

JOSEPH CHARLES DILL

I was born a little after 8:00 P.M. on September 23, 1928 at the Methodist Hospital in Indianapolis, Indiana. My Dad, Joseph Elmer (Elmore) Dill and my Mother, Florence Maude Burke Dill, had a little house on the east side of the city at 3937 Fletcher Avenue. Because of the great depression, which started the next year, my Dad and Mom had to move because they could not keep up the payments on their home due to my Dads losing his job. This move occurred in 1931 or 1932 and we relocated in a small house on Dearborn Avenue. This was a rental property, owned by a Mr. David Bruce. It had running water but no bathroom facilities or central heat.

My Father could not find employment and in 1933 went to work in the Works Progress Administration (W.P.A.) which was a program introduced by Franklin Delano Roosevelt to put men back into the work place. Dad and Mom were unable to meet the rent payments and Mom was ill. Mr. Bruce insisted they stay in the house and take care of it because he could not rent it to any one else and did not want it to sit vacant.

In the neighborhood where we lived, there was only one man, Mr. Rhinehart, who still had a job. He was the last driver in Indianapolis for the Jewel Tea Company. I can remember, about this time, a teenage girl walking up and down the street, one day, crying very hard. I asked my Mom what was wrong with her and it turned out her Father was unable to cope with unemployment and had committed suicide.

A teenage girl, who lived next door, taught me how to tie my shoes. She also worked with me and helped me learn to read by early age five. I had no brothers or sisters, no TV, no radio, so reading came easy.

About this time, my Dad got a job with the G. & J. Rubber Company. My Mother started to go uptown on Saturdays, taking me with her. On one of our first trips we ate lunch at McCory's 5&10 Cent Store. A Hires root beer and a hot dog were 5 cents apiece. As a big thrill I was allowed to buy my first book: Alley Oop and Dinny The Dinosaur by V.T. Hamlin. It was a big-little book and cost 10 cents. Transportation for our big trip was the Indianapolis Transit Co. and was a token apiece for each adult. Kids under six were free and the tokens cost six for a quarter.

In 1934 we moved again to a two story house at 3029 Meredith Ave. Here we had a bathroom - I can't remember whether we heated by a stove or by central heat. About the same time, the Suits family moved to a house across the street. Gil (Gilbert) and Rose Suits were my Mothers' Uncle and Aunt. They had several children: Carl, Mary Carol (Carol), Ruth (Brig), Robert, Doris, Betty, and Barbara Ann. Another son, Gilbert Jr. had died at eleven months of age.

When I was five years old my Mother was in the hospital for two weeks, having an apendectomy and I spent the daytime hours at the Suits' house while my Dad was at work. Most of my memories of that time were pretty vague but I still remember little girls: Doris,

Betty and Barbara Ann peeking around the door as Carol gave me a bath in a galvanized tub sitting on the kitchen table. I hated the giggling.

I started school at Florence Faye School, No. 21, in September, 1934. I remember disappointment because I could already read and write (a little) and noone else could.

In the following summer we moved again to a house at 3006 Meredith. Here we had Central heat, a basement with a coal furnace and a HOT WATER HEATER! This marvel had a storage tank with two outlets and one inlet. At the top inlet cold water came into the tank. At the bottom of the tank cold water came out, on demand, into a copper coil that was contained in a cylindrical unit adjacent to the tank. Within that unit there was a burner below the coil. This burner had to be lit by hand and as the water in the coil was heated it rose to the top and was let in to the big storage tank at its' top. After heating for about a half an hour there was enough hot water for a bath which was drawn from an outlet at the top of the storage tank. Of course, as the heater had to be lit manually, it had to be shut off the same way. Our entrance to the basement was through a trap door in the floor of the kitchen pantry.

At first we cooled our food in an ice box in the summer and augmented this with a window box in the winter months.

School was about 6 or 7 blocks away and in the winter this could be a long cold hike. I remember my folks saved up and bought me a reprocessed wool mackinaw. Across from the school was a string of small shops. One of these was the Standard Grocery. Inside the store was a pot bellied stove and a lot of us would stop there to get warm before we had to stop and wait to get across the busy intersection of Rural Street, English and Southeastern Avenues. On one occasion, soon after I received my new coat, I stood warming myself by the stove. One of the kids let out a yell that I was on fire. I had stood too close to the stove and, although we soon beat out the fire, I had burned a place about six to eight inches in diameter in the back of my coat. Needless to say there was a lot of disappointment at home.

