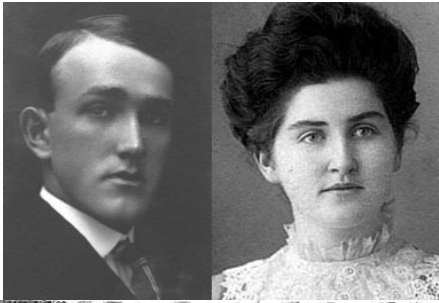


# **Things I Think I Remember**

## **Part I (1929 – 1947)**

*by Paul Bullock*

*Things I Think I Remember – Part I (1929 – 1947) - Photos*



Homer Bullock and Mary Florence Rector before they were married in 1911



The Rector cousins in the front yard of the Bullock home in Waterloo in 1929. They are facing the Bullock home and the Herman Brehm home is in the background. Phil, Ruth, Bob, and Cal are in the photo; Paul wasn't born yet.



On the Isle of Pines in 1920 are Herman Bullock, Homer Bullock, Mary Bullock, and Drusilla Bullock. Phil is in front of Homer and Ruth is on Mary's lap.



The Bullock home on the Isle of Pines in 1920. Five year old Phil is standing by the middle window.



The Van Den Mark house at 16 West River St., Waterloo; photo taken in 2004.

## **Things I Think I Remember Part I (1929 – 1947)**

by  
Paul David Bullock

*Sometime in the late 1980's, I wrote down a list of things that happened to me throughout my life to that point. It was merely a list of a few pages with no fleshing out at all. In a conversation with my big brother Phil, I mentioned that he should do the same. I sent him a copy of my miserable catalog of items and a few months later he sent me a copy of his first draft of his memoirs called "This Is My Life." He worked on TIML, as he called it, on a continuing basis until he died in on October 6, 2006. It is a wonderful work of 29 pages and 25,000 words and is a valuable contribution to our Bullock history. From time to time he would urge me to begin work on my memoirs. A month or so after Phil died; I started to put this work together. I quickly found out that I couldn't always distinguish between my own recollection and my recollection of someone else's recollection. I'm sure that my writings of the early years are mostly the latter.*

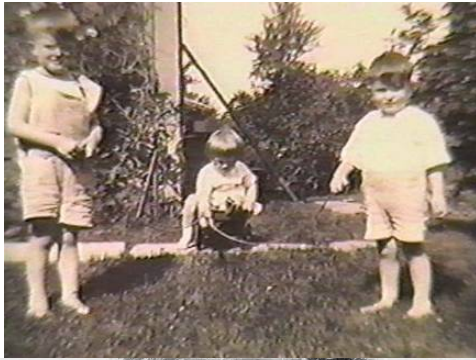
### **Waterloo, NY (1929 – 1934)**

I, Paul David Bullock, was born in Waterloo, Seneca County, New York on September 18, 1929 at 4 p.m. My parents, Homer Bullock (born in 1888) and Mary Florence Rector Bullock (1889), lived on the Geneva Road (Routes 5 & 20) about a mile west of downtown in a home rented from Herman Brehm. This home was next door to the west of the Brehm home on the south side of the road. The birth was in the home and was attended by Dr. W. Raymond Holmes. The Bullock family consisting of my parents; Philip Gerald Bullock (1916); Ruth Hope Bullock (1920); Robert Homer Bullock (1926); and Calvin Fenton Bullock (1928) moved to Waterloo from Second Milo, Yates County about a year earlier. They moved here when Homer took the job of Manager of the Geneva District, Singer Sewing Machine Co.

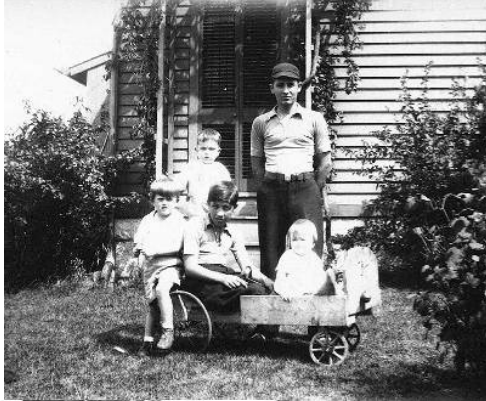
Homer and Mary were married in Second Milo in 1911. Their first child Herman Stephen Bullock (1913) died at four-and-a-half of complications due to a convulsion; Philip was two at the time. At that time, Homer was farming rented land in Milo. In 1918, after Herman's death, the Bullock family moved to Waterloo so that Homer could take the job as conductor on the trolley line between Geneva and Seneca Falls. They lived in a home rented from Herman Brehm just across the road from the Brehm house. Homer's parents, Herman and Drusilla Bullock, had moved to the Isle of Pines, Cuba in about 1908 and Homer's brother Edgar had joined them in about 1916. In 1919, Edgar was starting up a box factory on the Isle to manufacture wooden boxes to ship grapefruit and other fruit from Cuba to the United States. At Edgar's request, Homer and family went to help start up and run the factory. The family stayed there until 1924 when they returned to the States; Ruth was born there in 1920. Homer and his brother-in-law Howard Swarthout started up "The Woodcraft Products Corporation" in Second Milo, Yates County, to manufacture and sell items made from exotic woods from the Isle of Pines. The venture failed and Homer took the Singer job in Geneva.

About a year after I was born we moved to the Van Den Mark home at 16 West River Street in town, actually across the Cayuga and Seneca Canal from the actual downtown of Waterloo. Mrs. Van Den Mark also lived in the home and occupied the upstairs while we had the lower floor; we may have used one of the upstairs rooms. It's possible that Homer and Mary or an older child had a room upstairs. The house, still standing, is quite small; I really don't

*Things I Think I Remember – Part I (1929 – 1947) - Photos*



Bob, Paul, and Cal Bullock at the Van Den Mark house in Waterloo in 1930.

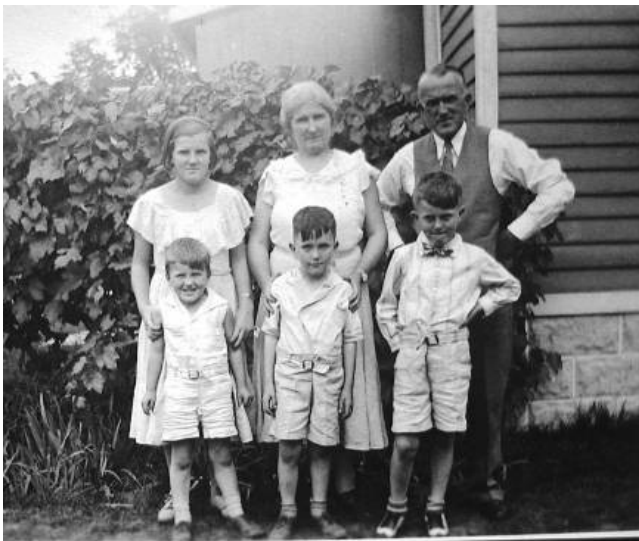


Bob, Cal, and Paul Bullock with Frank and Don Swarthout in about 1930. The location is unknown.



Ethel Nelson and her brother; the Nelson's were neighbors on West River St. Ethel was a good friend of Ruth and Mr. Nelson ran a gas station on River St..

Photo of Phil in his cap and gown at the Van Den Mark house in 1933.



The Bullock family at the Van Den Mark house in 1933. Phil probably took the photo.

know how we handled it – five people at least on one floor. Soon after moving, Homer lost his job at Singer; the Great Depression had hit home.

Of course, I remember nothing of the Brehm house. We have a photo of the Rector cousins taken on the side lawn of the home with Herman Brehm's home in the background. The photo was taken before I was born so I'm not in it. I remember nothing of the inside layout of the Van den Mark home but do recall things about the neighborhood. Next to the house was a lane (now a road called Market Street) that went down to a warehouse and/or coal yard that was on a railroad (no longer there). There was a service station down the street operated by Mr. Nelson and a cemetery across the street. Ruth, along with her good friend Ethel Nelson, would take me for rides on River Street down to the service station and then back around the corner down Washington Street across the railroad and the Cayuga and Seneca Canal to downtown Waterloo. I don't remember the incident, but, according to Ruth, on one of those rides the buggy or wagon tipped and I hit the ground head first. In later years, when I would do something, in her opinion, wrong or crazy or stupid, she would comment that the fall must have resulted in brain injury which was somehow responsible for my behavior. I recall my brothers and sister telling scary stories in the dark about ghosts coming out of the cemetery; I would not go near the place at any time.

I recall that we, Bob, Cal, and I and probably some neighbor boys dug a large hole in the lawn; we were going to China. When Mary and Mrs. Van Den Mark found out about it we got in big trouble, had to fill it back up and promise never to do it again. One boy who probably helped us was a Sorensen, a neighbor and friend of Bob.

When Homer lost the Singer job, getting work was difficult. The most regular was delivering coal for an outfit in Seneca Falls; I recall him coming home dead tired with coal dust on his face and hands. He didn't work regularly so Mary baked cookies and Ruth sold them in the neighborhood. I didn't realize it at the time but we were in very bad shape economically.

We went to a Baptist Church on Main Street (Rtes. 5 & 20). I can remember the family walking east on River, north on Washington and east again on Main to get to the church. From time to time, we went to a Baptist Church in Seneca Falls; this church was far more conservative and fundamental and thus more to Homer's liking. Lawrence and Eve Reigel were members of this church. Lawrence, his sister Mary, and Lawrence's parents were old friends of Homer and Mary dating back to when the Bullock's lived in Waterloo in 1918. One time when visiting the Seneca Falls church a visiting speaker gave a chalk talk about the Holy Land. Since I was the youngest person in the audience, the final art work was given to me. I still have the work framed and hanging in my office; it is signed "F. Rimes, 1934."

Phil and one of his high school friends had an old car that they stripped down and drove around the neighborhood. I remember getting a ride in it and the loud noise of the muffler-less engine. The car burned a lot of oil but Phil prevailed on Mr. Nelson to supply him with used oil from his station. Phil graduated from Waterloo High School in 1933 but I have no recollection of his graduation. We do have a set of two photos; the Bullock family, everyone except Phil who took the photo, and another of Phil in his cap and gown. These were taken in the yard of the Van den Mark home.



*Things I Think I Remember – Part I (1929 – 1947) - Photos*



The Roadside Craftsmen on Routes 5 & 20 in East Bloomfield. Ruth is standing by the tree on the right. The photo was taken in about 1938.



The Cook house on Routes 5 & 20 in East Bloomfield. Phil took this photo in the 1990's



Paul standing by the garage door at the Cook house. Taken in 1934.



Post card featuring Elton Park.

## **East Bloomfield – Cook House (1934)**

In 1934, Clarence E. Wemett was building a facility called the Roadside Craftsmen in East Bloomfield to manufacture and sell items made by a potter, woodworker, weaver, and metal worker. It was on the heavily traveled Routes 5 & 20 in East Bloomfield, Ontario County, New York. Wemett was a successful gasoline and oil distributor and owned and operated several service stations throughout central New York. The Roadside Craftsmen was in an old church that had been moved from Branchport to the site in East Bloomfield. There was to be a resident potter and woodworker who would prepare items for sale; they would do most of their work in the basement. In the summer, to draw in potential customers, the potter and woodworker would perform outside under gazebos along the road in front of the building. There would also a weaver who would perform inside the display and sales room and a metal worker who had a shop in Avon, NY, also on Routes 5 & 20, called the Avon Coppersmith.

Wemett had heard about Homer's wood working and wood turning skills through friends and relatives having heard about the unsuccessful business that Homer tried to start up in the mid 1920's; Wemett was Mary's distant Rector cousin. Homer jumped at the opportunity to participate because he didn't have a job and woodworking had always been his real interest. His father Herman owned and operated a grape basket factory along Keuka Lake from the 1880's through 1908. Also while Homer was on the Isle of Pines in the early 1920's, he taught himself the art of wood turning and was involved in an effort to sell his work there on the Isle. He still had a supply of exotic wood from the Isle in storage and had equipment (lathes, saws, etc.) left from the abortive Woodcraft Products Corporation.

Our family and goods were taken to East Bloomfield using Wemett's truck and his men. We moved into the Cook<sup>1</sup> house (called this since it was rented from Mrs. Cook who lived next door) on the south side of Route's 5 & 20 (State Street), one house west of the intersection with South Avenue. Next door on the corner was the home of Mrs. Isadore Munson; she and her late husband Frank had operated "The Trading Post" in East Bloomfield and a restaurant in their home. The Trading Post, a general store, was still operating under the ownership of Willie Adams. The Munson home is now a restaurant called "The Holloway House." Next door to the west was the home of Mrs. Cook. On the north side of State Street across from the Munson house was the Congregational Church. Across South Avenue from the Congregational Church was Elton Park<sup>2</sup>; on the other side of the park was the Methodist Church where we worshiped.

I recall little about the inside of the Cook house but I do know that we had electricity and, as I recall, we had no indoor toilet; we didn't have electricity in Waterloo. I recall a covered walkway from the house about fifteen feet back to the outhouse. We had no car, but this was no problem since we were within walking distances of the Roadside Craftsmen (less than a quarter

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<sup>1</sup> This home is # 17 on the East Bloomfield Historical Society walking tour with this description: Walter Bridgland – The attractive, Walter Bridgland home was built in 1892 and is somewhat Queen Anne in its style. Mr. Bridgland was a local salesman.

<sup>2</sup> The park is # 1 on the walking tour with this description: Elton Park – originally called the Public Square, Elton Park was part of the purchase of the Congregational Church from Benjamin Keys in 1798. The square was cleared, fenced and landscaped in 1847. In 1865 the fence was removed and J.G. Batterson of Hartford, Connecticut constructed the Column of Freedom to honor 39 Civil War dead. On January 3, 1901, the square was named Elton Park in memory of Charlotte Steele Elton. In 1934 her husband, James, donated the memorial arch. A cairn, in memory of the Seneca Indians and Father Fremin, a visiting Jesuit, was erected on the south side of the park in 1937. The historic park is the center for many community activities.

*Things I Think I Remember – Part I (1929 – 1947) - Photos*



The Methodist Church facing Elton Park on Park Street. Photo is from a 1940's newspaper article.



This photo of the Cook house was taken in 2006 from across State St. at Bob and Ruth's home.

The statue of a Union Soldier is at the center of Elton Park. Photo was taken in 2006.



The East Bloomfield Academy building on South Avenue facing Elton Park. Uncle Joe Bullock was principal of the Academy in 1901. The East Bloomfield Historical Society now uses the building. Photo was taken in 2006.



