Earl[6] Skinner (Warren[5], Harry[4], Richard Jr.[3], Richard Sr.[2], John[1]):

HARRY EARL SKINNER
"Earl"; "H. Earl" in written form [KDS]
b. May 17, 1901
Born while parents lived at Parrish Street, Phila., PA [HES]
Living 1966, Haney's Mobile Homes, Box 424, Thorofare, NJ
d. April 19, 1990, age 88, Wiley Retirement Community, Marlton, NJ [AES]
Died at Wiley Health Care Center, Marlton, NJ; services at Wiley Church; handled by Davis Funeral Home; buried Eglington Memorial Cem., Clarksboro, NJ, lot 39D - south half, sermon on the mount [AES]
m. June 10, 1927 Norwood Methodist Church, Norwood, PA [AES]

w. LILLIAN CHARLOTTE SHOWALTER
"Lillian"; For some reason, she also called herself "MiMi" [KDS]
b. Dec 7, 1903 Fairmont, W. VA [Lillian]
Living 1995 Wiley Retirement Community, Marlton, NJ
d. Apr 22, 1996, age 92; cremated; graveside service in which the urn was buried attended by the family, cousin Dick Hughlett, the funeral director, and probably a minister. At my father's request, I turned on a tape recorder sitting on a car seat for a pre-recorded rendition of "Amazing Grace". [KDS]

CHILD:
1st Lt. DAVID EARL SKINNER
b. Nov 8, 1929 Taylor Hospital, Ridley Park, PA
d. living 1995 73 N. Childs St. Woodbury, NJ 08096
m. May 17, 1952 Presbyterian Church, Woodbury Heights, NJ by Rev. Ernest C. Enslin (pub. May 20, 1952 Woodbury Daily Times)

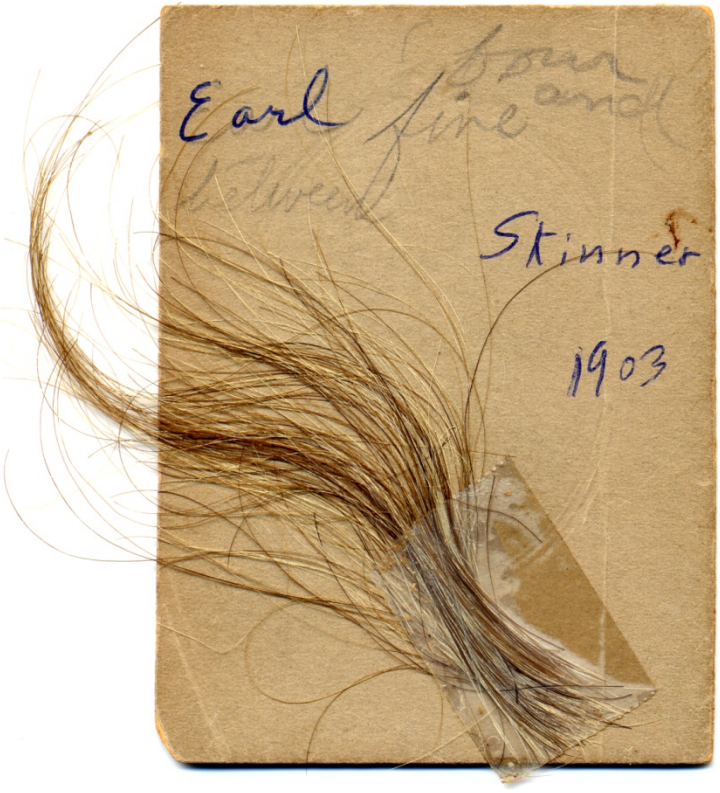
w. ANNETTE (originally ANNA) ELIZABETH FREDERICK
Only child of Frank Gerhard Frederick and Marie Elizabeth Ackerman
b. Feb 1, 1930 Underwood Hospital (Dr. Underwood), Woodbury, NJ [Annette]

Children:
1. Kevin David Skinner
2. Susan Lynn Skinner

Ref.: Mrs. Gladys Hughlett, 611 Orchard Way Lansdowne, PA

All above per 1/24/1966/VEM and 1/17/1975/VEM, except as noted otherwise within brackets [ ].