At that point in time, Indianapolis was laid out in city blocks, one tenth of a mile on a side. A person could walk entirely around the block without crossing the street and always be safe on a sidewalk. Due to this situation, I was frequently sent to a small neighborhood store, Snyders Market, for incidentals. A twin loaf of Taystee Bread was ten cents, apples five cents a pound and candy two to five cents per bar. I remember Mom sending me for a loaf of bread with strict instructions to bring back the change from the quarter she gave me. When I dropped the quarter on the tile counter to pay for the bread it went "clunk". The lady who worked for the Snyders told me she was sorry but she couldn't accept the coin because it was counterfit. When I returned home and told my Mom she broke down and cried. Money was hard to come by in those days.

Outside the Snyder store and anchored to the sidewalk was an insulated bread storage box about three feet tall X three feet wide X five feet long. It sat on eight or ten inch legs. This box had a hinged lid equipped with a padlock. The Taystee, West and Colonial delivery

men had keys. They would make thier deliveries during the night and when the store opened the storekeeper could unlock the box and take in the bread. I kissed my first girl, Bobby Jean Rhinehart, by that box when I was seven. Of course I was seen and was duly ratted on to my Mom. I caught hell for this indescrption.

December 1935 was the year I lost most of my childhood innosense. Mom and Dad had always explained the numerous Santa Clauses by pointing out the one at the William H. Block Company as the real one and the ones at the other stores were his helpers. This year, when I sat on his lap, I saw the sewn edge of his fake beard and the big lie was exposed.

My Grandparents, Charles and Jessie Eaker, always came in from the farm for Christmas. Since we only had a two bedroom house I slept in the front room on the couch and Grandma and Grandpa got my room. That Christmas I fiegned sleep and listened to the four adults set out my presents and talk about them. It was kind of hard to act surprised the next morning.

I had a dog, named Buddy, a cat, named Patsy, (not at the same time), a sandbox and a trapeeze made from a bamboo bar suspended from a tree limb by hemp rope. My Dad got rid of the dog because he barked too much. One of the exciting times that occured in this period was when Patsy climbed the light pole one house away. My Dad had to go to the Phillips' house, five doors east of us and borrow their extension ladder. He climbed up the ladder and rescued the cat. He took the ladder back and by the time he got back the cat had resumed her perch at the top of the light pole. Talk about mad, Dad had to go back, borrow the ladder again and retrieve the cat a second time. All of this took place after sunset which sort of compounded the severity of the situation.

On my eighth birthday my Mom told me to wait outside on the front porch for my Dad to come home from work. Meredith, the street we lived on, was a divided street with a fifteen to twenty foot grass median. A real pretty car went down the other side of the street and it really caught my eye because the headlights were green! The car proceeded down to the end of the block, made a "U" turn came up and parked in front of our house. It was Dad in his new car, a 1934 Plymouth sedan. This was before the days of sealed beam headlights and the parking lights were green bulbs in the headlights. I called that car my birthday gift for a long time.

It was about this time that my Great Grandfather, Joseph Stevens, came to live with us. His daughter Ellen Stevens Bowman, had moved him from her house to her younger sister Susan. Susan had him for a brief while and then threw him out into the street. He knew no one else in Indianapolis except his Grandson, my Dad. Grandpa lived with for only a short time because he was such a burden for my Mom, He was incontinent and the wet furniture, carpet, and beds were just too much. We took him back to Parke County, actually Montezuma, Indiana, so he could live with his oldest daughter, Alice. Alice was married to a man named Fred Schalley and worked as a cook in a little restaurant near the Wabash River. Granddad lived with her until his death, about 1937. He was 86 years old when he died.

The Suits family had moved to a house at the corner of Newton Avenue and LaSalle Street. It was there I first learned to ride a two wheel bicycle (it belonged to Doris). We rode the bike on a cinder alley that ran behind the houses. On the other side of the alley were the railroad tracks.