The Condon house on Routes 5 & 20. Phil took this photo in the 1990's.



mile), the school (about a half mile), our church (about two football fields), and Carey's IGA grocery store (less than a quarter mile). Homer would walk to the Roadside Craftsmen west on the State St.; his workplace was on the north side of State St. Highway 5 & 20 was the main route between Buffalo and Albany and, as such, was heavily traveled by fast moving vehicles; I wasn't allowed to cross State St. About five homes west on the same side of State St. was the Silvernail home; Harold called Junior was a good friend of Bob and Roger a friend of Cal. Their father, Harold senior, worked at the Clark canning factory in Holcomb. I clearly recall the arguments we had about our bib overalls; we thought Montgomery Ward's were better but the Silvernail's voted for Sears Roebuck. One house west of the Silvernail's was the home of Roy Gamble, the pastor of the Congregational Church; son Trevor was about Bob's age.

I recall visiting Mrs. Munson, with an adult of course. The home was large, the rooms were quite dark and filled with comfortable furniture. She always had a cookie or a piece of candy for me; a real treat in those days. Shortly after we moved in she sold her home and moved to a smaller house three doors west, still on the south side of State St. Mary helped her moved and was given lots of books and trinkets in addition to being paid. After Mrs. Munson moved, she was often visited by her niece or grand niece, Rosalee Munson, from Rochester; she was about Bob's age. She now lives in Holcomb. In the late 1990's, I determined that a diary from the memorabilia that Mary left when she died was written by Frank Munson in the late 1800's. Mrs. Munson may have given Mary this by mistake. I located Rosalee and passed the diary on to her since Frank and Isadore had no children.

At the intersection of State St. and South Ave. traffic traveling on State St. had the right-of-way. One day near dusk, a car traveling on South Ave. didn't stop and crashed into a car traveling on State St. Several people were seriously injured, at least two were killed. We heard the crash and Homer and Mary rushed to the scene to help while we children stayed on our porch. Mary soon came back with a small child, about my age, in tow. Ruth, with our help, tried to occupy the girl's attention while Mary went back to help. I remember getting toys for the girl to play with. She seemed to be unhurt but her face and clothes were quite bloody. After a while Mary took her and turned her over to someone in uniform.

In the fall of 1934, Cal entered the second grade, Bob the fourth, and Ruth the tenth. I didn't start school until the next year.

### **East Bloomfield – Condon House (1934 – 1940)**

Less than a year after moving into the Cook house we moved to the Condon house, still on State St. but across it and just east of the Roadside Craftsmen. This house had no electricity and no inside toilet or running water. There was a hand pump in the side yard where we could get spring water. There was a front porch with two doors into the house; one to the dining room and one into the living room. We never used the door into the living room. There was a side porch with a door into the kitchen; I have the recollection that this porch was enclosed. There was a large back porch that extended the full width of the house. The door to this porch went into a storage/mud room and then into the kitchen. The dining room was on the south east corner; this room was fairly large but rarely used except as the front entranceway. The living room was on the south west corner and an open stairway to the second floor was along the north wall of the room. The woodwork, doors, windows, trim molding, and stairway were a honey



colored wood with a beautiful finish. There were a couple of built in bookcases made with the same warm finish. We had an oak table, we called it the library table, on the south side of the living room with a shelf about a foot from the floor. It had very stout legs with claw feet; between the claws were clear marbles. I remember lying on the floor looking at the claw feet and listening to a crystal set that Phil had rigged up on the shelf. Homer loved listening to “Amos and Andy” and Mary the soaps including “Young Widder Brown” but my clearest recollection is listening to the Louis - Schmeling fight. I think it was the rematch in 1938 which lasted only 124 seconds, not the first meeting in 1936; maybe both. The crystal set was powered with batteries which severely limited the listening time.

Homer and Mary’s bedroom was on the northwest corner with doors to both the kitchen and the living room. When we were under the weather, we would spend the day in Homer and Mary’s room so Mary could keep an eye on us. I remember one time when I was sick, all of a sudden all of the family was standing around the bed laughing at me; apparently I was a little groggy and said something unexpected. The kitchen was on the northeast corner with a wood burning stove, an ice box, a sink (no running water), and a kitchen table. I can’t recall where the dishes were stored, whether there were cabinets or not. There was a small pantry off the kitchen. The door to the basement was in the kitchen. The basement was at ground level at the rear of the house and had an earthen floor. The cistern was fed from the eave troughs and a hand pump at the kitchen sink drew water from the cistern. There was a gravity coal-fired furnace on a concrete slab in the basement. A door from the basement emerged to a space under the back porch; this was used as outside storage.

Going up the open stairway from the living room led to a hallway that ran east and west across the house. There were three bedrooms, Phil’s, Ruth’s and one for the three boys. The location of the three and who occupied each, I don’t recall, but I do remember how cold it would get in the winter. The gravity furnace, without cold air returns, didn’t pump much hot air that far up. The fact that Homer would dampen the furnace to save coal at night would make it even worse. On cold nights, before bedtime Mary would heat up soap stones on the kitchen stove, wrap them in towels and give us each one start out the night with warm feet.

There was a two story barn in the back of the house. The first floor had a large rolling door where an automobile could be stored. We didn’t have a car at the time. In 1929, before the depression hit, Homer lent his one or two year old Essex to a work associate and it burned completely. Although he did drive Phil’s cars, Homer never owned a car after that incident. The second floor, accessed by a ladder, was a large open space. Homer turned part of this space into a pen for his pigeons and the other part to store his precious cache of exotic woods. Since Route 5 & 20 was heavily traveled, it was well used by tramps making their way across the state. Mary, bless her, could not send any of these bedraggled men away hungry. She always had enough food to fill their bellies and often, on cold winter nights, would let them sleep in the barn. She always told them not to smoke or light matches in the barn but oftentimes we would see the evidence that here wishes weren’t followed. But other than that, we never had problems with any of them. Apparently the word spread and our house became a regular stop on the hobo trail. At this point, she had to turn many of them away. Looking back, it seems to me, that these men were several notches above the homeless of today. Mostly, they were on their way to a specific place to find work or to stay with family, and not willing to sponge off others for the rest of their lives.

*Things I Think I Remember – Part I (1929 – 1947) - Photos*



Paul standing in front of Cy Murrill's Texaco station next door to the Condon house in about 1936. Paul is wearing a blue or red straw hat; the three Bullock boys got red, white, and blue hats for Fourth of July that year.



Homer at the outdoor lathe in front of the Roadside Craftsmen. Photo from a 1935 newspaper article.



A jet black cat with a damaged paw showed up at our house one day; the damage was probably caused by an animal trap. Mary took the cat in and cared for it while the paw was healing. Blackie, as we named her, stayed in our barn and it was amazing how well she maneuvered on three legs. She was a good mouser and had a litter at least once a year. Mary made sure that all the kittens found homes so we never had more than Blackie as a permanent resident in our barn. I don't recall what happened to her but she wasn't around long after we moved to the Parmalee house. We did keep one of her kittens but I can't remember its name.

The one-holer outhouse was next to and west of the barn about 20 feet from the back porch. We all had slop pails in our rooms that we used at night and when it was very cold. It was our responsibility to empty the pails into the outhouse. Every so often Homer would clean the waste from the outhouse and spread it out on the field behind the barn. There was a large lilac bush next to the outhouse that really flourished. One Halloween in the late 1930's some pranksters tipped over the outhouse; needless to say it caused a major inconvenience in the household. As far as I know, we never found out who did it.

Our vegetable garden was on the east side of the property. I can't recall what we grew in this garden but do remember the endless weeding and hoeing. I would get a severe tongue lashing when I accidentally cut off or pulled out one of the good plants. East of our lot was Cy Murrill's Kendall service station and behind the station were about ten very small tourist cabins; three or four of which had their backs to our garden. In the summer, especially on weekends the cabins would be filled with people traveling through New York State on Routes 5 & 20. We would look at all the cars to find the out-of-state license plates. A few years after we moved from the Condon place, Cy put a restaurant called "The Red Top" on the property; it quickly became a popular roadhouse in the area.

On weekends, we kids would sit in our front lawn and watch the traffic. We got to the point where we could name the year, brand, and model of most of the cars of the more popular cars. We had the Fords, Chevys, Plymouths, and Dodges down pat but when the occasional rare brand such as an Auburn, Franklin, Pierce Arrow, or LaSalle went by an argument would follow about what brand and year it was. We spent hours at this but never kept any statistics.

Homer would walk west to work at the Roadside Craftsmen across a field. It didn't take long before the 200 yards trail became a well worn path. His woodshop took up the eastern half of the basement floor; the potter had the other half. The basement was at ground level on the north end and underground on the south end. The southern end of his space was the finishing room where the wood products were given several coats of lacquer. The lacquer booth had a large fan to evacuate the fumes and the rest of the room was filled with racks for the drying products. Between coats the product was lightly sanded to prepare for the next. The finishing area was separated from the rest of the space by a large cloth curtain. The balance of the woodworking space was filled with a table saw, a band saw, a small turning lathe, a large lathe, a belt sander and other equipment. In the summer, the large lathe was moved outside in front of the building for Homer to perform his turning skills for the potential customers. The space was well lit with windows on the both the north and east side. Although there was a blower that evacuated the sawdust outside, this area was a very dusty place. Dust masks were not used back then; from early on Homer would have coughing spells in the evening and early evening until he died in 1957.

*Things I Think I Remember – Part I (1929 – 1947) - Photos*



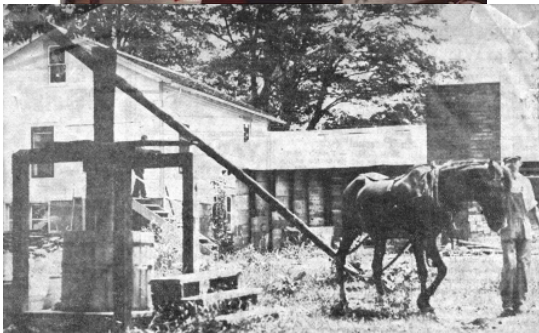
Four examples of items turned by Homer using his exotic woods from the Isle of Pines. Paul has these items.



Mom and Ruth in Ruth's dining room dividing up wooden items turned by Homer. Photo taken in the 1960's.



Phil participating in the above exercise.



The clay pug mill behind the Roadside Craftsmen. Photo from a 1935 newspaper article.



The weaver and the potter at work in the Roadside Craftsmen. Photos from a 1935 newspaper article. This potter worked there before Guy Daugherty came.

Homer would turn bowls of various sizes mostly from gum wood. Gum wood was plentiful and its closed grain made it easy to work on the lathe. From time to time, he would turn products from his prized exotic woods from the Isle of Pines; those woods were difficult to work with but once done were beautiful. I hope that Wemett charged a good price for those products and that Homer received his fair compensation. Other wood products made were boxes and cases of all sizes for jewelry and other items. These boxes were ingeniously made by gluing the six sides together first and then sawing around the circumference to separate the top and bottom. Slits were sawed in the four side pieces before assembling so that, after the box was sawed in half, the top fit perfectly over the bottom. The boxes were finished either with clear lacquer to show the natural beauty of the fine wood or colored lacquer to cover up the not-so-pretty varieties. A variety of salt and pepper shakers were made. Some of the products were displayed and sold in the building but much was sold wholesale to department stores and the like. I particularly remember one special project that Homer worked on that took quite a bit of his time. He made a quantity of turned plates for a Rochester group, The Dames of Malta. Since he was the only turner, all had to be made by him. A special medallion about an inch and a half in diameter was to be placed in the center of the plate. Homer had a difficult time meeting the schedule which called for the plates to be available for a particular meeting.

The potters half of the basement floor consisted of a potter's wheel and many, many racks for drying the green pottery. This half seemed quite a bit darker than the woodworking side although there were just as many windows. Guy Daugherty, from Texas, was the potter for several months out of the year; he had jobs in other parts of the country including the Carolinas and Texas. He was never there during the winter. He rarely brought his wife with him and stayed in the Park Hotel in East Bloomfield. I enjoyed being around him; he always paid attention to us kids and had a joke or two to share with us. Guy Daugherty, who was about ten years older than Homer, died in 1958. Recently I learned from Guy's daughter, Ellen Daugherty Shaeffer that his father and her grandfather, Daniel Boone Daugherty, had a large pottery shop in Denton, TX and that for the last seventeen years of his life, Guy had a pottery shop in Bethune, TX.

In the rear (north) of the building was a horse powered clay pug mixer. Special clay, shipped in from somewhere, and water were put in the barrel of the mixer and the mixer blades were turned by a horse going in a circle. After the clay was mixed it was cut into appropriate chunks for making whatever the potter was doing that day. After the piece was turned on the potter's wheel and dried, the pieces were dipped into a bath of glaze, let dry and put into the kiln. The gas fired kiln was on the west side of the building. As I recall the kiln was about eight feet by ten feet and about six feet tall. The kiln was protected by a roof. During peak production, Mr. Daugherty had two or three men working with him.

Above the basement was the display/sales room that filled that floor except for a couple of offices. The room was well lit with several windows on both the east and west sides. The walls were plastered and painted white and the roof trusses were in view. The oak floor was highly polished. A beautiful sight, too bad I wasn't allowed to spend any time there. The wares were spread out on tables throughout the area except for one corner where weaver had her loom and other equipment set up. The double doors on the southern end of the room lead out and down a flight of about ten steps to the parking lot in front of the building. I should mention that, for the most part, we were not allowed in the basement and never allowed upstairs in the display room.



Homer's pigeons in a cage next to the barn at the Condon place.



The building was about thirty feet from Routes 5 & 20 with a gravel parking area between. The potter's and the woodworker's gazebos were either end of the parking lot about fifteen feet from the road. During the summer, especially on Saturday and Sundays, Homer and Guy would do their work in the gazebos with potential customers and the merely curious watching. Hopefully they would then find their way into the sales room. I'm not sure how Homer rationalized the fact that he was working on Sundays. Later on, he was always dead set against us participating in social activities on Sundays: he especially frowned on my desire to play on the town baseball team on Sunday afternoons.

West of the Roadside Craftsmen building was a couple of smaller buildings; one contained a small restaurant at one time and the other was where some of the seasonal workers lived. Further west was a Shell service station run by Perry Hawkins. On the south side of State St., across from the station, was the Tobey farm. We got our milk there for many years. We had one gallon tin milk pail that we would carry to the farm and one of the Tobey brothers would fill it up in the separator room.