“ four and five between”
Earl’s DNA

KDS COMMENTARY – Lillian and Earl Skinner

Background

Earl's parents, Warren and May Skinner, were married in November of 1900. At the time, May was working as a sales lady at a Philadelphia 'Notions' store. Warren was working at a clerk in Philadelphia. A few months earlier, he had been working at an amusement park in South Jersey during the summer of 1900. Both Warren & May were commuting to their jobs in Philadelphia from homes in Glassboro, South Jersey. After their marriage, Earl's parents lived at a rental home in Sewell, South Jersey, and then moved on to a rental at Parrish Street in North Philadelphia.

Birth of Earl Skinner

Earl Skinner was born in May, 1901 at Parrish Street in North Philadelphia. His birth and baptismal records show an address of 1419 Parrish.

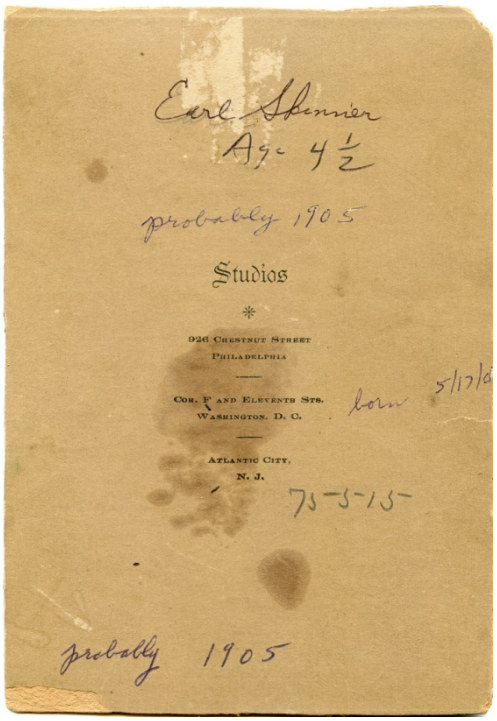
Earl was born exactly six months after the marriage of his parents.

1419 Parrish Street

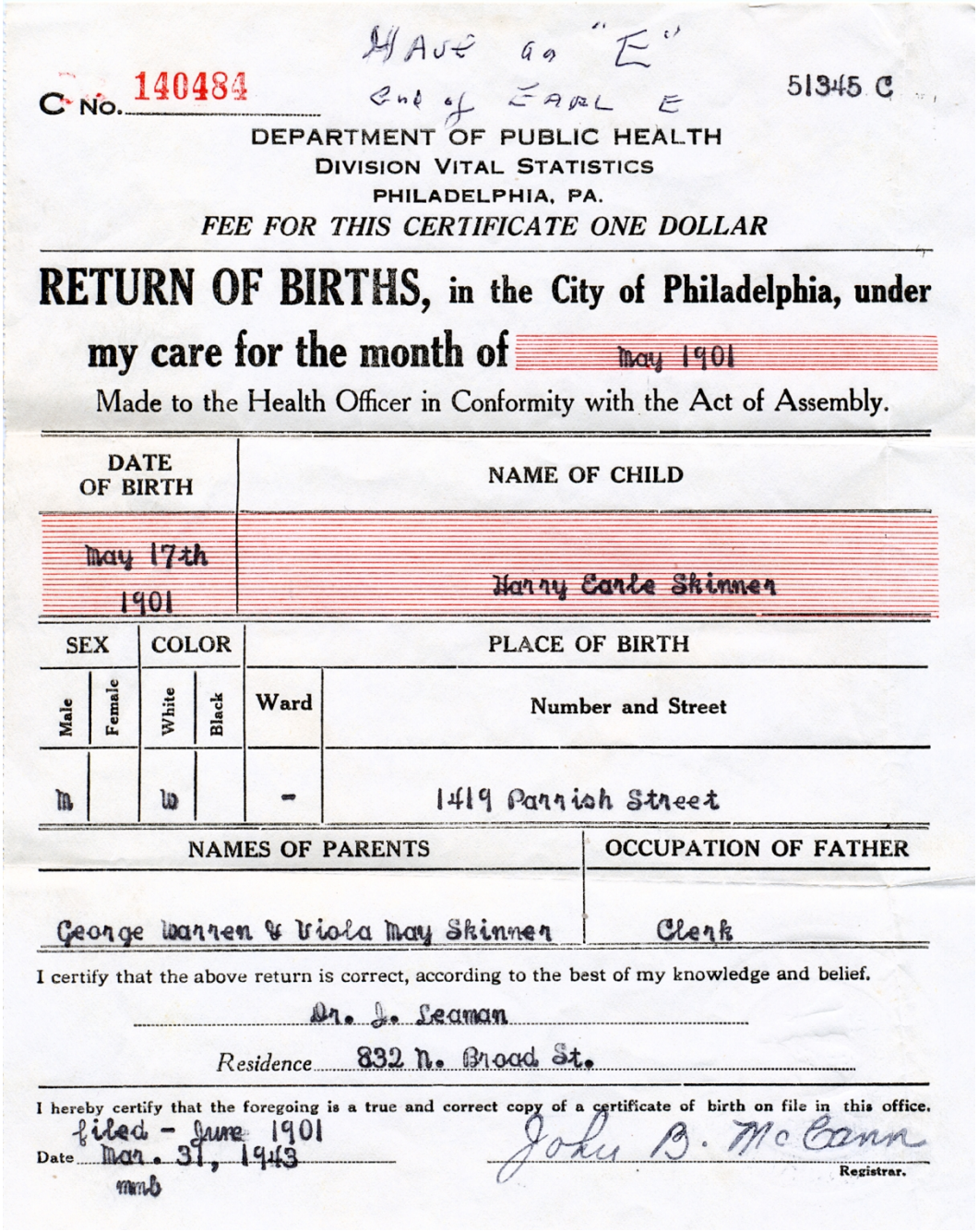
1419 Parrish is just off Broad Street, about 1 1/3 mile up Broad Street from Philadelphia's City Hall. The home would have been at the corner of Parrish and the 800 block of Carlisle Street.



