week or ten days, in the foothills of the Adirondacks or on the St. Lawrence river, staying occasionally in a hotel. My mother died at eighty of a heart condition; my father at sixty-seven from Hodgkins disease.

In my younger days, I used to visit Watertown, New York, seventy-five miles from Potsdam, where I had a cousin, going on the train. Watertown, to me, was a big city with 30,000 inhabitants. I was duly impressed and took pictures of a few homes and public buildings. I also visited another cousin in Madrid, ten miles away. I would go there and back on my bicycle. When my mother went with me, we went by horse and buggy and she drove the horse. I was never allowed to touch the horse. My father always had a man or boy to feed and rub down the horse and do other odd jobs around the house. I never saw him with even a hammer in his hand. A woman came in weekly to clean the house. Laundry was sent out to be done. I had a brother, Walter, five years older than me, who died of scarlet fever when he was seven.

I had two aunts in Potsdam, my father's older sisters. They and my father went to a one-room country school with Beulah's father. Aunt Ellen was a seamstress and a widow. Aunt Lottie was never married and kept house for the two of them. They lived nearby and I often stopped to see them. I always looked in a pocketbook, kept on a table, and I was entitled to take and keep any change I found in the pocketbook. Aunt Ellen and Aunt Lottie often had Christmas or Easter dinners with my family, either at their house or ours.

Christmas, in my younger days, was always a festive occasion with many presents. At times, when my friends came to see what I got for Christmas, I was embarrassed because I got so much more than they did. Christmas continued to be a festive and happy occasion for Beulah and our family, and now for our children's families. The first Christmas after

we were married, Beulah and I visited Potsdam. We stayed a few nights at the Benton farm that has been in the family for six generations. We slept in a feather bed in an unheated bedroom. We used an outhouse in zero weather. That was an experience I will never forget.

For years past, I have worn, almost exclusively, Brooks Bros. clothes. Brooks is a manner of dressing--3-button natural shoulder jackets, button-down collar shirts, regimental stripe and silk foulard ties. I have had a charge account at that store since 1917 when I was in law school and my father was required to guarantee payment of the account.

A few days before Beulah and I were to be married, a Chinese laundry misplaced and could not find my laundry. The situation caused Beulah and me to seriously consider postponing the ceremony. A day later, however, they located the laundry and we were married as planned. Beulah, at that time, was earning \$1,800. a year and I was making \$1,500.

Beulah and I have always been justly proud of our four children, not a black sheep among them. All graduated from college. All obtained Masters' degrees. John went to Loomis, Amherst, and Brown; Bill to Kimball Union, Middlebury, and Dartmouth; Barb to Middlebury, the Sorbonne, and Yale; and Tom to Gould Academy, Carleton College, and Columbia. Over the years, Beulah and I received many compliments and congratulations on their character, conduct and accomplishments. They really are a group to be envied by other parents. They all picked spouses, too, that Beulah and I admire and love. Our prayers were answered.

In the old days in Potsdam, ice cream was either made at home or served at a soda fountain counter in a drug store. They had no cardboard containers for taking it out. My father, however, would take an earthen jar with a cover, to the soda counter and have it filled. It held seven scoops of ice cream at five cents per scoop. Then we would take it to my father's store, wrap it in several sheets of newspaper and take it home for Sunday dinner.

One night, when Bill was only two years old, he had an earache and was not getting enough sleep. We were living in a ground floor apartment in Rockville Centre. Our bedroom windows faced a playground in the rear of the apartment building. About 10:00 p.m., when Beulah and I had just got into bed, we heard a loud, heated argument outside. Beulah went to the open window to tell the men that they were disturbing the baby and to please move on. At that very second, a shot rang out and a man fell to the ground. I was in bed, leaning on my elbow and looking out the window. I saw the flash from the gun or revolver and I saw a man fall to the ground. It was a moonlight night. It seems that a group of men had been playing poker nearby and there was an argument about money. Two or more of the men were taking a short cut across the playground, to get from one street to another, the apartment building being on a corner lot. Beulah and I hurried to our living room. Marion and Eddie were there. Eddie phoned the police, fearful all the time that someone outside would hear him. The police came, also doctors, investigators, newsmen, and photographers. Sirens were screeching and flash bulbs lighting the playground. They roped off the area that contained the body and it was there on the