Homer purchased and learned to play the saxophone while on the Isle of Pines. In the late 30's he put together a band/orchestra of East Bloomfield locals. Billy McKay, a house painter who played the violin; Charlie Seiler, barber - viola; Nellie Adams, organist at the Congregational Church - pianist; and Homer the saxophone; I don't recall any of the others. I can remember their practice sessions in our living room; they did have performances but I don't know where they were.

Homer was an ardent bible student and spent many hours reading the scriptures and devouring articles by Arno C. Gabelein and Donald Grey Barnhouse in magazines such as "Our Hope," "Sunday School Times," and "Eternity." Homer's favorite book of the bible was Romans and had many commentaries on that book. Once in a while he would be asked to teach a Sunday school class in the Methodist Church but students interested in a concentrated bible study were few and far between. He did have evening bible studies in our home from time to time consisting of people who really wanted the depth. When I was a teenager, I sat in on some of these and I was really impressed by Homer's knowledge and in his brilliance in responding to difficult questions posed by the students. The classes were interesting if those in attendance would ask questions and get the discussion into areas of interest to the students. If there was no discussion, Homer would drone on and on and the class would soon be out of it. He didn't have an interest in employing techniques to deliberately get discussions going and, as such, if class participation happened or not it was up to the students. I believe that those experiences in Homer's classes convinced me that a teacher needs more than knowledge of the subject matter; he must have an interest in applying methods to get the students involved.

Homer used the barn to raise pigeons. He tried selling squabs to a place in New York City but that never panned out. He made a stab molding, painting and selling lead soldiers. He started this while in Waterloo and continued in the Condon house but the customer base was never tapped. They were about two inches long and an inch and a half tall and most were a soldier mounted on a horse. He would melt the lead on the kitchen wood stove and pour it into the molds; I don't know where he got the molds. He did a beautiful job painting them; the face, only about an eighth of an inch tall, had the eyes, nose and mouth all faithfully rendered. I remember the saddle blanket which was edged in gold paint; Homer would always tell us that

*Things I Think I Remember – Part I (1929 – 1947) - Photos*



Mom standing next to the Condon house in about 1938.



The Carey IGA store on Main St. in East Bloomfield. Coley and Elsie Carey ran the store where the Bullock's bought their food. Photo courtesy of the East Bloomfield Historical Society.

there was real gold in that paint so we couldn't touch that tiny little jar. He had a real interest in clocks; both spring wound and those powered by weights and was always working on one or two of them. He would take them apart, fix the damaged part, clean them, oil them and put them back together. We had several working throughout the house and his nightly ritual, before going to bed was to set them and wind them. Many of them would chime on every hour, and some the half hour, throughout the day and night. Many people would bring their clocks to him for repair; I think they paid him but I'm not sure. In the mid 30's, Homer gave a talk to the East Bloomfield Scientific Club about his time on the Isle of Pines; it was the first and last time he attended a meeting of the club. The club was a group of men that met for social reasons several times a year; it was named thusly because its purpose wasn't scientific at all. Bob now attends the meetings that are held at the Holloway House.

Homer was a very proud man. Mary's mother, Minnie Nichols Rector, died of cancer in early January 1938. Mary spent much of December 1937 taking care of her in Second Milo, NY south of Penn Yan. Knowing that Mary was out of town, the ladies of the Methodist Church brought us a couple of Christmas baskets filled with food and other goodies. I'll never forget Homer's reaction to this act of kindness. While the ladies were in the house, Homer was polite but not very talkative. After they left, he went on a tirade saying that he didn't need handouts and that he could take care of his family by himself. He wanted to return the baskets but Phil and Ruth prevailed on him and let us kids tear into the baskets for the goodies. We thought it was great.

Mary was a master at providing food for the family on a limited budget. We often had roast beef for Sunday dinner and there was always enough to go around plus leftovers for later on in the week. The beef was always well done, that's the way Homer liked it, and served with a vegetable and potatoes. Our vegetables came from the garden; fresh in the summer and canned the rest of the year. She did a lot of canning, fruits and vegetables, in the fall, stored them in the cellar and slowly went through them in winter. Sometimes, when a jar was opened, the top layer of the food would be covered with mold. She just threw away that layer and served the rest. Her fried corn meal mush was delicious even without maple syrup; we had Karo syrup instead. Oatmeal and bread with milk were staples for breakfast; cold cereal was far too expensive. Mary had an eggless-milkless-butterless cake that was delicious; no frosting of course. I understand that this type of cake is now a favorite of the vegans. We bought out bread and other staples from the Carey IGA store on Main St. Us kids would go to the store by crossing the field in back of the house to Main St. and going east to the store; less than a half mile away. Mary would give us a list which we would give to Mr. or Mrs. Carey. They would fill the order and put it on Homer's tab; we never handled any cash. Sometimes they would tell us that the balance should be paid before getting any more credit.

Washing clothes was a complicated and time consuming operation in a household with no running water, hot or cold, and no drains. Mary had at least two large, about four feet in diameter and a foot and a half deep, galvanized buckets which she used on washdays. Once a week she would heat water from the cistern to a boil on the wood stove in a large copper container. She would then transfer the water to one of the galvanized buckets and moderate it with some cold water. She would add soap and clothes and scrub them with a washboard. I remember her using Fels Naptha bar soap and shaving off flakes to dissolve in the hot water. She would then pass the clothes through a hand operated wringer and put them in cold water in the other galvanized bucket for rinsing. She would then wringer the clothes and put them on an

*Things I Think I Remember – Part I (1929 – 1947) - Photos*



Mom sitting next to the Condon house in about 1938.



Phil standing next to the Condon house in about 1938.



The graduating Class of 1937 of East Bloomfield High School. Ruth is at the far left of the first row.



A zoom of Ruth from the above photo. Ruth graduated from East Bloomfield High School in 1937.



outside clothesline for drying. The weekly washing would take most of the day. I recall that she set the buckets and wringer up on the back porch in the summer and had clotheslines strung up on both the back and side porches to use in case of rain. I don't recall where she set up the buckets in the winter. I do recall the clothes freezing while they were hanging on the line in the winter; she would warn me not to touch the frozen cloth for fear the threads would crack. To press the laundry Mary used an iron made of cast iron. She would heat an iron up on the wood stove, attach a wooden handle and use the iron to press the sheets and shirts. As you can imagine they were quite heavy and gave Mary quite a workout. She had at least two irons so one would be ready when the other got cold.

The same buckets used for laundry were used for bathing. Saturday night was bath night and the water would be heated up on the wood stove in the kitchen. A bucket would be placed on the kitchen floor and filled with warmed cistern water. The kitchen doors would be shut, the shades drawn and bathing would proceed. I remember that we three boys all used the same bath water and, being the youngest, I was almost always last; the water would be cold and the water dirty and soapy when my turn came.

Mary was a stay-at-home mom but when she got the chance and Homer approved, she was able to provide some income for the family. She picked cherries at the Davis farm across the road; baby sat for Norris Wemett; picked and sorted peaches at the Hi Page farm on Main Street; cleaned house for Mrs. Munson, Lena Steele, and the Wemett's; prepared material for the weavers at the Roadside Craftsmen. She was very adept at the Singer sewing machine and made her own clothes and made Ruth's also until she was able to buy her own. She would mend Homer's and the boy's clothes and socks. Homer was always wearing holes in his shirts and pants at belt level because he was always leaning against a machine or bench as a woodworker. She would take pieces from the tail of the shirt to repair the both the shirt holes and the pant holes. Consequently, his pants would have odd colored patches across the front. She tried to get him to wear an apron but she was only partially successful.

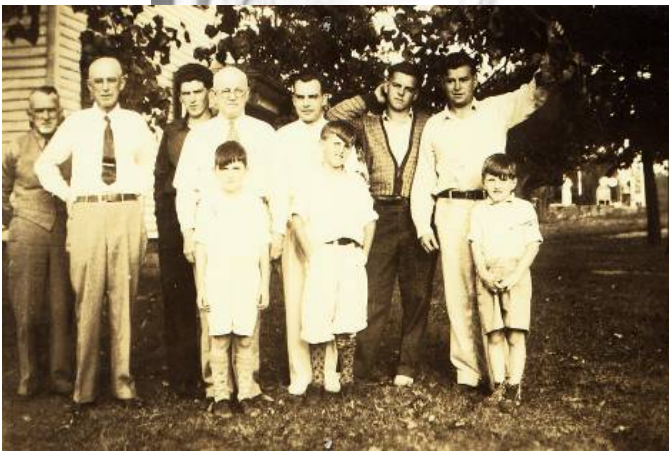
Phil, eighteen when we came to East Bloomfield, worked at odd jobs where he could find them. He worked at the Roadside Craftsmen when he was needed and earned, as he tells it, \$12 per week. He also said the Homer made \$18 per week when he started in 1934. Phil also worked at the Clark canning factory in Holcomb and for local contractors. In about 1937, he bought a 1931 Chevy roadster and overhauled the engine at his cousin's, Gene Bullock's, garage in Crosby, south of Penn Yan. While in Waterloo, Phil got involved with electronics and amateur radio. He built his own equipment but was limited because of the cost of the parts. Because of this interest, he went to New York City in 1937 to work at Lear Radio; at first he lived with Uncle Hugh and Aunt Helen Brown and family in Hasting-on-Hudson, NY and took the train into the city. Later he got a room in the city and started working for another company. Altogether he was there for only a few months. In 1938, Phil got a permanent job with Rittenhouse in Honeoye Falls; he knew the plant manager, Ken Lord, through his membership in an amateur radio club. He then bought a newer car, a 1934 Plymouth coupe, which he had until he got out of the Army in 1945. Phil attended church regularly and was a member of the church choir.

Ruth was fourteen when we moved from Waterloo. Among her friends in town were, Mary Beth Woods, Faith Balding, Janet Berg, and Katherine Stapely. She helped Mary with the meals, laundry, and cleaning. We all had chores to do around the house which we did with much

*Things I Think I Remember – Part I (1929 – 1947) - Photos*



Ruth went to nursing School at the Genesee Hospital in Rochester, NY. She graduated in about 1941.



Ten Bullock men standing in front of the Condon house in about 1935. They are first row: Cal, Bob, and Paul; second row: Homer, Edgar (Homer's brother), Phil, Joe Bullock (Homer's brother), Walter (Joe's son), Teall (Joe's son), and Herbert "Pete" (Joe's son). Signs in front of Murrill's gas station can be seen in the right background.



The East Bloomfield Methodist Church taken in 2006.

grumbling. While in high school, Ruth waited tables at “The Locust Lawn” restaurant a few miles northwest in Ionia. She also worked at “The Holloway House” just down the road but Homer didn’t like it because “they served booze there.” With her earnings she began to buy her own clothes; she didn’t care for the dresses that Mary had made for her. Looking at photos from the day, it appears that most of the girls wore the homemade variety. She was very generous in giving us kids toys and goodies; a rare treat for us in those days. Shortly after graduating from high school in 1938, she attended nursing school at Genesee Hospital in Rochester, NY. While she was in nursing school, we moved to the Parmalee house.

Bob was eight when we moved from Waterloo, Cal was six and I four and a half. Bob’s best friend was Harold “Junior” Silvernail who lived on State St. in between the Cook and the Condon houses. Bob got a bicycle and started a paper route in the late 30’s; I believe he started delivering the Rochester Democrat and Chronicle in East Bloomfield. In the early 1940’s, us three Bullock boys delivered both the Democrat and Chronicle and the Rochester Times Union in both East Bloomfield and Holcomb. Bob played drums in the marching band starting in the late 30’s; I can remember both him wearing cape and hat with his white shirt and white duck pants in parades. The parades would start in Holcomb and end up in Elton Park in East Bloomfield. Ruth was in the band also but I don’t recall what instrument she played. Sometime around 1936 that all three of us, Bob, Cal and I, had straw hats: one red, one white and one blue to wear and American flags to wave at the parade. I had the red one or the blue one, not the white one. All three boys were in the Boy Scouts but Bob made it to the highest level. Cal was pretty much a loner but probably his best friend was Roger Silvernail.

We were members of the Methodist Church<sup>3</sup> and were faithful attendees at Sunday school, church service, and social activities. We would walk single file along Routes 5 & 20 about a half mile east to get to the church. The church was on Park Street across from Elton Park with the entrance, on the west end of the building, led into a foyer. On either end of the foyer were stairs that led up to the sanctuary on the second floor. Both sets of very narrow stairs curved around 180 degrees on their way up so one end of a tread was much narrower than the other. In the early 70’s Mary fell and broke her hip trying to maneuver them. The sanctuary took up the entire second floor of the building and was about forty feet wide and sixty long. Each side of the room had probably four stained glass windows that were probably three feet wide and eight feet high with scenes painted on the glass and memorials painted on the lower panes. I remember sitting through many a service trying to memorize the memorials. I don’t remember any of them now. There was no organ in the church at the time but you could see evidence that an organ had been there once. The choir sat behind the pulpit and stayed there during the sermon. When I was in the congregation, I got a kick out of watching John Hamlin, the bank president, fall asleep almost every Sunday. Later, when I sang in the choir, I was very careful not to do the same. The pianist and choir director Hilda Hamlin, John’s wife, was seated on the same level as the congregation at the piano to the right of the pulpit. Just before the sermon, the children would come to the front, the pastor would give them a little talk, and then they would go to children’s church downstairs. Homer and Mary would never let us leave, so we would go up front for the talk but come back to our seats when the rest went downstairs. There was a center aisle and aisles down both sides of the sanctuary and the pews, some with seat

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<sup>3</sup> The church is # 2 on the walking tour and described thusly: United Methodist Church – The clapboard church was built by the Universalists about 1832 and was purchased by the Episcopalians in 1842. The church was sold to the Methodist Society in 1859 for \$2,000. In 1867, the building was repaired and a second story was added for the sanctuary. A modern addition, dedicated in 1975 replaced a Greek Revival rectory built in 1845.





cushions, could hold about 150 people. On a Sunday morning the room was never more than half filled; the only time I remember it being filled was at combined services with the other churches in the area. On the left side of the front wall was an emergency exit that led to outside stairs going down to the ground.