Earl Skinner, circa 1905



Lillian's writing



Make as "E"
End of EARL E

C No. 140484 51345 C

DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC HEALTH
DIVISION VITAL STATISTICS
PHILADELPHIA, PA.
FEE FOR THIS CERTIFICATE ONE DOLLAR

RETURN OF BIRTHS, in the City of Philadelphia, under my care for the month of May 1901

Made to the Health Officer in Conformity with the Act of Assembly.

DATE OF BIRTH	NAME OF CHILD
May 17th 1901	Harry Earle Skinner

SEX		COLOR		PLACE OF BIRTH	
Male	Female	White	Black	Ward	Number and Street
M		W		-	1419 Parrish Street

NAMES OF PARENTS	OCCUPATION OF FATHER
George Warren & Viola May Skinner	Clerk

I certify that the above return is correct, according to the best of my knowledge and belief.

Dr. J. Seaman

Residence 832 N. Broad St.

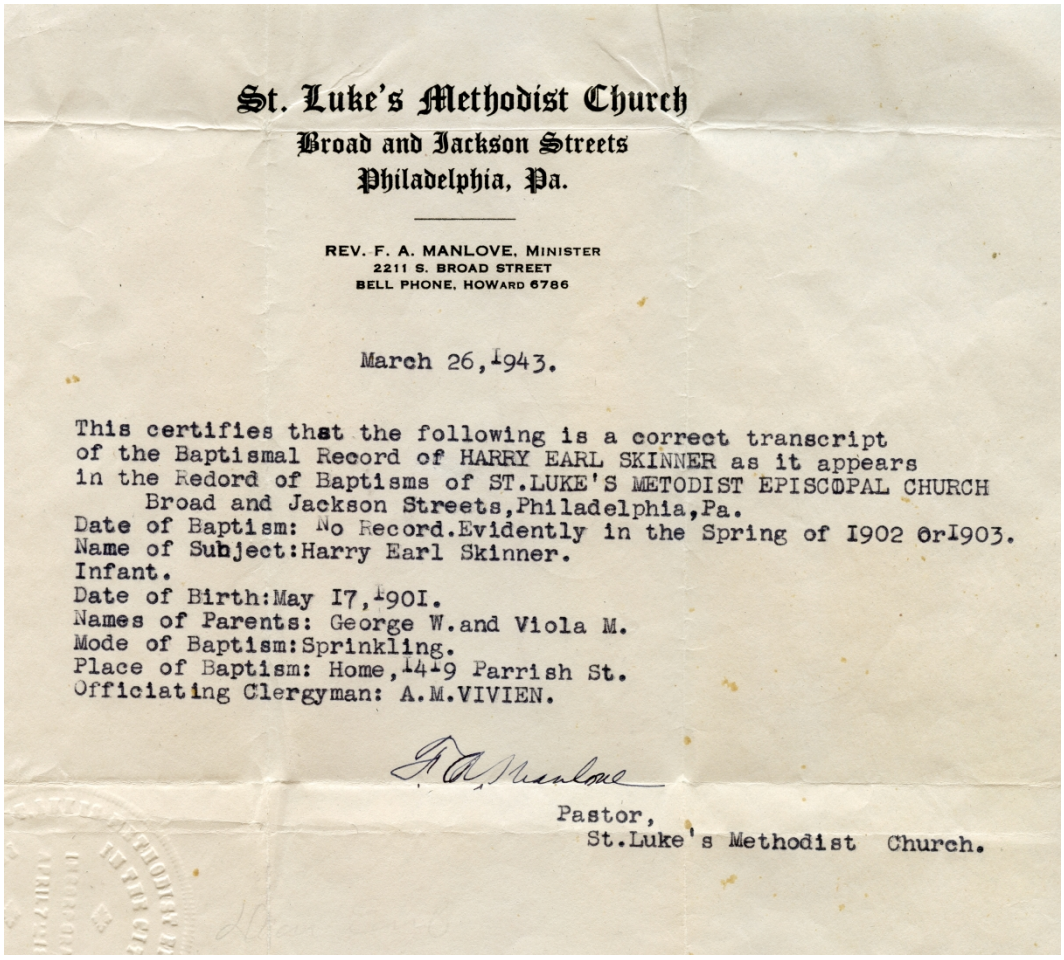
I hereby certify that the foregoing is a true and correct copy of a certificate of birth on file in this office.

Date filed - June 1901 Mar. 31, 1943 mmb

John B. McCann
Registrar.

Earl's Birth Record

His father's occupation is shown as 'Clerk'.



St. Luke's Methodist Church
Broad and Jackson Streets
Philadelphia, Pa.

REV. F. A. MANLOVE, MINISTER
2211 S. BROAD STREET
BELL PHONE, HOWARD 6786

March 26, 1943.

This certifies that the following is a correct transcript
of the Baptismal Record of HARRY EARL SKINNER as it appears
in the Redord of Baptisms of ST.LUKE'S METODIST EPISCOPAL CHURCH
Broad and Jackson Streets,Philadelphia,Pa.
Date of Baptism: No Record.Evidently in the Spring of 1902 or1903.
Name of Subject:Harry Earl Skinner.
Infant.
Date of Birth:May 17, 1901.
Names of Parents: George W.and Viola M.
Mode of Baptism:Sprinkling.
Place of Baptism: Home, 1419 Parrish St.
Officiating Clergyman: A.M.VIVIEN.

F. A. Manlove
Pastor,
St.Luke's Methodist Church.

Earl's Baptismal Record

Earl was baptized at home by preacher A. M. Vivien of St. Luke's Methodist Church. St. Luke's was located in South Philadelphia on South Broad Street. This was several miles from the Skinner home off North Broad Street. Today, this church is gone, thought the Methodist Hospital founded by the Methodist organization remains nearby.

Earl requested these copies of his birth and baptismal records in 1943, perhaps relating to his drafting work at NY Ship fulfilling government contracts.