When I was about nine, we were forced to move again because the rental property where we lived was sold. We relocated in the south half of a "double" located about 700 south on Keystone Avenue. We didn't live in this house long - less than a year, I believe. During our stay there the city cleaned up what had been a dump site across the street and built a clubhouse for kids as well as a banked bicycle track. That land was later converted into a double screen outdoor movie theater and the rest of the dump became the Twin Aire Shopping Center.

We moved from keystone Avenue to 323 South Grace Street, renting from a man named Edmund Hamilton. The rent was high, about \$25.00 per month but we had a nice front and back porch, a nice two car garage with a concrete alley running behind our lot. Included in the house were a living room, dining room, two bedrooms, a bathroom, a large kitchen and a full basement. We remained in this house for the rest of my childhood.

On Grace Street we lived between the Stuck and Carrol families. Mr. Stuck and Mrs. Carrol were siblings. The Stucks had three children; Donald (the same age as I), Robert (called Ducky), and Virginia. The Carrols had three children; Coleen (three years older than I), Daniel (one year older) and Micheal (five years younger).

As boys, Don, Edam, Duck, and I played together along with another boy named Don Adams who lived on Meredith (remember that street?) around the corner.

The two Dons and I were in the same class (grade) at school. Don Adams played in the school band, I took language courses and sang in the Boys Choir, while Don Stuck mostly just acted like a "jock" but of course we didn't have a name for it then.

We had a sandlot softball team and Mr. Stuck, owner of the Best Coal Company, was our sponser in the informal league that existed. He didn't pop for uniforms or T - shirts but he did provide some bats and balls.

Don Stuck and I started dating about this time, we were twelve. I was dating a young lady named Deloris Harper and Don, her girl friend Jean Harrison. All four of us were small enough that we got in for five cents each at the Tacoma Theater. We called it dating but Don and I met the girls in "our seats" in the theater. We couldn't afford to buy their tickets but we each bought a five cent bag of popcorn we shared with them.

I was a patrolboy on the school safety patrol. I ran for sergeant but lost the election to a boy named Don Phillips. This worked out for the best because I was assigned a post at the intersection of Southeastern, English and Rural where I got to know Jackie Gioscho, my next girl friend. Since Jackie and I were fairly short I was able to take her to the movies; five cents each and still buy a five cent bag of popcorn, which we shared. This expenditure shot the hell out of my allowance which was fifteen cents per week. I received this huge sum for cutting the grass, shoveling snow, cleaning up my dog's stools, helping with the dishes, etc. I started cutting other peoples' lawns and passing out handbills for a local grocer to obtain extra cash.

That summer I graduated from Junior High and signed up at Arsenal Technical High School for the fall. There was a newly completed High School named Thomas Carr Howe that was closer but my Mom went with me to the School Board and got permission for me to go to Tech because I wanted to become an Engineer and they offered a comprehensive program in math and science that would better prepare me for this course of study. I was the only one of my "gang" that went to Tech so I was a little on the outside but I really wanted to go this way.

In December, 1941 we had entered what was to become World War II. I was in the Boy Scouts of America (I rose from Tenderfoot to Eagle Scout in 1½ years). I became a messenger in the Civilian Defense Corps. I also was a first aid instructor (not many people signed up).

I started high school in September, 1942 and gave up girls, on a temporary basis. Three things happened that year: 1) my Junior High math teacher had told me that I'd never make it in math and science because I was too slow. I was the one who said "just a minute" when she called for test papers to be handed in. 2) I took an I.Q. test in my freshman year, given in my Social Studies class. I discovered that I ranked in the "genius" category (low borderline). 3) If I really tried I could finish every test before all the students in my Algebra class. I took my first report card back to Junior High to show my old teacher the difference. She said she always knew I could do it but I don't think she really ever had a clue. That year my Algebra teacher, Mrs Hoover entered me in the city Algebra contest. I managed to finish a respectable eighteenth in the city. I went on to prepare for the state competition but finished eighth on our eight man team and was subsequently dropped when each team was cut to six because of the inability of some schools to develop eight people.

During this year I took up the clarinet and by the end of the year I had progressed to first chair.