The first floor of the church contained the fellowship hall (50'x30'), a medium room (25'x25'), a kitchen, and a couple of smaller rooms. The smaller rooms were used for storage and classes and the larger rooms were curtained off for Sunday school classes. The large rooms were outfitted with sturdy folding tables when used for church dinners; I can recall helping to put up and take down the tables and chairs. Mary would bring covered dishes and help cook and serve the dinners. It always appeared to me that Homer didn't really enjoy the social times at the church and would often find an excuse not to attend. I always looked forward to the Christmas party at the church; we would be given a small bag of hard candy and a couple of oranges. We boys would have a contest to see which one could make their candy last the longest; I never won. The oranges were Harry Norton's treat; he would carry in a few crates "just in from Florida" and hand them out himself. Each orange was separately wrapped in paper with Sunkist printed on it. Harry, a very short man with a humped back, was, among other things, the local Westinghouse appliance dealer. There was a basement but I don't recall being down there. The parsonage was located just east of the church and connected to the church by way of a door from the fellowship hall to a room in the parsonage. Rev. Edmans was the pastor when we first attended and Rev. Paul Huyett took over later on.

We got food from the Carey IGA and other things such as clothes, shoes, toys, candy, school supplies, etc. were purchased from a general store called "The Trading Post" across the street. The Trading Post was run by the Munson's for many, many years but was now owned and operated by Willy Adams. We never bought much there because most of our clothes, shoes and coats were hand-me-downs from our Penn Yan cousins and people in the church. I do remember the display of toys and such at Christmas. The second floor would be dedicated to toys and I distinctly remember walking through with wide eyes knowing that I would not be able to have any of them. Children had to be accompanied by someone older; Homer or Mary would never go so we prevailed on Phil and Ruth to lead us through. When Phil and Ruth started earning some money, they would see to it that we got something at Christmas. One time before he died in 1938, Uncle Edgar and Aunt Elizabeth Bullock and their daughter Edith visited us in their big Franklin automobile. He, Bob, Cal and I walked down to the Trading Post where he bought us each a toy car. Mine was a 1934 Chrysler Airflow silver in color with real rubber tires; about two and a half inches long. I played with it a lot and kept it until the rubber disintegrated and the wheels fell off.

We would play baseball on the side lawn at Condon's. Our bat was a table leg, not so bad really, and the ball was anything we could come up with. We once wound twine and string into a ball and wrapped it with black tape. I remember when I was about six we were playing in the side yard with the Brown children and others while the adults watched from the porch. The Browns were visiting upstate relatives from their home in Hastings-on-Hudson, NY. Most of the time when a fly ball would come my way an older kid would run over and catch it in front of me. When I did get a chance, I muffed it. Very embarrassing; I swore that day that I would practice enough so I could get to the point of never missing a ball I could get my hands on.



The East Bloomfield School on Main St. where Ruth, Bob, Cal, and Paul attended until 1940 when the new Central School was built. This photo was taken in the 1950's when the building was used as the Town Hall. It was torn down a few years later.

I distinctly remember Mary teaching me to read in the Condon house while the other children were at school. I recall learning so that I could read and thereby show off by reading the material that Bob and Cal brought home from their classes. I think I could read better than them before I darkened the door of a school.

While living in the Condon house in the fall of 1935, I started first grade with Mrs. McWilliams as the teacher. The school was about a half mile from the Condon place and we would get there by crossing the field in back of the house to get to Main Street and go east to the school. Many of the kids brought a bag lunch to eat in the dining room but we would go home for lunch. All twelve grades, no Kindergarten, were in one building. The first floor had three classrooms each on a corner of the building; one for first and second grades, another for second and third grades, and the third for fifth and sixth grades. Each had a cloakroom. Mrs. McWilliams taught the first and second grades, Miss Maude Mason taught third and fourth, and, my favorite, Miss A. Louise Welch taught fifth and sixth. The principal's office was next to the front entrance and the music room was on the fourth corner. The hallway ran along the length of the building with doors out each end. Next to the hall, between the music room and the first/second grade room and a half story below, was the gymnasium/auditorium. Screened windows in the hall and music room could be opened to view a sports event or expand the seating for an auditorium event. A temporary stage would be erected and folding chairs used for such things as plays, concerts, and graduations. The second floor was for the junior and senior high school classes; I remember little of that floor since I only spent part of my seventh grade year on that floor. The new Bloomfield Central School was opened in about 1940. My only remembrance of the third floor or attic was when our class would be trooped up there to be read a scary story around Halloween. The basement contained the toilets, dining room, storage rooms, heating plant, and a couple of extra classrooms. When we needed to relieve ourselves, we would ask to "go to the basement."

I was invited by Mrs. J. Wendell Howard to go to a movie theater in Canandaigua to see a Disney movie with Dorothy Ann Howard. Dorothy Ann was a year younger than me and the Howard's lived on State Street across from Elton Park. Dr. J. Wendell Howard was the family physician for the Bloomfield area. Although they were quite reluctant to let me go, Homer and Mary relented and Mrs. Howard picked me up at the Condon house one afternoon. I was so excited that I jumped up and down on the back seat so much that my head hit and broke the dome light. It was a very embarrassing thing to happen to a ten year old on his first date. My brothers never let me forget it. The movie was either "Pinocchio" or "Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs"; Snow White came out in 1937 and Pinocchio, 1940. My best guess is that it was Snow White.

Although I don't remember this, I was told it happened and was kidded about it for many years. Our family would attend church school and church services on Sunday and also attend most of the social functions. When I was eight or ten years old, Hilda Debow would make it a point to speak to me and give me some special attention. She probably realized that I was shy and wanted to get me more socially involved. Hilda, who was in her mid twenties at the time, later married John Hamlin and was the organist and choir director. One time at a church supper, when she saw me standing next to Mary, she leaned over and gave me a kiss on the forehead. My response was to give her a poke in the nose. I truly don't remember the occasion but enough people have jokingly reminded me that I'm sure it happened. In fact, when I was singing in the church choir under her direction, Hilda mentioned it several times.

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The Elliot home in Wycombe, Bucks County, PA. Grandma Drusilla Bullock lived with the Elliot's until she died in 1941.



Robert and Edith Elliott in front of their home. Edith was Homer's sister. Photo taken in about 1947.



School at Bloomfield Central was out for two weeks because of the snowstorm in March 1940. The photo from a Rochester newspaper shows drifting that blocked the Ionia road until a rotary plow was brought in.



The Parmalee place on West Main St. in East Bloomfield taken in about 1942.

Sometime in 1939 or 1940, I went to Wycombe, PA with Homer and Mary to visit Robert and Edith Elliot and Grandma Drusilla Bullock. Edith was Homer's sister and Drusilla his mother. I was in fifth or sixth grade at the time; I recall sitting with Miss Welch and telling her I would be missing a few days of school to make the trip. She asked me why I was going and not the other children; the answer was we were taking Phil's 1931 Chevy roadster and only three could fit in it. We drove down through New York State and along the Delaware River in Pennsylvania. We saw the Delaware water gap on the way down and the Delaware wind gap on the way back – or was it the other way around – wind on the way down and water on the way back. We were pulled over by a Pennsylvania state trouter on our way back for not stopping at a stop sign. Never before and never after had I seen Homer carry on such an agreeable conversation; it worked – we only got a warning. Grandma Drusilla was in her late eighties and quite feeble at the time; she died in 1941. I'll never forget her small frail body lying on a big bed with white sheets and white covers. I was forced to go in the room, talk to her and give her a kiss.

It was on this trip, I think, that I came face to face with my fear of heights. It could have happened somewhere else, I'm really not sure. We visited some historical site that had a tower about 75 feet high where you could climb up several flights of stairs to get a view of the place. As we climbed up I could feel myself getting more agitated. When we got to the top, Mary and Homer walked up to the railing to get a good view. No matter how hard they tried, I wouldn't go up to the railing but hunkered in the stairway until we finally went down. When we got back home, my brothers and sister were told about it; they didn't sympathize, in fact, they teased me about it unmercifully. I had to learn how to overcome this fear; I finally accomplished it when we re-roofed the barn on the Holcomb property.

In February of 1940, when I was in the fifth grade, we had a period of very heavy snow; I have read of the snow storm of Valentine's Day 1940. The combination of heavy snow and strong winds forced the school to be closed for at least two weeks. Drifting on the Ionia Road was such that the road was closed for a long time; special equipment was brought in to remove the snow. I remember walking a mile to the site to see the snow blowers burrow through the ten foot high drifts. Mary clipped a photo from the March 30, 1940 Times-Union showing the road with only one lane open a month and a half after the storm.

In the spring of 1939, construction of a new school on Oakmont Avenue was begun. The new expanded school district would be Bloomfield Central School and would include students from all the one room rural schools in the area. We spent a lot of time watching the construction.

### **East Bloomfield – Parmalee House (1940 – 1944)**

We moved to the Parmalee<sup>4</sup> house sometime in late 1939 or early 1940; it was clearly a step up with electricity and indoor plumbing and undoubtedly cost a bit more in rent. I don't remember which came first, making the move or Homer leaving the Roadside Craftsmen for a better paying job at a furniture factory in Rochester. I'm sure they were connected in some way. The Parmalee place on West Main St. was only a few hundred yards from the Condon house.

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<sup>4</sup> This home is # 34 on the walking tour and is described as: Millard Parmele – Mr. Parmele had this home built in 1874. The Parmeles were early settlers in Bloomfield and descendants of the family still reside in the area.

*Things I Think I Remember – Part I (1929 – 1947) - Photos*



Another view of the Parmalee place taken in 1940.



Photo of the Parmalee place taken by Phil in the 1990's.



Another photo of the Parmalee place taken by Phil in the 1990's.



Cal, Bob, Homer, and Paul in front of the Parmalee place in about 1942.



Cal, Mom, Homer, and Ruth by the Parmalee place in about 1942. They are standing in the driveway which was just to the west of the house. Canton's barn can be seen to the right of Ruth.



Vera and Earl Canton lived in the large house to the west of us and Frances Norton lived to the east and Hi Page, Vera Canton's brother, lived across the road. Going east to the center of East Bloomfield on the south side of Main St. was Mrs. Norton (a widow), the Gatlings (Percy, Winifred and their mother), a white house, Lena and Frank Steele, the Eddy's (Carleton Sr., Mrs. Eddy and five or six children), and the Wheeler Funeral Home. On the north side going to town was Hi and Nancy Page, the Hurlbut's (C. Leroy – the new school superintendent, Mrs. Hurlbut, Bobby and his sister), and Stuart Shaw Caves and family. There was only one home west between us and the intersection of Main St. with State St; the Sullivan Farm across Main from the Roadside Craftsmen. When we moved, Homer rented the bottom floor of a hops barn across Main from the Parmalee place to store his lathes and other equipment and also what was left of his precious exotic woods. Homer rode to work with Billy McKay who also had a job in Rochester at the time. Phil was working at Rittenhouse, driving there in his 1934 Plymouth. As I recall, Ruth was in nursing school in Rochester and Bob had just entered high school. Cal was in sixth grade and I was in fifth.

The house had a front porch with an entrance into the dining/living room which was only used as an entrance by visitors. We entered through the side porch into the kitchen which was about ten by fifteen feet. There was a sink with running city water on the west side of the kitchen with cabinets above the sink. The door to the cellar was next to the sink. Our wood burning stove was on the south wall with the kitchen table in the middle of the room. The door out of the kitchen to the south led to a storage shed which had a door to the rear porch on the east side of the shed. The living area was north of the kitchen; it was about 20 by 20 feet with a wood burning stove in the middle of the room. Double doors to the west from this room led to the parlor where our "good" furniture was stored; this room was never heated and only used when we had company. We had a salmon colored sofa and two matching easy chairs; I have no idea where this furniture came from and whether we had it at the Condon house. There was spare room west of the kitchen with a door from the parlor and a door from the living area. There was a piano in this room and a couch/bed used by visitors; this space was never heated and rarely used by the family. The stairs to the second floor were off the little hallway between the living area and the spare room.

Going upstairs there was a hall running north and south to the west of the stairs. West of the hall was Phil's bedroom: it was a very small bedroom, no larger than 8 by 10 feet. In addition to his bed he had all his amateur radio gear. We had electricity here so he could hook up his transmitter and receiver and talk to other hams all over the world. All his spare time was spent making and using his equipment. At the north end of the hall on the north side of the house, above the parlor, was a bedroom, about 12 by 10 feet, used by Bob, Cal, and I; I can't recall the arrangement of the beds but I'm sure that there was one double bed used by Cal and I. On the north east corner of the second floor off the hall, above the living area, was Homer and Mary's bedroom.

Turning left to the east at the top of the stairs would lead into the large, 10 by 10 feet, bathroom. The bathtub, sink and toilet were a real treat after so many years without indoor facilities and made the Saturday night bath routine faster and much more enjoyable. To the east of the bathroom, on the south east corner of the house was Ruth's bedroom, about 10 by 10 feet; both that room and the bathroom were over the kitchen. Many logistics problems were caused by the fact that the only way into Ruth's room was through the bathroom. The cellar was under the whole house except the kitchen; the earthen floored area contained a cistern, a coal fired

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Paul or Cal smoothing out the ruts in the Parmalee driveway. Taken in about 1943.

Paul spraying the potato plants in our victory garden. Mrs. Norton's house and barn can be seen in the background. Taken in about 1943.



Bob walking up to the Parmalee house in about 1943.

Homer walking from the garage to the Parmalee house in about 1943. The Canton's barn can be seen in the background.



Photo of Homer and Cal that appeared in a newspaper article in about 1943. The article was about Homer making stringed instruments.

furnace, a coal bin and storage space. It was a gravity furnace with one large grill in the living area directly over the furnace. The second floor was heated by hot air rising up the stairs and through a grate in the ceiling into Homer and Mary's bedroom. Mary would store all her canned goods in the cool cellar. There was a hand pump and small sink in the tiny hall at the top of the cellar stairs to get water from the cistern. I'm not sure how the hot water was heated in this house; the tank must have been small because we were always running out.

The driveway ran on the west side of the house to a small shop like building with an attached open door garage. Homer set up a little work area to work on some of his many projects. The Canton house next door to the west was large and about 100 feet from Main St. Their driveway circled up to the house and around to their very large barn and then back to the street. They had an ice house, unused at the time, on the property line next to our shop. Our garden was in the back on the east side of the property next to Mrs. Norton's property. Starting out, Homer had lettuce, radishes, carrots, broccoli and other small vegetables in addition to corn, lima beans and string beans. Our job was to weed and cultivate it on a regular basis. Later, during the war, we doubled the size of our "victory garden" on to Mrs. Norton's property and included such items as potatoes and squash. The size of the garden at that time was at least 50 by 100 feet.