ground until daylight the next morning, after a night of constant activity. We took John and Bill to the house where my mother and Marion were living. When a man from the District Attorney's office interviewed Beulah, she told him the men were talking Italian. "Do you speak Italian?" he asked. "No," said Beul. Then he said, "How do you know they were speaking Italian?" Later, on the witness stand, Beulah testified that the men were speaking a foreign language. An attorney immediately asked, "Was it Italian?" "I don't know," said Beul, "I don't speak Italian," a reply which brought laughter from the spectators and embarrassment to the attorney. It was a little triumph for Beulah. The defendant had a good reputation, was sending money every month to his parents in Italy, whereas the dead man, at the trial, was pictured as a gangster, even wearing silk underwear at the time of his death, a sure sign. The defendant pleaded self-defense and was acquitted. I always thought that the District Attorney, both in his investigation and at the trial, made only a half-hearted effort for a conviction. A day or two after the murder, Beulah and I and the boys moved to a second floor apartment in the same building, a larger one, too, with three bedrooms, for we were expecting an addition to the family.

One of our most tragic happenings was Tom's fall from a second-story window at 27 DeMott Place in Rockville Centre. He was two years old at the time, and he and Joseph were alone in the house. Beulah and I were away playing tennis. Joseph had just given Tom a bath. Tom ran into the bedroom, naked, climbed up on a big toy box, pushed a hinged and unlocked screen from the bottom of a window, and fell out. Joseph picked him up and carried him to a davenport in the living room. He had the good sense to phone Dr. Elias and my sister Marion. They came in a hurry, put Tom on a pillow, and rushed him by car to the hospital, with Tom and the pillow on Marion's lap. He was unconscious for five days. An X-ray showed three cracks in his skull about two inches long extending out in different directions from a central point. Medically, nothing could be done for Tom. The doctor said our prayers were his only salvation. When he regained consciousness and we brought him home, the doctor warned us that he must stay flat on his back, day and night, and not even raise his head from the pillow. He required constant watching for many days. Tom learned to pick up, with his feet, toys at the foot of his bed. He understood--amazing at his age, too--that he was not to raise his head from the pillow, and to our knowledge, he never did. Tom was in bed for several weeks and, of course, had to learn, all over again, how to walk. His recovery was nothing less than a miracle.

In May 1927, Beulah and John were on the roof garden of our Garden City apartment house and saw Charles Lindbergh take off for his historic flight to Paris. I, too, saw the plane from the window of a commuter train to New York. Roosevelt Field was only a short distance from Garden City and everyone in the area knew that Lindbergh was ready to take off whenever weather conditions were favorable, so people were watching for him.

Beulah was a remarkable person, a charming wife, and a devoted mother. Her energy was boundless; her efficiency, amazing. She had a magnetic personality. I always was proud of her gracious manner and her appearance. She was very clothes conscious, and had the knack of wearing

clothes that did the most for her. Beulah was a vivacious person. When she entered a room, she took command and was the center of attention. Sometimes, to me at least, it seemed like she was in color and the rest of us were in black and white. Beulah was honest and frank, always spoke her mind. She never lacked for something to say. She had a keen sense of humor. I found Beulah the most interesting person I had ever known, partly perhaps, because we had so much in common. We liked and disliked the same people. We enjoyed the same activities. In her younger days, especially, Beulah was such a carefree person, it made me wonder if she would be serious about marriage. I took the precaution to tell her it was for keeps, come hell or high water. She agreed. Beulah was an excellent teacher. She received many compliments from the parents of her children. Many a person is better off today because of Beulah's efforts. She was not well for a whole year before she passed away. She must have been discouraged, but she never complained. She was an attractive gal, well liked and had many friends. Beulah really was unique. The Good Lord, who made her, lost the mold.

My sister Marion's childhood days, like mine, were happy days, perhaps the happiest of her life. She went around with a group of girls called "The Seven Sisters," and later in school was a member of the Alpha Sorority. I doubt that Marion ever intentionally did anything wrong in her life. She was the closest to a saint of anyone I have ever known. Beulah and I often said that she should have been a nun, but she wanted to be married and have a family just like ours. She waited years before consenting to marry Eddie. When she finally married and had three children, she could not cope with them. Marion lacked self confidence and the ability to make decisions. She relied entirely on her mother for too many years and later on Eddie. She was attractive and an extremely likeable person with a pleasing personality. Marion would have said her entire life had been very happy, but to my way of thinking, it left much to be desired. She died from a brain tumor, at seventy-two.

In the mid-nineteen-seventies, I placed second in a pool tournament in Florida sponsored by the Redington Beach Chamber of Commerce. There were thirty-two players and we played every Sunday night for weeks. I was presented with a trophy during a well-attended evening of entertainment that included the selecting and crowning of the Queen of Redington Beach.