That summer my Uncle Gil Suits got me a job with the Indianapolis School Board as an apprentice carpenter. Three young boys were hired for this position, the first, Sam (something or other) lasted only one day. The second boy (and I can't remember his name) lasted 1½ months but I made it through the summer. It was really hard work but the pay was 50 cents / hour, which was more than a lot of grown men were being paid.

Uncle Gil and another man, named Fern, rode one truck and a man named Fred hauled me around. On minor projects the two teams were

assigned individual projects but on major jobs we worked together. My Uncle Gil was the senior carpenter and the group leader. He was a hard taskmaster and one of the best teachers of profanity I ever met. This was especially evident when I accidentally hit him in the head with a 2" x 12" I was lowering to him while he was standing on a hanging scaffold suspended under a bridge over a creek in front of Howe High School. I not only hit him in the head but I also knocked off his cap which then fell into the creek. I tried to scoop it out with the 2" x 12" but only managed to stuff it in the mud at the bottom of the creek.

During that summer my Dad got his usual two week vacation which he liked to take at Lake McCoy, near Greensburg, Indiana. Since my folks thought age fourteen was too young for me to be left alone, they worked out a deal with the Suits family whereby I would stay with them for the two weeks while, in exchange, they would take Barbara Ann to the lake with them. This was quite an experience for me since I had never lived in a large family group before. I was impressed because I found that while it was different, I really liked these people.

By the end of the summer I think I received one of the best complements I had ever experienced. My Uncle Gil, not within my earshot, told my Dad that I was a "hell of a worker". Coming from Gil that was something that meant a lot.

As I worked that summer, I often came home by riding the Michigan Street car to the corner of Michigan Street and Rural Street. Michigan is 500 North and Rural is 2700 East. I would then walk south on Rural to Meredith which is 300 South, east to Grace (later renamed Oxford) where we lived. I was young, very well "built" and I guess I looked pretty good. At least there was a group of two or three girls on a porch just south of New York Street (300 North) who used to wait and whistle at me as I walked by. It wasn't until almost a year later that I met two of these girls.

I went to work at the Sunshine Cleaners, cleaning lint from pants cuffs, unloading delivery trucks, transferring dry cleaning from the cleaning tanks to the pressers and taking the finished cleaning to the hanging area behind the front counter, removing the clothes to be cleaned from the front counter and taking it back to the work area. At the front counter was a raven haired beauty, with striking blue eyes, named Betty Hock.

It didn't take long for me to screw up my courage and ask her for a date. When she accepted, I was so nervous I thought she had said no but luckily she had a sense of humor and we straightened that situation out pretty quick. Betty was sixteen and I was fifteen and we dated throughout most of that summer until she and her family went away on a vacation trip. Betty a really fine young lady and she helped a lot on my growing more mature.

During my sophomore year at Tech, I got my hours arranged so that I only went to school during periods one through six, allowing me to work $\frac{1}{2}$ days while I went to school. I tried being an usher at the Lowes Theater in downtown Indianapolis. I didn't last long. I was

fired for meeting a girl, after work, in the balcony. I then went to work as a soda jerk in a drug store just down the street from the theater. The job at the drug store didn't pay much and how long it would last was questionable. I kept looking and was able to secure a position with the H.P. Wasson Company Department Store. War time caused a scarcity of a variety of several items, i.e. cigarettes, silk or nylon stockings, gasoline, meat and automobiles. My boss used to send another boy and I to the tobacco store on allotment day to buy cigarettes for her under the rationing regulations.

During this time I turned sixteen years old (September 23, 1944) and pressured my Dad into giving me driving lessons. The old 1934 Plymouth had been traded in on a 1941 Plymouth in the fall of 1940 so we had about as new a car as was available. The 1942 models, introduced in September of 1941, were discontinued due to World War II. I passed my drivers test on my second attempt and was allowed to drive in daylight hours if I could get and pay for my own gasoline. One of my friends, John Keating, had a rich guardian uncle, who had ties with the black market and could get "B" ration coupons. We used to be able to get gas when a lot of people could not. I can't remember exactly how gas rationing worked, but the average family who owned a car was allowed a "C" rationing coupon which permitted buying sufficient gas to go to and from work and the grocery store. People who qualified, i.e. were important to the war effort or were doctors, nurses, military personnel stationed in the area, minor politicians, clergy, etc. The "B" rationing coupons were issued to those people who had qualified for these areas. "A" coupons were issued to very important people and these individuals basically had no restrictions. The "B" John got through the black market allowed me to get a lot of daytime (weekend) driving. Of course I had to disconnect the odometer on Dad's car to prevent recording the miles and alerting Dad I had driven a lot more miles than I had told him.