Bob, Cal, and I mowed our own lawn and also mowed Mrs. Norton's. She had a barn in the back of her home which seemed empty except for the lawnmower. I recall going into the dark space to get the mower and wondering what else was in there. I had the feeling that Mrs. Norton was watching so I didn't dare taking the time to explore. When the job was done I would knock on her front door to get my quarter; if the grass was unusually thick and long she would give me two quarters.

Homer worked at the furniture factory for a couple of years and, after the war started in 1941 or 1942, he took a job in a plant that made parts of Army rifles. He was still working there when we moved to Holcomb in 1944 but quit when Phil came home in 1945. He would leave early in the morning, 6:30 or 7:00am, and wouldn't be home until after 6:00pm. He didn't like the travel but tolerated the work. He brought home samples of his work which was reviewing the quality of the final product, the housing of a military rifle. He was quite proud of the fact that he could, by sight and feel determine if there were any burrs or other defects on the part. I think he worked five days a week and Saturday mornings. His evenings and weekends were spent working on his pet projects and studying the bible. Most evenings he would fall asleep listening to Lowell Thomas, the evening radio newscaster, and reading his bible magazines. While at the Parmalee house, he started to work on making stringed instruments, violins and violas. He bought several books on the subject and collected the appropriate woods for the project. Spruce from the Carpathian mountains that he ordered from New York City was used for the belly and he selected curly maple from his own stocks for the back and neck. The progress was slow because he had to measure and control the thickness at each point in the belly and the back very carefully. His skill at carving the scroll at the end of the neck was amazing; he truly was an artist at woodworking. He made a few, three or four, violins and at least one viola; Cal learned to play the violin from Phil Kaufman, the music teacher, and used one of the instruments. Steven Bullock, Cal's son, still has that violin. A reporter and photographer from the Rochester paper visited Homer and wrote an article about his violins and his son who played one of them. On reading the article, a violinist from the Rochester Symphony contacted Homer and came to town to try out one of the instruments. He borrowed it for a month or two and

*Things I Think I Remember – Part I (1929 – 1947) - Photos*



Paul waking up to the Parmalee place in about 1943.



Mom standing near the Parmalee house in about 1941.



Cal standing on West Main St. facing the Parmalee house in about 1943.



Paul standing on West Main St. in front of the Parmalee place in about 1943.



Phil, Cal, Bob, Ruth, Paul, and Homer at the Parmalee place in 1941. Mom took the photo. It was taken shortly before Phil was drafted.

brought it back saying that it was a good piece of work but the tone just wasn't there. Rather than disappoint Homer, that experience spurred him on to making one or two more. Charlie Seiler, a member of Homer's little orchestra used one of Homer's violas. He worked on the violins in the shop in the back building during the summer but used the kitchen table for his work in the winter. He still worked on fixing up clocks.

Homer would always warn us of the evils of the Roman Catholic Church. We were told to never go into a Catholic church but when Ruth was invited by her friends to attend the Christmas mass at St. Bridget's Church he would give in and let her go after a stern lecture. Homer was really upset when at one point in high school when Bob was dating Eva Buck, a Catholic. At the same time, Homer had a good relationship with the parish priest at St. Bridget's. The priest would visit the Roadside Craftsmen and spend long periods of time having friendly discussions on religion with Homer. They would laugh and slap each other on the back and have a good old time. After Homer left the Roadside Craftsmen, the priest would come to our house and have discussions on the porch.

Homer didn't like Mary working outside the home but when opportunities arose and the family finances demanded it she did it anyway. The Canton home next to us was the old Page house which was headquarters for a large farm on both sides of Main St. The daughter, Vera Page Canton, lived in the large house with her husband Earl and the son, Hi Page, took residence of a house across the road and used the property to raise chickens and cultivate peaches. Mary would candle eggs most of the year for a couple of hours a day and sort peaches during the season. She would also baby sit for Hi and Nancy's small children from time to time. She would clean house for Lena and Frank Steele.

Mary would read every page of the daily Rochester newspaper and the weekly Canandaigua paper. People would give her back issues of such magazines as the Saturday Evening Post, the Women's Home Companion and the Readers Digest which she would keep for a long time. She was a saver of newspaper clippings, wedding announcements, meaningful church bulletins, graduation programs, concert programs, etc. When she died in 1973, she left several large cardboard boxes of memorabilia dating back to the very early 1900's. She was a master of patching holes in shirts and pants, darning holes in socks, and repairing shoes.

When we got a hole in the sole of a dress shoe, Mary would take a rubber sole and cement it to the bottom of the shoe. A kit of one sole and a small tube of rubber cement could be purchased at the five and dime for very little money. The sole of the shoe had to be cleaned and roughed up and the new sole cut to size. If we had a hole in the bottom of a sneaker, Mary would get out the can of Solo. Solo was a black sticky smelly substance that could be spread out to cover the hole and after drying was just as tough as the original sole. The trouble was that it would hold on for only a few weeks and then fall off at the most inopportune time. Also it seemed to me that everyone could smell the Solo on your sneaker. Homer would also put new heels on our shoes using nails. One problem was that he didn't have a last and the nails would loosen and begin to dig into our human flesh heels.

Phil was making pretty good money at Rittenhouse; enough so he could buy parts and put together ham equipment. We could hear him long into the night "calling CQ" to all parts of the world. He would send postcards to and receive them from his many contacts. He had his bedroom walls covered with so-called QSL cards. His call letters at first were "W8JPP" and

*Things I Think I Remember – Part I (1929 – 1947) - Photos*



Homer, Mom, and Ruth seeing Phil off to the Army at the Rochester RR Station in 1941. Phil took the photo.



Cal, Bob, Homer, Paul, and Mom at Fort Niagara in 1941. Two weeks after he was drafted, Phil was stationed at Fort Niagara. We traveled there in Phil's 1934 Plymouth coupe to see him and take his civvies back home. Phil took the photo. The crease at the top of the photo was caused when Phil folded it to keep it in his wallet while he was stationed in the Pacific.



Phil somewhere in the Pacific theater in about 1944.

Edith Bullock and Dale Dunkelberger while they were students at Houghton College in the early 1940's. They were later married.



Pete Vandenberg



later after the war they changed to “W2PYJ.” He was always fiddling with his equipment and antenna so that he could get a clearer signal to further parts of the world. Phil attended ham clubs and he and his buddies would get together to show off their rigs.

One of the first things Phil did with his extra money was to get a present for Mary. Mary often listened to the radio while she was working around the house; she liked music, news and the daily soaps like Young Widder Brown, Helen Trent and David Harum. The problem was that the radios in our house had been cobbled together by Phil with parts he could scrape up and, as such, weren't really reliable or easy to listen to. Phil mail ordered a Lafayette table model radio from Chicago and presented it to his mother. It was a beautiful radio, a wood cabinet about two feet wide, one foot high, and one foot deep with a green back-lit dial. What impressed me more was how much it cost; as I recall it was 35 dollars (several hundred in today's dollars). I'll never forget the look on her face when she opened the box. She cried when she tuned into WHAM and heard the clear signal. Phil stood in the background, smiled and took it all in. Mary did thank and hug him but he was clearly embarrassed by her show of appreciation. He never mentioned this occasion again in my hearing.

In December 1940, Phil was drafted into the U. S. Army. At first, he and other recruits were located for a week or so at Fort Niagara near Buffalo. One Sunday, Homer, Mary, Bob, Cal and I piled into Phil's 1934 Plymouth and paid him a visit; we brought back his civilian clothes. Two of us boys had to ride in the rumble seat and the other ride up front with Homer and Mary; we took turns being warm. We had taken many rides to Penn Yan in the rumble seat of this car and, previously, in Phil's 1931 Chevy, so we were used to the rigors of winter travel in a rumble seat. We would cover ourselves with blankets and snuggle down into the well of the rumble seat out of the wind; we weren't allowed to close the door for fear of carbon monoxide. I think Phil visited home just once before going overseas and then he was gone until 1945.

Ruth spent a couple of years in nursing school at the Genesee Hospital in Rochester and later worked there as a nurse. Through one of her classmates, she met her future husband, Peter James Vandenberg, Jr. Ruth would come home for a weekend and bring several of her classmates for a couple of days in the country. I can remember playing softball in our front yard with the girls and marveling at how well a couple of them could hit the ball. The girl's names I recall are Dottie Guest, Edna Scheidman, and Viola Mattern. Ruth's boyfriend, Pete, would visit often; once he rode a bicycle from Rochester to East Bloomfield. Our cousin Edith Bullock, Edgar's daughter, was a student at Houghton College in the early 40's and she would often visit us on long weekends or holidays. She and Ruth were both born on the Isle of Pines, Cuba in the early 20's. I recall that when helping Mary with the meals by clearing the dishes from the table she would always say, “Keep your folks forks.” She played the piano and I always especially enjoyed her rendition of “Under the Double Eagle” on our out-of-tune piano in the spare room. A few years ago, I reminded her of this and she responded by saying that she wasn't a particularly good pianist but she was loud.

Ruth and Pete were married in the Methodist Church in October 1943 just before he entered the U. S. Navy. The church was crowded with many local friends of the Bullocks, Pete's relatives from Rochester, and all Ruth's buddies from her work. Pete had a large family with many sisters and a brother. There was a reception at our home after the wedding.

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Ruth and Pete after their wedding in 1943. Paul is standing on the far right.



Ruth and Pete on their honeymoon in 1943.

Cal with one of the Eddy boys on his bike in about 1943.



Cal (far left) and three other Bloomfield students who were involved in making airplane models for the U. S. Navy. Photo is from a newspaper article in about 1943.



Cal (far right) and other Boy Scouts collecting newspapers for the war effort in about 1943. John Hamlin (far left) was on the Troop 55 board. Other scouts are Elmer Backer and Roger Silvernail.

Bob entered high school about the time we moved to the Parmalee house. He had a daily paper route and he and Cal delivered the Sunday Democrat and Chronicle in East Bloomfield and Holcomb. I recall that the Sunday route had more than 105 customers at one time. Bob bought a 1929 Dodge in about 1942 and they used it to deliver papers. Summers, he worked in the canning factory in Holcomb. He played the drums in the school band, had lead roles in many high school plays, and sang in the church choir. He had lead roles in the Mikado and the Pirates of Penzants; Phil Kaufman, the music teacher, was particularly fond of Gilbert and Sullivan. Unfortunately he left Bloomfield before I got into high school.

Cal played the violin and a brass instrument, I don't recall which one. He stuck with the brass; he ended up playing the sousaphone in his regiment band in the U. S. Army when he was drafted in 1947. Cal was a collector of match book covers, stamps, etc. At one time he had several shoe boxes full of match book covers. I would start collecting what he was collecting at the time but would lose interest and turn over my small cache to him.

Bob, Cal, and I had bicycles but they weren't ordinary bikes. They were made up with parts that we could lay our hands on. My bike had a frame and fork that once was on one of Bob's old bikes; the fork had broken and welded at least once. The wheels I picked up somewhere but the New Departure rear brake was purchased from Western Auto in Canandaigua and I installed it. It had no fenders to begin with so I could count on a muddy wet stripe down my back and up my front when it rained. I did put on fenders when I had the extra money. The carrier was also purchased from Western Auto; a large carrier on the handlebar was a necessity for paper routes. One Christmas, George Norsen got a new two tone maroon Schwinn bike with a headlight; I was really envious.

One summer day I was feeling sorry for myself; probably caused by a fight with my brothers. Fully expecting her to take my side and try talking me out of it, I told Mary that I was going to run away. Surprisingly, she told me I should take a packed lunch and maybe a change of clothes. She packed a sandwich and I took off with a flashlight and an old BB gun. I went across the road through Page's peach orchard to a wooded area where we often explored. There were springs there that fed the East Bloomfield water system. A pump powered by an electric motor would go on and off at intervals. I hung around there for a couple of hours, ate my sandwich, and went home with my tail between my legs. I didn't mention the incident to the family and, thankfully, as far as I know Mary never told anyone.

Just east of the Roadside Craftsmen on Main Street was an unused sand pit surrounded by trees that the locals used as a garbage dump. We boys would regularly go through the trash to see if "useful" items were thrown out. The only thing of value that we came across was an electric popcorn popper. I think it worked but was never used; we never had any popcorn to put in it.

We boys were members of the 4-H Club which met after school and some evenings at school. We had projects but were most interested in the group because the leader, Stanley Steele, Sr., would take us on various adventures. I recall attending several Knot-Hole games at Red Wing Stadium in Rochester. We would pile into the back of Stan's pickup and take the 20 mile trip in all kinds of weather. Some of the Red Wing players that later played for the St. Louis Cardinals were: Stan Musial, George "Whitey" Kurowski, Marty Marion, Erv Dusek, Estelle Crabtree, and Johnny Hopp.

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Paul and Gene “Two Gun” Mowry in about 1943.



Paul giving Two Gun a ride on his bike. They are under the horse chestnut tree in front of the Parmalee place. In the background is Hi Page’s house.



Two of Paul and Two Gun’s drawings done in the early 1940’s.



A collection of Paul’s trinkets: one of a series of presidential coins from cereal boxes, a sun dial, a Rochester Red Wings pin, a pin from the Betsy Ross house in Philadelphia, a decoder pin from the Tom Mix radio show, a flattened penny, a souvenir with Paul’s name from Roseland, and a Dewey for President pin.

When we were at the Condon house, Mary would give us a haircut or trim. When Homer had a steady income we would have it done by Charlie Seiler. Charlie had a barber shop in East Bloomfield between the Trading Post and the Post Office. I recall that he charged a quarter a cut and we thought it was way too much for a job that took less than 10 minutes. On several occasions when we would be in the chair or waiting, an “important person” would come in and Charlie would put him ahead us. Among others, I remember the school principal, John Gilmore, and Dr. Howard getting the preferential treatment. Dr. Howard would always insist on paying for those he preempted.

Carey’s IGA store had a large front porch overlooking Main Street. On hot summer days we would go to the store, get a Pepsi or Coke or Orange Crush or Nehi root beer or Royal Crown cola and sit on the porch to enjoy the drink. Often, Jenney Rice would be sitting on the porch. Jennie, who was at least eighty, lived alone on State Street a few houses east of the Methodist Church. She, being a kindly and lonely person, enjoyed having youngsters around and would often pay for our drinks. I think we treated her with respect although we all thought she was a little weird. She would always refer to herself as Jenney Lind Levi Rice and tell us she was named after the singer Jenny Lind of the mid 1800’s. When she left, she would say, “I’m going home, no more to roam, no more to sin and sorrow. I’m going home tomorrow.”