2415 Carlisle Street

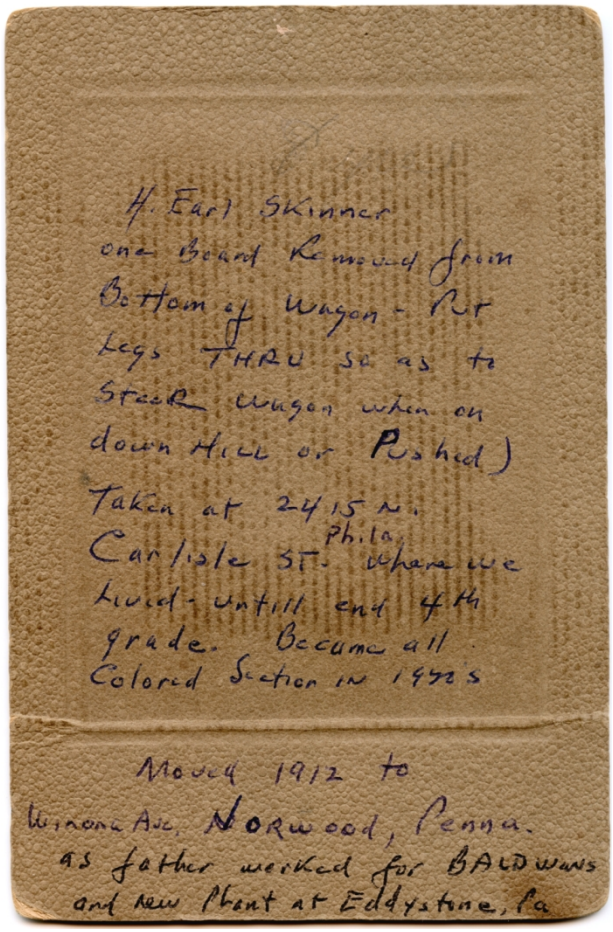
By the time of Earl's earliest childhood memories, the Skinners had moved from Parrish Street to 2415 Carlisle Street, Philadelphia. Carlisle Street runs parallel to North Broad Street (rt. 611), 1/2 block to the west. The house was on the right side of the street going north - about a block from the old Reading Main line.

Salesman

Earl would end up doing many odd jobs in his life, many involving sales. One of his first was selling his mother's baked goods out of his wagon as a child.