I once had a close call when flying a Curtis Jenny (J.N.4). I put on too much rudder on a turn and went into a tailspin at 2500 feet. I pulled it out at 500 feet, but it scared me.

Another scary experience--when Bill was four or five years old--he fell out the rear door of a moving car, to the highway. Fortunately, he suffered no ill effects.

Once, when flying from New York to Bangor, Maine, on an Eastern Airlines plane, I was the only passenger after we reached Augusta. I told the pilot I had done some flying in World War I, and he said, "Take the controls." I did and was fascinated by the sophisticated instruments. The Curtis Jenny, the only plane I had ever flown, had only a fuel gauge, a compass, an altimeter, a clock, and a gauge showing the number of propeller revolutions per minute.

When Muffin was about two years old, her favorite expression was "I CAN DO IT."

My mother had some unusual expressions such as: I wouldn't eat that, or I wouldn't do that, "the best day I ever saw." I recall a maid once talking constantly to Gram about her menopause, and Gram replied, "menopause jackass." Her reply to "sex relations" or any subject she thought should not be discussed, might well have been a repetition of the name of the subject followed by the word "jackass."

In 1934, Bradley Knitting Company of Delavan, Wisconsin, owed \$470,000. to George Borg, secured by a lien on the company's merchandise. Borg was a keen, shrewd, stubborn individual, with ample net worth, and the President of Borg-Warner. He had a summer home in Delavan, always wore polo clothes, was determined to acquire Bradley Knitting, and was about to foreclose his lien for that purpose when Stanley Klein of Amos Parish & Co., merchandise counsellors, learned of Bradley's predicament and told the president of the company to get in touch with Jack Maguire of Textile Bank. As a result, I spent six weeks in going back and forth between Delavan, Chicago, and Milwaukee, making the necessary arrangements--in spite of Borg's strenuous opposition--for Textile Bank to pay Borg, secure its advance by a lien on the company's merchandise, and to enter into a factoring agreement with Bradley Knitting. It required inventory-taking and pricing and the setting up of a field warehouse at the Bradley plant so Textile Bank's advance would be secured by warehouse receipts covering the merchandise and issued by an independent warehouse company (Independent Warehouses, Inc. of New York). It also required reviewing and conforming to the laws of Wisconsin, and consent of a majority of the company's four hundred stockholders. I explained factoring at a meeting of three hundred or more stockholders and told them the advantages to be gained by a factoring arrangement with Textile Bank. I also explained, in detail, the entire plan for paying Borg. The necessary consent of stockholders was obtained. When the closing date finally arrived, and Borg realized he had no alternative, other than accepting payment and releasing his lien on the merchandise, there were nineteen persons around a table in the board room of the Continental Illinois National Bank of Chicago, including Bradley's officers, stockholders' representatives, bankers, accountants, attorneys, and the warehouseman. It was an intense and exciting moment, a great relief to many concerned and a source of delight for me, when I had in my hand, the release of Borg's lien, the warehouse receipts and the executed factoring agreement, and I signed and delivered the check for \$470,000. When I returned to New York, my stock soared and Jack Maguire told me I would be the next Vice President of Textile Bank, and I was. When John Achellis of Frederic, Viotor & Achellis, the oldest and largest factoring concern in New York, and a Yale classmate of Stanley Klein, asked him why he had not referred this business to Frederic, Viotor & Achellis, Stanley replied, "You have no one in your organization that could have arranged and closed the deal."

During my twenty years at Textile Bank, I served in various capacities: Law Clerk, Ass't. Counsel, Counsel, Ass't. Secretary, Secretary and Vice President. A month before I left Textile Bank, the President, B. A. McDonald, a former Commercial Credit man, told me I was to be elected Executive Vice President at the next monthly meeting of the Board

of Directors. As I look back, I think that may have contributed to the cause of my first nervous breakdown. Some people just can't stand success. I may be one of them. After three years work and the restoration of Newport Savings Bank to a healthy financial condition, another accomplishment that brought me compliments and praise, I had my second nervous breakdown.

Following Harvey Gibson's sale of Textile Bank to Commercial Credit and Jack Maguire's resignation as President of Textile Bank, I was conceited enough to think there was some possibility I might be named to succeed him, but it was not in the cards. A. E. Duncan, President of Commercial Credit, told me he would temporarily assume the presidency himself and later name one of his own Commercial Credit men to the post.