My best friend while at the Parmalee place was Eugene “Gene” “Two Gun” Mowry. Gene was the son of Roy and Myrta Belle and when we first met, they lived on State St. to or three doors east of the Methodist Church. They moved to Holcomb on Main St. about halfway between the centers of the two towns. Roy was on disability and got some sort of pension and Myrta Belle worked at various jobs including the canning factory. Gene had a brother DeWitt and a sister Margarete that were quite a bit older, in fact, both were married and had children. Gene got the nickname “Two Gun” because he would greet people by reaching for his imaginary guns and beat you to the draw. Gene was quite an artist and we would sit around drawing pictures of anything and everything that came into our heads. We would do cowboys and Indians; Dick Tracy characters; and especially World War II generals from all the participating countries. The German generals always had a sneer on their face and had appropriate names like General Von Stoffel. We would make up stories and then act them out to the tune of classical music. We, the Bullock’s, had a wind-up phonograph and some old classical 78 rpm records that were perfect as background music for a chase or fight scene. Many hours were spent preparing and performing these stories. Gene had the weird habit of, in his words, “clicking through a story.” He would take two metal objects such as silverware and hit them together when he thought through a scene.

Roy had a car that he used to take Myrta Belle to work and pick her up. On many Saturday mornings he would take Gene and I to the Lake Theater in Canandaigua to see a cowboy feature and an episode of a serial. I think we got in for 10 cents and I was very careful to save my money so that I could get in. Roy would just park the car and wait for us to come out of the show to give us a ride home. At least once, when we were in high school, Roy took us to a Rochester Symphony Orchestra concert at Kilbourn Hall in Rochester. We both liked classical music, I guess from listening to those scratchy old records as we pretended to fight.

Gene and I did something that was really stupid and whenever I think about it I am thankful that it turned out without anyone getting hurt. Gene’s sister Margarete, her husband

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A pedometer from the Jack Armstrong radio show. It never worked.



On the left, Paul feeding one of Blackie's kittens at the Parmalee place in about 1943.

Two Gun Mowry in the 1950's.



Hilda and John Hamlin in front of the East Bloomfield Methodist Church.



Mike Gillette, and two young daughters lived on State St. three houses west of the Congregational Church. Gene, with me in tow, would often stop there just to say hello. Margarete would often have a cookie or some candy for us. One day we decided to sneak in the house and surprise her. We went in through a small three paned cellar window. I can't recall whether it was Gene's idea or mine; I think his. We got in and were ready to up to the first floor and surprise them. Just then Mike appeared at the head of the stairs and yelled out "Who's there!" We looked up and he had his shotgun aimed at us. We yelled out who we were and he lowered the gun. We were rightfully bawled out by Mike and Margarete and told never to do it again. We never tried it again and as far as I can remember we never went back there again just for a visit. Now, more than 60 years later, my brother Bob lives next door to that house and every time I visit, I look over and see that tiny window we snuck into.

The last time I saw Gene was at Mary's funeral in 1973. In 2004, I asked his sister Margarete about Gene's whereabouts. She told me that he was living in a senior citizen home in Canandaigua and gave me his number. I called him and we spent a few minutes reminiscing about old times. That summer Anne and I attended George Norsen's 50<sup>th</sup> wedding anniversary in Avon, NY just before going on to spend a week along Keuka Lake. I fully intended to stop by and see him but didn't make it.

Gene was no athlete and would be the last chosen when we played softball in Elton Park. It happened so often that after a while he refused to play. During the summer, we would gather at the park, pick teams and play for hours. Some of the kids participating were: me, Cal, Gene, George Norsen, Bobby Hurlbut, Chuck Hanrahan, Leroy Mason, Carleton Eddy and Julia Tobin. Bob and the Silvernail brothers would play on occasion but they were a little older and had jobs that kept them busy. Even though the park was filled with elm trees, they were large enough for us to play under the canopy; first and third base were trees while second and home were marked by a piece of paper or cardboard. Four "men" on a team would be enough for a good game; there would be a pitcher, an infielder, and two outfielders. The catcher would be supplied by the team up to bat while someone was batting, but if there was a play at the plate the pitcher would have to cover the base. Julia was the only girl interested in participating; no one complained because she was as good a player as anyone else. Some of the townspeople complained about us playing there because it spoiled the grass; thankfully the powers that be never took any action to actually keep us out of the park.

Bobby Hurlbut's father, C. Leroy Hurlburt, was principal of East Bloomfield School. In 1939, we moved from the old school into a new school building, Bloomfield Central School. Just about every Saturday morning for a period of time, Bobby and I would go to the new gym and play basketball while his father worked in his office. With all that practice and one-on-one play we got to be pretty good shot makers and ball handlers. At the end of every session we would try to see how many foul shots we could make in a row. Bobby was a better shot than me, but on occasion we both would get more than 20.

In the shed off the kitchen of our house, I put up a "basket" made of a tobacco can about six inches in diameter. Using an old ball about the size of a tennis ball, Bobby and I would try to make a basket. The roof of the shed was no more than 7 feet so the trajectory had to be flat on our shots. We got to be pretty good at getting the ball in the can. I recall that we went through many a tobacco can in the few years that we did this. C. Leroy took a job in Wayland, NY in about 1942, so unfortunately Bobby wasn't around to play on the high school team with me.



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George Norsen on a boat on the Barge Canal in about 1946.



The Bullock place in Holcomb in 1944.



The Bullock place in Holcomb in about 1944.

During the war people couldn't travel because of the rationing, so social activities tended to be close to home. Warren Wheeler of the Wheeler Funeral Home converted his side and back lawns into two large croquet courts. Summer evenings and weekends would find the courts filled with adults from the community. Children were allowed on the courts only during the daytime but at other times we came to watch the competition. Over time several people became very good players; one was Paul Norsen. Paul, my friend George Norsen's uncle, had a barbershop/lunch counter on South Avenue across the street from Elton Park. He lived in a couple of rooms behind his business. One of his legs was amputated above the knee but he was very agile at getting around with crutches. His arms, huge and muscled, made it possible for him to operate his business and be a very competitive croquet player. George and his father George, Sr. had an apartment above Paul's business.

George Norsen, Jr. and I were good buddies and spent a good deal of time together riding bikes around town. George, Sr. was divorced from George, Jr.'s mother Bertha and worked as a nurse at the Veteran's Hospital in Canandaigua. About once a month Bertha would have George, Jr. spend a weekend with her; George loved it and often said that he wanted to live with her full time. One time I spent a weekend with George and George, Sr. on a boat on the Barge canal. The boat, tied up near the locks on Clover Road, was owned by a friend of George, Sr. We traveled a number of miles both east and west going through a number of locks and got a chance to swim in the canal several times.

Mr. Pluto, the gym teacher, convinced Bobby Rayburn and I to give boxing exhibitions. One day, he put some gloves on us and taught us a few moves and told us we were ready. I recall one exhibition in the dining room in the basement of the school; it was probably a club meeting like Rotary. Bobby and I weren't really good enough boxers to hurt each other but we did go at it and give the spectators a good show. I was really trying to hit him and hit him hard and I'm sure he was trying just as hard.

Mr. Phil Kaufman, a very dedicated music teacher, had an impact on all of us. Bob sang in choruses and musicals and played drum in the band; Cal was in the band and played the violin, and I sang in choruses and musicals. I have a program for a Christmas Program given by the Bloomfield Central elementary grades in the auditorium of the new school on December 19, 1940. Mr. Kaufman and his wife were director and piano player. I was in seventh grade at the time and I don't remember a thing about my participation as King Herod.

### **Holcomb – Rubenstein House (1944 – 1947)**

Sometime before June 1944, Homer and Mary purchased a home on Main Street in Holcomb from Max Rubenstein. Although we called it the Rubenstein house, Rubenstein never lived there; it was one of the many properties that he owned in the area. There was a large house and barn on the four acres. I remember Homer reading a book entitled "Five Acres and Independence" while living at the Parmalee house in preparation, probably, for this move. The

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The Bullock place in Holcomb in 1944.



The Bullock place in Holcomb in 1944.



The Bullock place in Holcomb in the 1990's.  
Taken by Phil.



The Bullock place in Holcomb in about 1947  
from the roof of the barn. Pete Vandenberg is  
coming out the door. The car is Bob's 1929  
Dodge.

exact date of the move is not known but Bob remembers that we lived in Holcomb when he graduated from high school in June 1944; he recalls a graduation party there. At the time Phil was stationed in the Pacific and Ruth was living with husband Pete at a naval station somewhere in the states. Cal was completing the 10<sup>th</sup> grade and I the 9<sup>th</sup> grade.

The home was the second house from Caves Lumber Yard on the north side of Main Street going east out of downtown Holcomb; Murphy's lived in the first. The next property east of us contained Benny Eckler's home and his trucking company. Ed Styles and the Bardens lived across the street. Behind the house was a two story barn. The lot was triangle shaped with the point going north from Main Street meeting the railroad tracks. A good bit of the property had been dedicated to fruit orchards; there were numerous pear trees for sure.

The house was about sixty feet south of Main Street with the driveway going to the barn on the west side. The house was probably built in the late 1800's in at least three stages: the first stage was the main house of two stories and the attached one story kitchen-dining room; the second stage was an addition to the kitchen; and the third a bathroom added much later on. The family used the rear door into the kitchen as the primary entrance. The kitchen was about sixteen feet wide and fourteen feet deep. There were windows to the north, the east and the west. There were two doors to the north to the dining room which was about sixteen by sixteen. There was a door to the west to a covered porch of about fourteen by five feet. To the east was an outside door. A door to the north, out of the dining room, leads to the living room in the main part of the house. The living room was about sixteen by sixteen with windows and doors taking up most of the perimeter. A large bay window was on the west side; Mary always had it filled with plants. Doors to the front porch and to the front hall were on the north side of the room. The front porch was "L" shaped on the west and north sides of the original building. A double door to the parlor and a door to Homer and Mary's bedroom were to the east. To the north was fireplace, the door to the dining room, and a cupboard that was accessible from both the dining room and the living room. We had a sofa bed between the two doors to the north and the library table between the two doors to the east.

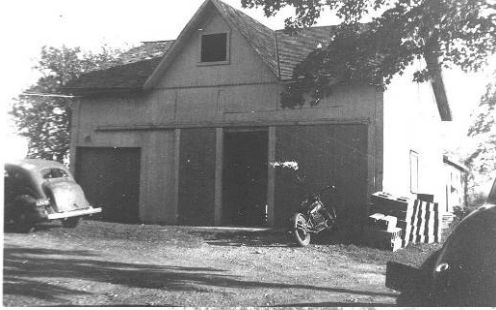
The double doors to the east lead to the parlor that was rarely used and contained the same salmon colored sofa and chair that were in the parlor at the Parmalee house. The parlor was about sixteen by sixteen and had two windows to the north and one to the east. To the west was a door to the front hall. Homer and Mary's bedroom was about fourteen by fourteen and had a window to the west and a door to the south into the bathroom. The bathroom was about ten by ten with small windows to the north and east. There was another door out of the bathroom to the west into the dining room. The front hall was about twelve by eight feet with a door out to the front porch to the north. The stairs to the second floor started near the front door. The ceiling in the living room, parlor and Homer and Mary's bedroom was at least a foot and a half higher than the ceiling in the dining room and kitchen.

The stairs led up to a hallway which curved around over the stairs. There was a very small room over the stairs that was probably used as a bathroom at one time. Off the hall to the east was a bedroom about sixteen feet square with two windows to the north and one window to the east. This room was used by Bob and Cal when we first moved in and later on by Ruth when she came to live with us in 1945. From the hall south was a door to another bedroom about fourteen feet square. This room had windows to the west and south, a door to the attic to the south and a door to the third bedroom to the east. This layout was quite inconvenient because

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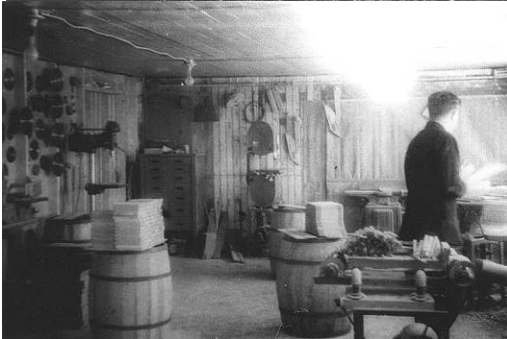
Bob and Cal on Phil's 1934 Plymouth at the Bullock house in 1944.



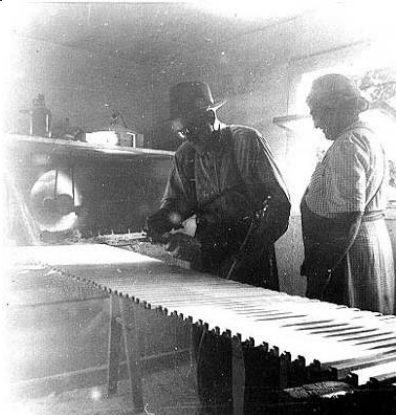
The barn behind the Bullock place in about 1946. Pete's Nash and Phil's Indian motorcycle are parked.



The renovation of the barn to make a shop for Bullock and Son included an addition and new windows. Taken in about 1946.



The inside of the shop area in about 1946. Bob is shown at the right of the photo.



Homer and Mary spraying lacquer on posts for towel racks in about 1947. The exhaust fan can be seen at the left of the photo.

one had to go through one bedroom to get to another. The third bedroom was about fourteen by ten feet with one window to the east. These two bedrooms were used by all four boys at various combinations at various times. While Phil and Ruth were away, the three boys each had a separate room. When Phil came back he had the second bedroom with all his amateur radio gear, I had the third, and Cal and Bob shared the first. When entering to the attic from the second bedroom required going down two steps. The attic was above the dining room and kitchen and was about sixteen by twenty-eight feet and had a low ceiling. One could stand up in the middle under the peak but had to bend over at the sides of the room. There was a window to the south out of the attic. The attic was a very convenient storage space and was well used.

In the summer of 1945 or 1946, I took on the job of painting the house. It was a big job that required a lot of scraping. I'm sure that I got a lot of help from Cal and Homer. My fear of heights was tested and I passed the test.