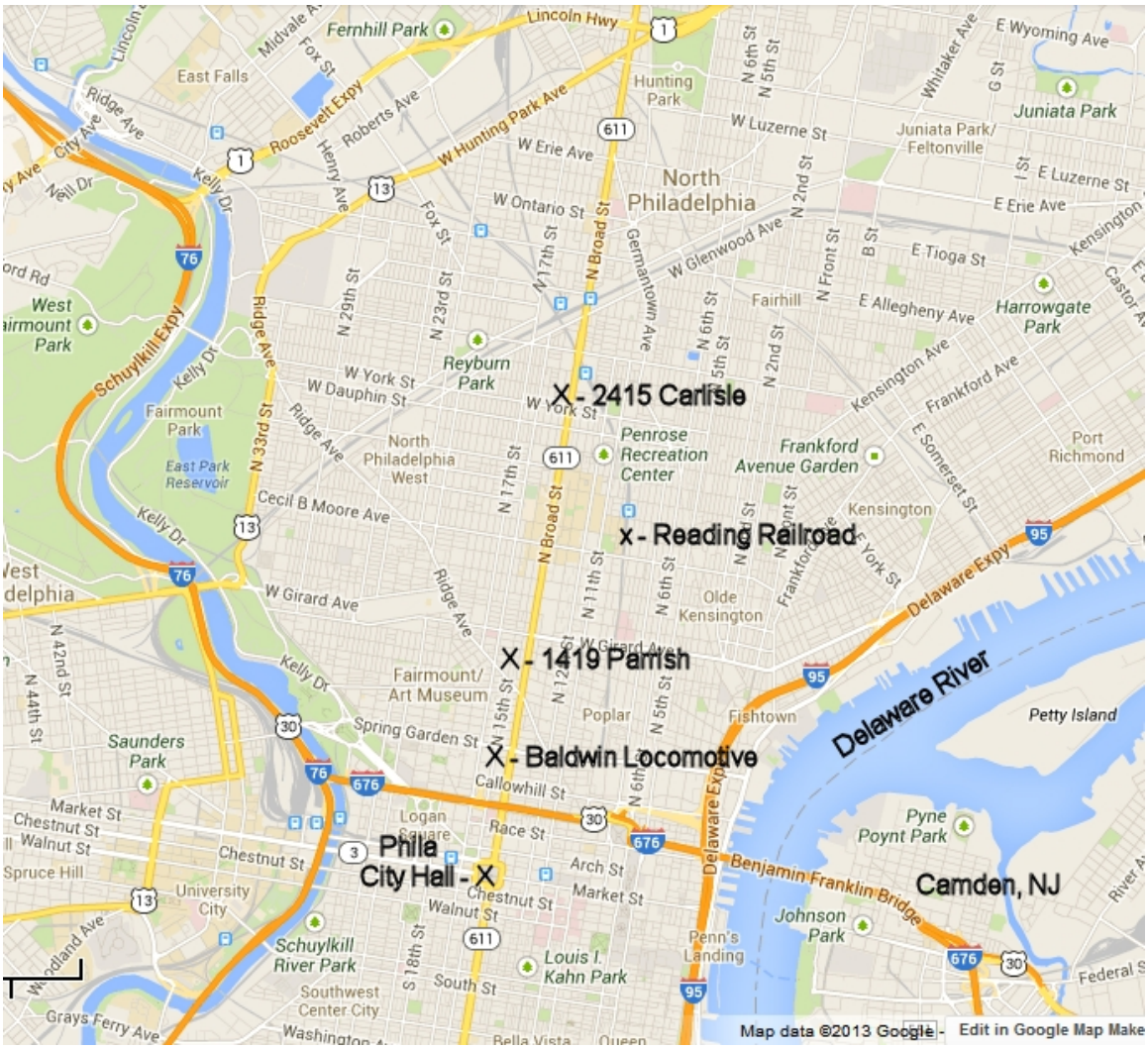


Earl Skinner
Carlisle Street, Phila



Earl's printing

"H. Earl Skinner. One board removed from bottom of wagon – put legs thru so as to steer wagon when downhill or pushed. Taken at 2415 Carlisle St. Phila where we lived until end 4th grade."



Parrish and Carlisle Streets, Philadelphia

The Skinners were living at 1419 Parrish Street when Earl was born in 1901. Earl's dad was a clerk at the time with the Adams Express Company, an early version of FedEx.

The Skinners had moved to 2415 Carlisle Street by the time of Earl's earliest memories. By the time of the 1910 census, Earl's father had taken a job with the Baldwin Locomotive Works in Philadelphia, with easy trolley or train access from their home.

Alcyon Park, Pitman, circa 1905/1906