Duncan was a real stinker, anyway, and I don't blame Jack Maguire for resigning as President of Textile Bank and starting his own company. To cite one instance--Duncan gave Maguire 4500 shares of Commercial Credit, worth around \$135,000., when they first acquired Textile Bank, hoping that would keep Maguire as President. When Maguire resigned, he gave back the stock to Duncan. Then Duncan promised me that he would give the 4500 shares to Woody, Hopkins (another Vice President) and me, to be divided equally among us, if we would stay with Textile Bank, and not join Maguire's new company. We did just that. After months passed and Duncan made no move to deliver the stock, I asked him when he intended to put the stock in our names. He replied, "Oh, I can't do that now. I have to pay an income tax on the transfer of the stock from Maguire to me." That was the end of the stock transaction. My mistake was not having Duncan put his promise in writing.

The following words of an old song express, better than I can, the extent of my loss when Beulah passed away.

To Beulah--

"I lost the sunshine and roses,
 I lost the heaven of blue,
 I lost the beautiful rainbow,
 I lost the morning dew,
 I lost the angels who gave me
 Summer all winter through,
 I lost the gladness
 That turned into sadness
 When I lost you."

Bun

If I had it all to do over again, there are two things I would never do. I would never smoke. I would never drink. Col. Joseph M. Hartfield was Senior Partner of White & Case, prominent New York City law firm. He was attorney for England in this country, attorney for J. P. Morgan and United States Steel Corp. He was said by some people to be New York's smartest and most influential lawyer. He knew everyone in New York worth knowing. At first night openings of Broadway shows, when the lobby between acts was full of celebrities, the Colonel was always the

center of attraction. He proposed me for membership in the Lawyers' Club and I once heard him say, "I do not smoke or drink. There are so many things in this world that are harmful to one's health, I decided, at an early age, that I would never voluntarily, with my own hand, do anything that might injure my mind or my body."

After my school days, I had only two jobs in my life, and was fired from both. In each instance, the cause was a nervous breakdown. I worked for twenty years at Textile Bank and twenty years at Newport Savings Bank. Bill arranged with the trustees of NSB for me to continue as a trustee and to get a pension, though the Bank, at that time, had no retirement plan.

When Beulah passed away three years ago, I had some misgivings about living alone, and wondered if I could ever be happy again. Through Fred Brown, Beulah's doctor, and John Ensor, however, and Dick Johnson, who introduced me to my pool-playing pal, Ralph Morgan, I became acquainted with several men in the New London area, The Country Squires, a group of one hundred seventy five retired executives, who have moved into the New London area in recent years from Massachusetts, Connecticut, New York, New Jersey, and other states. I play pool with some of them at least twice a week, either here at the cottage or at their homes in New London. Also, I play ping pong at Hilltop and attend the Squires weekly coffee hours and monthly luncheons. Bank trustees' and Investment Committee meetings, too, help keep me busy, and keeping busy is the whole secret of living alone. Bill and Janie have spent many weekends here at the cottage, and Barb and Jim come occasionally; more often I visit them in Standish. John and Flo come, too, now that they are in Rhode Island. Everything considered, I am as happy as any man could be, who has lost his wife, and I think Beulah would be proud of me.

The two women that most influenced my life were my mother and Beulah. With my mother, things were either right or wrong. There was no fine line of distinction. Everything readily fell into one classification or the other. If a thing were right, she was all for it; if wrong, she wanted no part of it. Perhaps some of her philosophy--and my father's was the same--rubbed off on me.

Beulah was a restraining and healthy influence on my life. She reduced some of my dreams to realities, tempered my optimism, lessened the importance to me of material things, and curbed my free-spending inclination. Whenever Beulah said, "We must cut our expenses," I always replied, "No, I must make more money," and that worked out on several occasions. Both Beulah's and my mother's influence on my life were invaluable.

The two men that were most influential, and did the most for me, in my business career, were Arthur Cunningham at Textile Bank and John Condon at Newport Savings Bank. Cunningham was smart. Jack Maguire thought he was the smartest young lawyer in New York City. He was a tough boss, demanded perfection from me, and was generous in his criticism of my efforts. He never, however, accepted criticism of me, from anyone else.

He always took my part, defended me to the utmost. He always called me "counsellor." I could not have had better training than the twelve years I worked with Arthur Cunningham at Textile Bank.

John Condon's wife once told me that John would do anything for me that he would have done for his own son and that, in a nutshell, sums up my relationship with John Condon. He lacked formal education, but had an in-born, native ability that, in many ways, more than offset his lack of schooling. John never hesitated to say so if he thought I was wrong but, like Arthur Cunningham, he resented anyone else criticizing anything I might do or say. Both he and Arthur were real friends of mine.

My private life, of course, was influenced to a great extent by my father--by his standard of right and wrong, and by his ideas, exemplified by his own conduct, as to how one should live and get the most out of life.