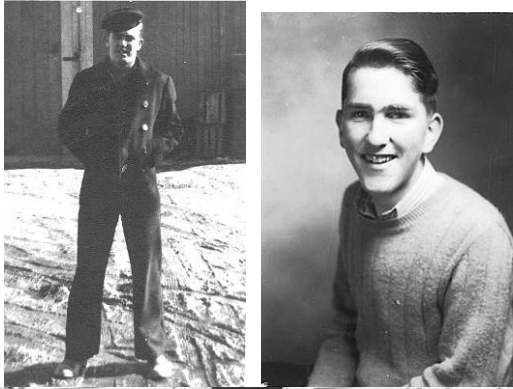
The barn, about thirty feet behind the house, was about thirty-five or forty feet wide and thirty feet deep. The first floor was all one big room with large posts in the middle to hold up the roof and second floor. There was a small, ten by fifteen feet, one-story area to the north. A ladder leading up to the second floor which was all on large space with a large door to the east; Homer stored his exotic Cuban wood on the second floor. In 1944 and/or 1945 we used the space in the barn to raise New Zealand White rabbits; Homer thought we could sell the rabbit meat to the local merchants. He would say, "It tastes like chickens." We never go off the ground with the business and got rid of the rabbits and hutches when the area was refurbished as a wood shop.

When Bullock and Son was formed in 1945, a wall was erected on the first floor separating the space in two equal parts. The part to the east was used as the shop while the space to the west was used as a garage. An addition was built to the south after taking out the back wall. Windows were put in the wall to the east and the addition to the north had windows to the north and east. The final shop space was about forty feet long (south to north) and fifteen to twenty feet wide (east to west). The attached one story space was used as an area to spray lacquer on the wood products. Part of the project included putting a new roof on the barn.

Because of the war, the years between 1944 and 1948 were quite hectic for everyone and the Bullock family was no exception. In 1944 Phil was in the South Pacific and Ruth was with Pete at a Navy base. A couple of months after he graduated from high school in 1944, Bob enlisted in the Navy for a tour of duty of two years; he has assured me that the only reason he enlisted was that he was about to be drafted into the Army. About that time, Ruth came to live with us; Pete had been shipped out to the west coast. She took over the front bedroom leaving Cal and I with the other two upstairs bedrooms. Since she brought Pete's 1940 Nash with her there were three cars around; the Nash, Phil's 1934 Plymouth coupe, and Bob's 1929 Dodge sedan. I recall a time in 1946 when Cal drove the Nash on a date and had a minor collision with it.

David Peter Vandenberg was born in January of 1945. I clearly remember the hubbub of getting Ruth to the hospital in Canandaigua and the homecoming after the birth. In June, Phil came back from the Pacific, was discharged and came back home. About that time, Pete returned from the Navy and he, Ruth and David lived with us for a while. At that time there were eight people living in the home. Pete, Ruth and David had the front bedroom, Phil had the

*Things I Think I Remember – Part I (1929 – 1947) - Photos*

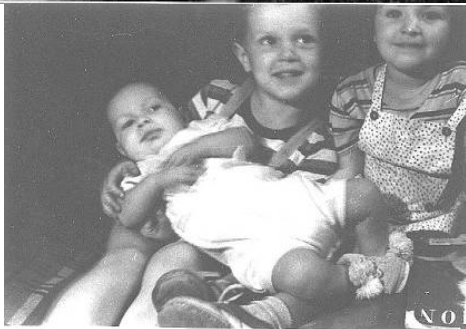


Bob in his U. S. Navy uniform in front of the barn in about 1947.

Cal's Class of 1946 graduation photo.



Dave Peter Vandenberg at about 2 behind the house in about 1946. Homer is behind the screen door.



Mark, David, and Barbara Vandenberg in about 1949.

INVOICE NO.

"TABLE SERVICE—HAND TURNINGS"

**BULLOCK & SON**

Finger Lakes Woodcraft

EAST BLOOMFIELD, NEW YORK

SOLD TO

*Seavers Assitin*

DATE

TERMS—25 - 10 Days—F. O. B. East Bloomfield, N. Y.

QUANTITY	DESCRIPTION	PER DOZ.	NET AMOUNT
1	<i>2 1/2 quart</i>		

A Bullock and Son invoice.



Cal in his U. S. Army uniform standing between Bob's 1938 Chevrolet and Phil's 1934 Plymouth in about 1947.



middle bedroom with the door to the attic, and Cal and I had the bedroom to the east. After a few months Pete and Ruth moved to Rochester to live with relatives in Rochester; Pete had a job in downtown Rochester. After they left Cal went to the front bedroom and I had the east bedroom to myself. Phil set up his amateur radio gear in that room. I can remember Phil “calling CQ” long into the night; I don’t think it kept me awake. In late 1945 or early 1946, Phil and Homer teamed up to form “Bullock and Son” woodworkers.

After Cal’s graduation in 1946, he joined the Army for a two year stint and was stationed in Fort Dix playing the sousaphone in the base band. About the time Cal left, Bob came back from the Navy and took over the front bedroom. Bob lived with us and worked at the canning factory and for Bullock and Son for a couple of years until he got married and started at Syracuse University in 1948. Cal came home from the Army in 1948.

In late 1946 or early 1947, Pete, Ruth, David, and newborn Barbra Joyce rented a house on the Victor Road. I recall helping Pete’s father, Peter James Vandenberg, Sr., wallpaper rooms in the house during that winter.

Sometime in 1945 or 1946, I saw my first TV broadcast. When Bill Teall got out of the service, he opened a radio sales and repair shop in East Bloomfield. When one or two stations in Rochester began TV broadcasting, Bill set up a TV in the window of his store for all to view. I don’t remember the content of the programs but I do remember standing there on the sidewalk and being quite impressed.

The new school building, much larger than the previous building<sup>5</sup>, for Bloomfield Central School on Oakmont Avenue was opened in 1940. The gym/auditorium and lobby were in the center of the building with one wing going to the north and another to the south. The gym had a stage on the south side and bleachers on the north side with the highly polished wood floor in the center. The bleachers were kept closed most of the time and opened for sporting events and auditorium events. The lobby was about 30 by 30 feet with main entrance to the east. The first floor to the east contained the classrooms for the first six grades and the principal’s office. The wing to the south contained the cafeteria, the shop, the coach’s office, and the boys and girls locker rooms. The second floor wing to the north contained the seventh, eighth, and ninth grade classrooms and the library. The second floor wing to the south contained the high school rooms and the home economics room.

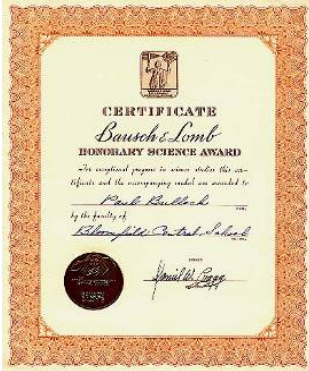
There was a very large front lawn on Oakmont Avenue with a parking lot northeast of the building with steps surrounded by a stone leading up to the school. The student smokers would hide behind the wall to light up. The teachers who smoked could use the teacher’s lounge. The baseball and soccer field was south of the school.

My time in high school was filled with the scheduled classes during the day and music, plays, and sports activities after school. And after school my paper route took about 45 minutes every day. I did all of my homework during scheduled study halls in the library; I don’t recall ever doing any homework at home. My science and math classes were fun because I always felt I was ahead of the teacher; I would actually read ahead and try to work the problems in the next chapter of the math and science books. Because of this my other classes would suffer. I did the

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<sup>5</sup> The old school on Main Street was used as the town hall until it was torn down in the 1970’s.

*Things I Think I Remember – Part I (1929 – 1947) - Photos*



Bausch and Lomb Science Award certificate that Paul received in 1947.

Paul's Class of 1947 graduation photo.



Paul standing on the corner in front of the Hotel New Yorker in New York City. The Class of 1947 was on a class trip in the spring of 1947.

Paul and Don Hudson in a photo from a newspaper article about Paul being valedictorian and Don salutatorian in 1947.



The Class of 1947 of Bloomfield Central School on the front steps of the school. Paul is second from the left in the second row and Gwen, Bob's future wife, is second from the right in the same row.

minimal amount of homework to get by in history, English, etc. As a result my grades in these courses were average. I got many a Dutch Uncle talk from my English and history teachers telling me that I was not performing to my ability and that I was a role model who had responsibilities in this area. Daniel Craig, the principal, cornered me several times to give me the same message. In fact, in early 1947, he sent a letter to Homer and Mary telling them the same thing and encouraging them to give me a push. In the same letter he told them that I should go to college and they should start thinking about it. They never did anything but, thankfully, Mr. Craig gave me an application for Albany State, told me to fill it out, get my parents to sign it, and bring it back to him. He sent it in and the rest is history.

I really liked my science classes and my science teacher, Mr. Dahl. The biology, chemistry and physics lectures and labs were always interesting and I always got good grades. Mr. Dahl treated me as a special student which made me feel good but, at the same time, uncomfortable among the others in class. In June of 1947, I was awarded the Bausch and Lomb Science award for excellence in science classes. Al Dahl with his wife, Alice Buell Dahl, and their children lived on Howard Avenue about a block away from the school. In 1950, Phil married Alice's younger sister, Lois. I liked science but I loved math. The teacher for most of my math classes was Miss Anne Fitzmorris and after her marriage Mrs. Doran. I enjoyed algebra, trigonometry, and geometry and always got good grades. In fact, I aced all of the New York State Regents in math; I got 100% in trigonometry.

My senior year about ten junior and senior boys took a course in Home Economics. It was something new at the school that Miss Fish wanted to try out. I'm not sure how much we learned but it was a lot of fun. On several occasions we made desserts and invited some girls to the class to try them out.

Despite my average performance in many courses, was earned the distinction of Valedictorian of the Class of 1947. My friend, Don Hudson, was named Salutatorian. On graduation evening in June, I gave a five or ten minute speech titled, "Education: Practical or Theoretical." My thinking pretty much followed an article in Life magazine. I don't have a copy of the speech; Dr. Howard, a member of the school board at the time, asked me for a copy after the speech so I gave him my only copy. Mr. Kohler helped me edit the speech and gave me advice on presentation. Stuart Caves, of Caves lumber, invited Don and I, because of these honors, to have lunch with him at the Rotary Club Canandaigua.

At some time during my senior year a debate was set up between our school and Thomas Jefferson High School in Rochester. A three person team from each school debated both at Bloomfield and at Thomas Jefferson. I was on the team as well as (I think) Don Hudson and Joanne Simmons. The debate was whether it was best to live in the city or the country. I used the fable about the city mouse and the country mouse as the basis for my argument.

In the spring of 1947 our class made a three day trip to New York City. We stayed at the New Yorker Hotel and our days and evenings were filled with trips to the Empire State Building, the Statue of Liberty, to a Broadway play, and a Dodger baseball game at Ebbets Field in Brooklyn. It was a pre-season exhibition game between the Dodgers and the Montreal Royals, their AAA farm club. Playing second base for Montreal was Jackie Robinson; Jackie made history when he went on to play the 1947 season with the Dodgers.



Paul took this photo of the Statue of Liberty's torch while on the senior trip in 1947.

THE WISHING WELL

A Romance of Old Ireland  
By  
May Dodge and John Wilson Dodge

Bloomfield Central School  
March 28, 1947

Cast of Characters  
In order as they first appear

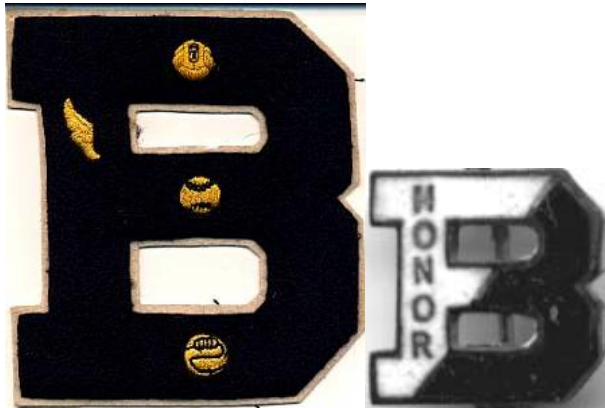
TERENCE FITZPATRICK O'GRADY . . .	Charles Thomas
NOREEN . . . . .	Eunice Eckler
LADY MARY DONNELL . . . . .	Dorothy Ann Howard
SQUIRE MATTHEW BAXBY . . . . .	Don Hudson
DARBY DUFFY . . . . .	Paul Bullock
KATHLEEN O'MARA . . . . .	Gwen Morrow
DAN TYRON . . . . .	Charles Handrehan
NORA . . . . .	Peggy Smith
MAUREEN McGIBNEY . . . . .	Jane Comfort
MOLLY O'TOOL . . . . .	Mary Howes
FELIX MURPHY . . . . .	Robert Lockwood
THE FAIRY . . . . .	Janet Gibson
CHORUS . . . . .	Louise Case, Ruth Peters, Muriel Reynolds, Dolores Stonewall, George Proctor, Jack Terry, Glen Webb, Richard Wilkins.

Paul played the role of Darby Duffy in "The Wishing Well" production at Bloomfield Central in 1947.

Pete & Joe

- Gwen Morrow - For Sentimental Reasons
- Susan Smith - Piano
- Eunice Eckler - Old Lamplighter
- Patricia Teal - Zip a De Doo Da
- Connie Parrish - accordion
- Sally Kunes - recite Poetry
- Gail Gillette - Gal in Celico
- Margaret Steele - The Rosomunde A1
- John Howard - drums & Henry Lay - trumpet - -
- Edith Good - The Whole World is Singing M. Song
- Janet Cornish - recite poetry
- Mary Sullivan & The Girl That I Married
- Rosinia Carey - Accordion
- Bob Bayburn & Old Man River
- Marjorie Bailey - Clarinet & Aneth Carlson
- Larry DeRoco - Doing What Comes Naturally
- Cathrine Radcliff & God Bless America
- Sylvia Childs & Mrs. Childs - Pian. Duet
- Charles Handrehan & Don Day - Choo Choo Cha Boogie
- Peggy Smith - Piano
- Paul Bullock - Big Bass Viol
- David Johnson, David Pelton & Ben Gausa - Trio -

Paul sang "The Big Bass Viol" at a Pete & Joe Amateur program at Bloomfield Central in about 1946.



Paul earned this sports letter in 1947.

Paul's Honor B pin.

Music was an important part of my life in high school. I started singing in the Methodist Church choir about the time we moved to Holcomb at the start of my sophomore year. Hilda Hamlin was the church “organist” (no organ just a piano) and choir director. Hilda’s husband John sang tenor along with Charlie Thomas, Stu Morse, and others. Bob, Cal, Phil, and I (when available) sang bass along with others. Gwen Morrow, Eunice Eckler, Barb Mason, Mrs. Thomas, and Mrs. Morse were among the sopranos and altos.