A lot of things happened in 1945. First World War II ended. Victory in Europe in June 1945 then Victory in the Pacific in September in September 1945. I entered into my Senior year at Tech and I turned seventeen on the twenty third day of that month. I became president of the D.E.A.N.S. Squire Club, the high school equivalent of a college fraternity, more or less. Although I had been driving for more than a year I was still not allowed to have Dad's car for a date at night.

Finally January, 1946 arrived and the first of the two senior dances was scheduled. I asked a young lady for a date. Past conversations between my parents and I had led me to believe that I would be able to get the car for this type of special occasion. Based on this, I told the girl I would be driving that night. When my Dad said no I blew up and for the first time I stood up to him. After a lot of shouting Dad caved in. I'd like to think I was right but looking back I'm not so sure. Of course, things went right that night, but later that year I proved not to be as reliable as someone driving should be.

Tech won the basketball sectional tournament and advanced to the Regional tournament in Anderson, Indiana. I rode up to see our defeat in the rumble seat of my friend Ed Farrel's 1928 Model A Ford

During the spring of that year I was informed by Purdue University that I had been denied admission because my high-school transcript

indicated that I had failed Solid Geometry. I went to the Tech Records Office and it took but a few minutes to determine that they had sent the records of a "Scott Dill" to Purdue instead of mine. Although they corrected this quickly, Purdue informed me that they no longer had any openings on campus. They suggested that I go instead to the extension in Indianapolis for the initial semester.

In the meantime, subsequent to my high school graduation, I had an accident in my Dad's car. It was totally my fault. I was paying more attention to the girl beside me than I was to my driving. I ran a stop sign and hit another car, turning it upside down, or rather on it's side. The crash threw myself and my date out of the car. This was before the days of seat belts. My friend Bruce and his date, Shirley, were tossed around in the back seat but were unhurt. I'll always remember landing on my left side, on the street, and then as I rolled, as if in slow motion, my date Jodie sailed over my head. The accident occurred in the downtown area so an ambulance, the a newspaper reporter, a tow truck and the Police were quick on the scene. I was duly ticketed by the Police, the ambulance hauled Jodie off to City Hospital, and a cab took Bruce and Shirley of to their respective homes. My Dad, my Mom and I went to the hospital to check on Jodie. By that time her mother, notified by 'phone, had arrived and soon we found that she was in great shape - so great that the young doctor in the emergency room had had her strip so that he could check her arm (?)

I started at Purdue Extension in September and found that the tuition and books took more than 2/3 of all I had saved after banking 50% of of every dime I had ever earned. My savings had come to about \$650.00.

One of my buddies, Hollen Elsworth (Buster) Pruett enlisted in the Army without telling any of his close friends. Bruce Morford and I were disenchanted with life in general and our prospects of ever getting a college education so we went down and enlisted as well. The armed services, at that time, offered a short term, eighteen month enlistment program complete with the G.I. Bill of Rights.

I received, as a going away gift, a nice chess set from my cousin Carl Suits. I left home on October 3, 1946, completed basic training at Camp (now Fort) Lee Virginia. After Basic I passed through Indy, on a nine day delay in route. I managed to have another car accident while at home. This one was tottaly the other guys fault. He had a California driver's license with a condition that he memorize stop light positions because he was color blind. At that time Indiana was one of the few states that positioned the green light on top, the yellow in the middle, and the red on the bottom. Although he had admitted his guilt, Dad's insurance company cancelled his policy because I had experienced two accidents in the same year.