One time when Beulah and I were in Charleston, South Carolina, and I had a quinsy sore throat, Beulah went in the Hotel Fort Sumpter to get a room, leaving me in the car. When she signed her own name on the register, the clerk asked if she were alone. Then Beulah corrected the register to read, "Beulah B. Butler and husband." - Good start for Women's Lib.

My name has appeared four times in the New York Times, first when I passed the New York State bar examination, and later when I was elected Ass't. Secretary, Secretary and Vice President, respectively, of Textile Bank.

Now, whenever anyone asks me for legal advice, I tell them that half of the law I ever knew has been repealed and I have forgotten the other half.

I went from high school directly to law school. I have often wondered how and to what extent my life would have been affected if I had acquired four years of liberal arts education, between high school and law school, as is customary today.

When I first went with Newport Savings Bank and the Bank had a lot of problems, George Bacon, Vice President of the Merchants National Bank of Boston, and a close friend of mine from my days in New York, offered to serve as a trustee of Newport Savings Bank and attend the monthly meetings. NSB trustees, however, did not want a "city fellow" on the board.

In connection with Newport Savings Bank's recent application for a Federal charter, the trustees of the Bank were required to submit individual financial statements to the Federal Home Loan Bank Board in Boston. My assets, as listed, were not too impressive, but it was with sheer delight that I could write "none" under liabilities.

People I should have mentioned, but didn't, in my "Interesting People" memo were Doris Corwith, Gus Hall, and Norman Thomas. Doris was Nat'l. President of the American Legion Auxiliary and in that capacity,

talked with the governor of every state in the Union. She later became associated with NBC and was in charge of all talk programs, political, religious or otherwise. Doris was one of Beulah's and my closest friends on Long Island. Gus Hall, I am sorry to say, was a camper at Wallula. He was a likeable kid, too, but is now, and for many years past has been Secretary of the Communist Party in the United States. On more than one occasion, he was that party's candidate for the presidency of the United States. Norman Thomas was the Socialist Party's candidate for President of the United States on numerous occasions and surprisingly received hundreds of thousands of votes. Beulah and I talked with him at Tom's graduation from Carleton College in Northfield, Minnesota. He had a grandson in the graduating class.

Textile Bank factored fifty or more textile mills, cashing their sales and making advances against merchandise. A mill was entitled to 90% of their daily sales and 66-2/3% of the market value of its merchandise inventory that was subject to Textile Bank's lien. There were always seven or eight problem accounts, like Botany Worsted Mills owing in excess of a million dollars and invariably requesting daily more money than they were entitled to. During my last three years at Textile Bank, I was in charge of all the so-called problem accounts. The remaining accounts were divided equally between the Treasurer of the Textile Bank and me.

Six or seven years ago when Beulah and I were in Florida, Bill wrote us the most flattering letter we ever received. He said so many nice things about us that tears came to our eyes as we read it. Good that such a thoughtful letter was written before it was too late.

My first checking account was unique. My checkbook never showed deposits or the balance. My father opened the account in a Potsdam bank when I was in New York City going to law school. He made all the deposits and I drew all the checks. I never had it so good. He never told me the amounts or dates of deposits. Whenever I overdrew the account, a man in the bank would call at my father's store, next door, for additional funds.

Under a World War I program, boys in the senior class in high school were excused from classes for a few weeks to work on farms. Three friends of mine and I worked for three weeks on a farm outside Potsdam. We put in long hours and spent all our time building stone walls.

When we moved from Long Island to Newport, New Hampshire in 1939, we were accustomed to the seashore, fond of ocean bathing, and only mildly interested in Lake Sunapee. In the summer of 1950, however, we rented an apartment over a boathouse at the end of Jobs Creek, Lake Sunapee. We had a boat and thoroughly enjoyed the lake. A few months later, we bought the lot at Fernwood Point and the following spring, we built the cottage. While we also had our house in Newport during the next ten years, we always spent at least six months of the year at the cottage, plus winter weekends.

Beulah and I spent fourteen winters in Florida--always staying six months. Most of the time we stayed at LaPlaya Apartment Resort at Redington Beach on the west coast. The last winter we lived at Coral

Shores, an apartment hotel in N. Redington Beach. We enjoyed the warm weather, bathing in the Gulf and walking on the beach. Then, too, St. Petersburg, fourth largest city in the state, was only a few miles away. Since January 1, 1977, when Beulah passed away, I have lived at the cottage year round.

I have had a full and extremely interesting life--more than my share of happiness and only a few heartaches. The Lord has been good to me and I am grateful.

BBB

February 24, 1980