I sang in the high school chorus all four years. A Japanese woman named Yehudi Yamani was our music director. I recall playing the father in Humperdinck’s “Hansel and Gretel” musical in my junior year. The part was a lovable ne’er-do-well drunken woodcutter and husband of the wicked stepmother. I had a couple of solos and had a lot of fun. I sang “The Big Bass Viol” as part of the Pete and Joe amateur talent show in my junior year. Pete and Joe were radio personalities at a Rochester radio station who came around to high schools, did some jokes and a musical performance and had a dozen or so amateurs perform. Hilda Hamlin picked out the song and spent a lot of time instructing me on how to do it. She also played the piano at the performance. I didn’t win; cute little Eunice Eckler won with her rendition of a Shirley Temple song. I sang “How Lovely Are Thy Dwellings” at my high school graduation Baccalaureate service in June 1947. Hilda again helped me and spent a great amount of time helping me to get it right. It was a difficult piece for me but Hilda somehow got me to hit each note right on pitch. I also sang this piece at least twice in our church services.

I was involved with school plays in both my junior and senior years. I played Orestus in “The Nutt Family” my junior year. Orestus, the black caretaker of the Nutt family home, teams up with the maid Cerise to provide the comedy in the play. These two parts and their lines were quite politically incorrect by today’s standards. The play book describes Orestes as: “A tall, lean boy of twenty. He is the caretaker. His skin is coal black and this speech and mannerisms reflect the true darkey. Although he tries to put on a bold front he is decidedly shy in the presence of ladies.” I think Muriel Reynolds played Cerise and other players included Gwen Morrow, Charlie Thomas, Don Hudson, and Gene Burlingham. The director was our English teacher; I think his name was Mr. Kohler. My senior year, I played George Jones in “Almost Eighteen.” The play book describes Uncle George as: “Another boy, although forty-five. He has managed to keep his dreams by standing by and watching life at a distance. By the same fashion, he has retained his quick sympathy and unhurried sweetness. He is easygoing, slow of speech, and slow to anger.” The play was also directed by Mr. “K.”

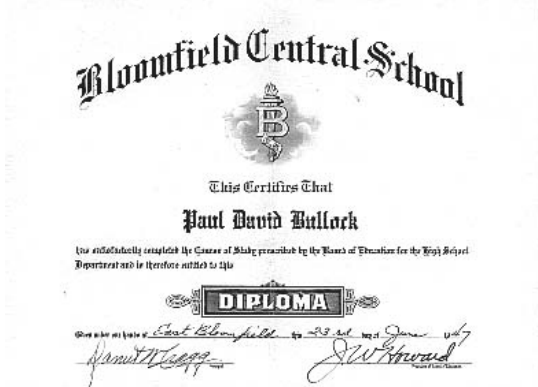
I was involved in all of the interscholastic sports that were available at Bloomfield Central. We were one of eight schools in the Finger Lakes B-C league; we were one of the smaller schools. With two coaches in three years (my sophomore, junior, and senior years) there wasn’t a lot of consistency in the sports of basketball, baseball, and soccer. Mr. Peters and Mr. Brennan were good men but had quite different approaches; Peters took another job my senior year. In basketball, I was on the first team all three years and a starter the last two. We didn’t have a winning record any of the years; my senior year we won about as many as we lost. The starters the last year were Don Hudson at center, Bob Rayburn and I at forward, and Dick Peters and Gene Burlingham at guard. Others on the team were Pete Thomas, Corkey Rose, Jim Rodgers, and Charlie Thomas. When Mr. Peters was coach we had several plays but really didn’t execute them well. Our last year, Mr. Brennan didn’t spend much time on plays, emphasizing defense. I believe that if Peters had stayed on we might have taken the league. My strong suit was rebounding and scoring; I was second high scorer in the league in 1946-47 with





Bloomfield pennant.

Photo of Holcomb taken by Phil from Charlie Nearing's plane in about 1946. The Bullock property is part of the triangle at the upper right. The Clark Canning factory is off the lower right of the photo. The pond was used for cooling and the light spot is the concrete pad where the peas, corn, beans, etc. were unloaded by the farmers.



Paul's diploma signed by principal Daniel Cragg and school board president Dr. J. Wendell Howard.



The Bullock family eating Sunday dinner around the dining room table in about 1947. They are, clockwise around the table: Cal, Mom, Bob, Phil (partially hidden), and Homer. Paul took the photo.



Phil's Indian motorcycle, Phil's 1934 Plymouth, Pete's Nash, and Bob's 1929 Dodge taken in about 1946.

an average of 15 points per game. Cal was on the team my junior year, he was a senior. He wasn't a starter but he was a scrappy defensive player. I recall a game in Manchester when, late in the game, I was fouled deliberately. Cal went after the perpetrator and gave him a lick or two; as a result he was thrown out of the game. I think we won the game.

I was a starter on the baseball team the last two years, playing first base. Don Hudson and Dick Peters were pitchers and catchers; when Don pitched, Dick caught and vice versa. Gene Burlingham was at second; Charlie Thomas at shortstop; Pete Thomas at third; and Jim Rodgers and Corky Rose in the outfield. I wasn't a very good hitter but did a decent job in the field. I must have been slow of foot; one day during practice Mr. Peters, knowing I used an Ernie Lombardi bat, said it fit because we were both slower than molasses. Ernie was a catcher on the Chicago Cubs who was well known as the slowest runner in the majors. Those two years our team was undistinguished; we won about as many games as we lost. I do remember our last game in 1947; a home game against Gorham. They had a very good team and were ready to go to the playoffs a couple of days later. To save him for the playoffs, they didn't start their star pitcher whose fastball was almost impossible to hit. We got a few runs off their starter and held on to win the game. As a result they didn't make the playoffs.

Our school, along with most of the others in our league, was too small to support a football team; we played soccer instead. I played my junior and senior years at the fullback position. I felt more comfortable with the other sports but, ironically, soccer was the only sport that I played in college at the varsity intercollegiate level. Until 1947, I had a paper route delivering the Rochester Times Union to about 50 subscribers in Holcomb. The Times Union had afternoon delivery so it became a problem when I had sports practices after school. In my sophomore year, the people didn't get their papers until 6:00 PM. When I gave up the route my junior year, I really missed that few dollars a week.

In summers from the middle of June until the first week in September I worked at various jobs including the Clark canning factory in Holcomb. My assignments included operating a machine that separated the peas from leaves and stems; after the peas were shucked, they entered a salt bath where the peas sank to the bottom and the chaff floated. My job was to keep the salt bath at the appropriate level and see to it that all the pumps worked. Cleanup at the end of the day took an hour or so and I always ended up soaking wet. Another assignment was operating the cooling bath for the canned food (peas, corn, beans, succotash, etc.) after cooking. After the food was canned, the cans were put in large metal baskets about four feet in diameter and two feet deep. These baskets were put in large steam cookers for a period of time; after cooking the baskets were put on a trolley line that ran into a long deep channel of cool water. My job was to see to it that the baskets got safely into and out of the channel and to keep the water cold enough to cool down the cans. Another assignment I had was working in the warehouse taking cans out of the baskets and placing them in cardboard cartons and then piling the cartons in the appropriate part of the warehouse. After the cans were allowed to age for a week or two they were taken out of the cartons, labeled, and placed back in the cartons for shipment. The aging process was to determine if the food was appropriately canned; if they were not the cans would swell and even burst. It wasn't uncommon when walking through the warehouse to hear cans popping. Another assignment was working in the large vats used to make sauerkraut. As the shredded cabbage was dumped into the vats, my job was to spread it around and spread salt on the cabbage. The vats were at least ten feet in diameter and fifteen feet high. I was back in school when the sauerkraut was taken out and canned. During the peak canning season it was



*Things I Think I Remember – Part I (1929 – 1947) - Photos*



Photo of six of Paul's friends standing in the snow. They are: Carleton Eddy, Two Gun Mowry, Leroy Mason, George Norsen, Chuck Hanrahan, and John Howard. Taken by Paul in about 1947.



Arm band used while on duty as an AWS observer.



Photo of AWS observers in front of the observer shack. Llewellyn Van Buren, chief observer is in the back row wearing a fedora. John Hamlin is to the left of Van Buren. John's mother Cora Hamlin is wearing a dark dress in the front row. Photo courtesy of the East Bloomfield Historical Society.



Phil's 1934 Plymouth coupe parked in the Bullock driveway. Taken in about 1944.

not uncommon to put in twelve to fourteen hour days. A week's pay was really impressive after working sixty or seventy hours at eighty-five cents an hour.

Another summer job I had was with the Stuart Shaw Caves lumber yard in Holcomb. The job, which only lasted for a few weeks, was helping load lumber on and off delivery trucks. Another job which lasted a short time was with the Lord Electronics Company in Canandaigua. Phil knew the owner, Ken Lord, since they were both involved in amateur radio activities. Phil prevailed on Ken to give Don Hudson and me a job at his plant. We rode to work with Gertie Webb who also worked in Canandaigua. After a couple of weeks Don and I decided to take the day off and spend some time hanging out in Rochester. When Gertie dropped us off in Canandaigua, we went to the Greyhound bus station instead of going to work. We didn't tell anyone of our plan, our folks, the boss, or Gertie. That evening when I got home Mary said that Ken Lord called early in the day and asked where we were. The next day when we got to work, Ken called us into his office, handed us our pay and told us we didn't have a job there anymore. An important life lesson learned!

Shortly after the attack on Pearl Harbor, the War Department established the Aircraft Warning Service (AWS) where citizens volunteered to spot potentially hostile aircraft. Throughout the US, concentrated mostly on the East and West coasts, approximately 16,000 observation posts were established and staffed by more than 800,000 volunteers. The AWS existed for about two and a half years and discontinued in May of 1944. Llewellyn Van Buren was appointed chief observer for the East Bloomfield post; Captain Van Buren was a retired rural mail carrier and a veteran of the Spanish American War. Van Buren lived with his wife on the northwest corner of Main and Church Streets and always marched in the Fourth of July parade in his uniform. Van Buren put together a group of volunteers to staff the activity 24 hours a day, 7 days a week; since I wasn't involved at the start I don't know how many people were involved or the names of the participants. My brother Bob was a spotter for a period of time but doesn't remember ever spotting a plane. I do know that Van Buren did a good bit of the daylight spotting. The spotting station was a very small shack located east of the Hilltop Inn at the northeast corner of State Street and Oakmount Avenue. It was no larger than 6 feet by 6 feet with small windows on all four sides. The spotters were provided with identification booklets for identifying planes and forms to fill out when a plane was spotted. The job consisted of watching and listening for airplanes; when one was spotted the form was filled out with: Number of Aircraft; Aircraft Identity, if possible; Single or multiple engines; Seen or Heard; How far from post; Direction headed; Altitude: High, Med., or Low; and Speed: Slow, Fast, or Very Fast. The sighting was called in to the filter center in (I think) Canandaigua. This was done by cranking the telephone and when the local operator in Holcomb said "Number Please" the spotter would respond with "Army Flash." When the call was connected to the filter center, the post code number (which I don't recall) was given and then the data on the form read off.

Since my brother Phil was in the U. S. Army serving in the South Pacific and my brother-in-law Pete Vandenberg was in the U. S. Navy, I wanted to be an observer so I could serve the country in some way. When the program first got underway, I was only 12 and considered too young. My chance came when I was 14, just a few months before the AWS was discontinued. The program was winding down because the possibility of enemy aircraft being in US airspace was considered much less likely. In the winter and spring of 1944, I was assigned a 4 hour shift from 4am through 8am, one day a week. One of my older brothers, Bob or Cal, would give me a ride from our home in Holcomb to the spotting station and after my shift, I would walk down

*Things I Think I Remember – Part I (1929 – 1947) - Photos*



Cal, Phil, and Bob visited Robert and Edith Elliot in Wycombe, PA in about 1947 when taking Cal back to Ft. Dix in NJ. The photo shows Cal (in uniform) Robert and Edith Elliot, and Phil in front of the Elliot house. The car is Bob's 1938 Chevrolet and Bob took the photo.



Bob and his 1929 Dodge in the Bullock driveway; taken in about 1944. The Murphy house is in the background.



David and Barbara Vandenberg sledding at Sullivan's pond in about 1954.



Barbara, Cathy Bullock (Cal's wife), and David at Sullivan's pond in about 1954.



Joe Tobin at Sullivan's pond in about 1947. Cal took the photo.

Oakmount Avenue to Bloomfield Central School where I was in 9<sup>th</sup> grade. I called in several sightings; in most cases I was only able to determine the number of aircraft, the direction of flight, and the altitude. While I had less than 50 hours service, many spotters accrued several hundred hours and some over a thousand. Medals were awarded for those who exceeded 500 and 1000 hours. I still have the arm band worn while on duty and a certificate of appreciation dated May 29, 1944.

A letter from Henry L. Stimson, Secretary of War, dated May 16, 19 44 was sent out to all the volunteers announcing the discontinuance of the AWS and thanking them for their service. Among other things he says: “ ..... The aircraft warning centers, at which many of you served and to which many others have reported as ground observers, are to be closed. .... This war has a long way to go. We are entering upon its crucial phase and victory lies far ahead beyond many bloody battles. The War Department sincerely hopes that you will not relax your war effort, and urges you to transfer to one of the many remaining vitally important jobs the loyalty and self-sacrifice you have shown in your work for the Aircraft Warning Service. .... The War Department is deeply grateful for the important service you have rendered your country.”

Sullivan’s pond was a small body of water edged by a couple of small hills near the intersection of State Street and Route 64 in East Bloomfield. The pond was about 100 feet in diameter. When the snow fell and the water froze, it was a local gathering for skating and sledding. The hill was steep enough to get a sled moving at a pretty good pace before it hit the ice covered pond. For years we spent a lot of time sledding and when we were old enough to afford skates we tried that out. One evening in about 1945, there was a large crowd using the pond for skating. The ice was in good shape except for some soft spots at one end of the pond. I was not a good skater; my ankles just wouldn’t stay straight resulting on skating partly on the blade and partly on the side of the shoe. I knew of the soft spots but I absent mindedly strayed to the bad end and went through the ice into the water. Fortunately, the water was only waist deep and I was able to break the ice in front of me and wade to shore. I got a ride back to Holcomb with an adult with a car. I dried myself out, warmed myself up and walked the mile or so back to the pond for more skating.