When Bruce and I got to Fort Lawton, Washington for overseas assignment we spent a soggy seven or eight days before being sent to Japan to serve in the army of occupation. We went via the troop ship the Frederick Funston. A friend, Paul Eder, who we had met in Basic

training, and I were the only ones not affected by sea sickness, although Paul did get sick one day from eating some stale Milky Way candy bars we had bought in the ships stores.

The trip was interesting, for sixteen days. Candy bars were two for a nickel and cigarettes were fifty five cents per carton (!) We experienced some very rough seas, waves up to forty feet high and a lot of wind but I was too young and dumb to be impressed by this.

After getting off the ship at Yokohama we were transported by train to the fourth replacement depot at Camp Zama. On the second day about a dozen of us were called out from the barracks and told that of the incoming soldiers we had been selected because we had scored the highest on our Army General Classification Test (basically an I.Q. test). We were assigned to a two week stint, working nights to classify and assign the other troops to whatever outfit required them. At the end of that two week period we were allowed to select whatever outfit we wanted to join.

The selections were allowed in the order of our test scores. There was one opening at the Judge Advocate General's office. The top man took that. The next best was to be assigned to Military Government, which I jumped at.

My buddy Bruce was disenchanted when we became separated so he signed up for paratrooper training. The two weeks at the replacement depot was an experience in and of itself. For the regular guys being processed it was two to four days of lousy chow. For our group, working nights, the food was mostly what we could pick up in the P.X. I ate all kinds of canned food, including chicken, rattlesnake meat and lots of candy bars.

What a change when I got to the Tokyo-Kanagawa Military District! My introduction to the T.K.M.D. , Headquarters Company, Yokohama, Japan was great. My first meal was dinner, served table style, by Japanese girls. The food was excellent. After dinner I was approached by a fellow whose last name was Dole from Southport, Indiana. He invited me and a fellow named Ed Trapp, who I had met on the C&A Detail, to go along with a group to Mt. Fujiyama that weekend.

The trip to Fuji was interesting, as we approached we saw Lake Hakoni (which I had never heard of) come into view. I took some pictures of this beautiful lake and the imposing mountain with my trusty Brownie Hawkeye camera.

I was first assigned to a clerical position but in February I was promoted to P. F. C. and then in April to T/5 (Corporal) whereupon I became a Chief Clerk/Engineer Inspector for the Industrial and Manufacturing Division of the Economics Section of Military Government.

About this time I learned that Buster Pruitt had been promoted to

corporal in the Seventh Calvary stationed just outside Tokyo. I wrote to him and invited him down for a weekend visit. Bus did manage a weekend pass and came down. In a few weeks I was able to get a three day pass and went up to see him. While there I visited Sugamo Prison where they were keeping Tojo. I also saw the Royal Palace, the surrounding moat and the huge goldfish in it.

By September I had earned another promotion - to Sergeant. Along with the promotion came a permanent jeep and a full time, 24 hour Class A Pass. This meant that any time I was off duty I was free to come as I wished. Thus I became a very popular person and was allowed to transport my many friends to such places as Hiroshima, Yokosuka, etc.

Hiroshima was one of the targets of the Atom Bomb. While the city was densely populated, it was not a truly modern city as were Yokohama and Tokyo. Most of the structures were one and two story structures. The epicenter of the blast was dead ground but as you moved away from dead center growth rose sharply to a high and then tapered off to normal height.

Yokosuka was most memorable, especially the Buddha Gardens. The 300 year old bronze statue was hollow inside and we were allowed to enter. While Shintoism was the official religion of Japan and there were quite a few Christian churches, the majority of the people worshipped Buddha. Surrounding the statue was a beautiful garden. Stepping stones allowed you to wander over water and through carefully manicured plants. In the water were various species of goldfish ranging in size from 2" to 2ft. They swam through a mixture of water plants. Perhaps the best testimonial to the beauty of the gardens was the fact that the G.I.s did not trash the area.

I was scheduled for discharge in February of 1948 but I was ordered home in December of 1947. At that time the Army offered a one year extension. My boss, Mr. Steve Kempski, a Department of Army Civilian, proposed an immediate promotion to Technical Sergeant and another promotion to Staff Sergeant in six months if I would re-up and take over the Tokyo Branch of the Economics Section. I may have goofed up but I turned this offer down.

I returned Stateside in January 1948 via the Omar Bundy. This trip took only eighteen days but included New Years Eve. My boss had given me a bottle of bourbon and a bottle of Haig & Haig Scotch as a going away present. As a first four grader (Sergeant & up) I had been assigned a stateroom which I shared with a Staff Sergeant also in route.

While the main contingent of the troops were in the hold drinking anything with alcohol in it (a lot of it was Aqua Velva Shaving Lotion), my new friend and I toasted the new year with high priced scotch.

Upon arrival at the port of Seattle we were delayed for twenty four hours because one of the men had died during the crossing and had been stored in the freezer. He had to be taken off and the cause of death determined before we could be allowed to disembark.

The discharge process took about two weeks. All in all the Army did a pretty good job considering the number of G.I.s they were processing.

Coming home, I bought tickets on Independent Airlines from Seattle to Chicago and Eastern Airlines from Chicago to Indianapolis. I had never flown before and this alone was a real experience for me.

Independent Airlines was a small company which had been formed by some veterans who attempted to compete by offering low cost, bare bones service. Their planes were surplus DC-3s which did not have regular seats with an aisle between them but rather bench seats that lined each side of the fuselage. Lunch was a box lunch which included a sandwich, a small bag of peanuts and an apple. This was accompanied by a paper cup of coffee. We landed in Helena Montana on 7 or 8 inches of ice. After taking on fuel and two or three passengers we left for Chicago. Flying over the Rockies we used the heaters that were provided. These were old army blankets. Landing on ice we transferred to Eastern Airlines Golden Eagle flight. As we started to taxi out Midway Field for take off, one of the engines caught fire. We had to return to the terminal and get on another flight.

Landing at Indianapolis I caught a cab to my folks home. Along the way I spotted my old girl friend Jodie Pruitt as we stopped for a stop sign. We exchanged greetings and after I had been home about five minutes the telephone rang and it turned out to be a friend named Mickey Kane. When Jodie had gotten home she had called him to let him know I was back.

Mickey wanted to know if I wanted to go out on a double date with him, his girl and a friend of hers. I said yes (my parents thought I could have at least waited a day or two) and I did indeed go out with them. I think the girl Mickey had fixed me up with was named Patty but I'm not really sure. She was a good looking girl and it soon became obvious that she was more than willing to have sex. Unfortunately I was too green to know how to handle the situation so what could have been a rather enjoyable evening was somewhat strained. I never had the courage to call her again.

I had been discharged too late to enroll for the January semester at Purdue so I submitted my transcript for the fall term. In the meantime I looked for work. It took me about two weeks before I landed a job with the Vonnegut Hardware Company, forty second street branch. I went to work as a salesman/delivery truck driver reporting to a Store Manager named "Andy" Anderson. So, for a period from the first of February through mid-September I worked at a hardware store.

During this period I took up roller skating. A friend of mine, Dick Whitsett, and I started going to the Riverside Roller Rink. After a while my second cousin, Betty Suits and a friend of hers named Doris, asked if they could ride along. We were going about three to four times a week, then I happened to meet a young lady whose first name was also Doris, and I had to terminate all my other riders so I could concentrate all my time on her. This turned out to be a summer time only romance and in the fall I entered Purdue unencumbered.

Purdue had fouled me up again. Although I had enrolled early, (January) they informed me that I did not have campus housing. I found a place in Lafayette proper with a family named Black, and as I had wheels it wasn't too much of a problem until Indiana winter, with it's accompanying snows set in.

About the time I started at P.U., I developed what, at first, looked like big pimples on my neck, chest and shoulders. I went to the doctor and he said that I had the Shingles. He gave me a shot of vitamin B-12 and a perscription for more so that the Purdue Infirmary could continue the treatment. I was also to use calamine lotion. I'll always remember the wierd feeling I had as the individual sores dried (on the surface) and as the scabs worked loose the 1/8 to 1/4 strings that were attached to a sac like appendage filled with pus. Fifty years later I still have the scars.

All of the treatment at P.U. was covered by my student fees. This made it much like the Army, where I didn't have to pay each time I went in the medical unit.