While living on Parrish Street, the Skinners attended a church picnic in South Jersey at the Alcyon Lake and amusement park in Pitman Grove. Three photographs survive of the event. One photograph is shown here. Two others are included in the biography of Earl's parents.

Earl appears to be about 4 years of age at the time (born May, 1901), so the picnic would be circa 1905 or 1906. Earl's parents are pictured at the picnic with the family of John and Ida Shull. Ida Shull was a relative of Earl's maternal grandmother – Mary S. Leap.

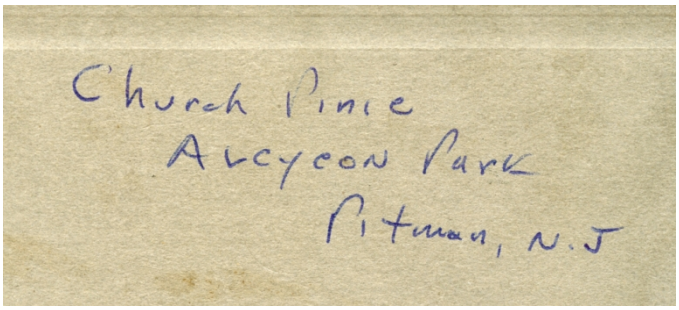


Alcyon Park Boardwalk, 1906
[http://amusementparknostalgia.com./indal.html]



Church Picnic, Alcyon Park, Pitman, NJ, circa 1905/1906

Upper Left – John Shull, Warren (hidden) & May Skinner
Second Row Left – Ida Shull
Bottom Row Center – Shull's son, Ruth Shull & Earl Skinner (b. May, 1901)
Earl's printing – he is pointing out Pop Pop (his father) and May Skinner (his mother) & himself

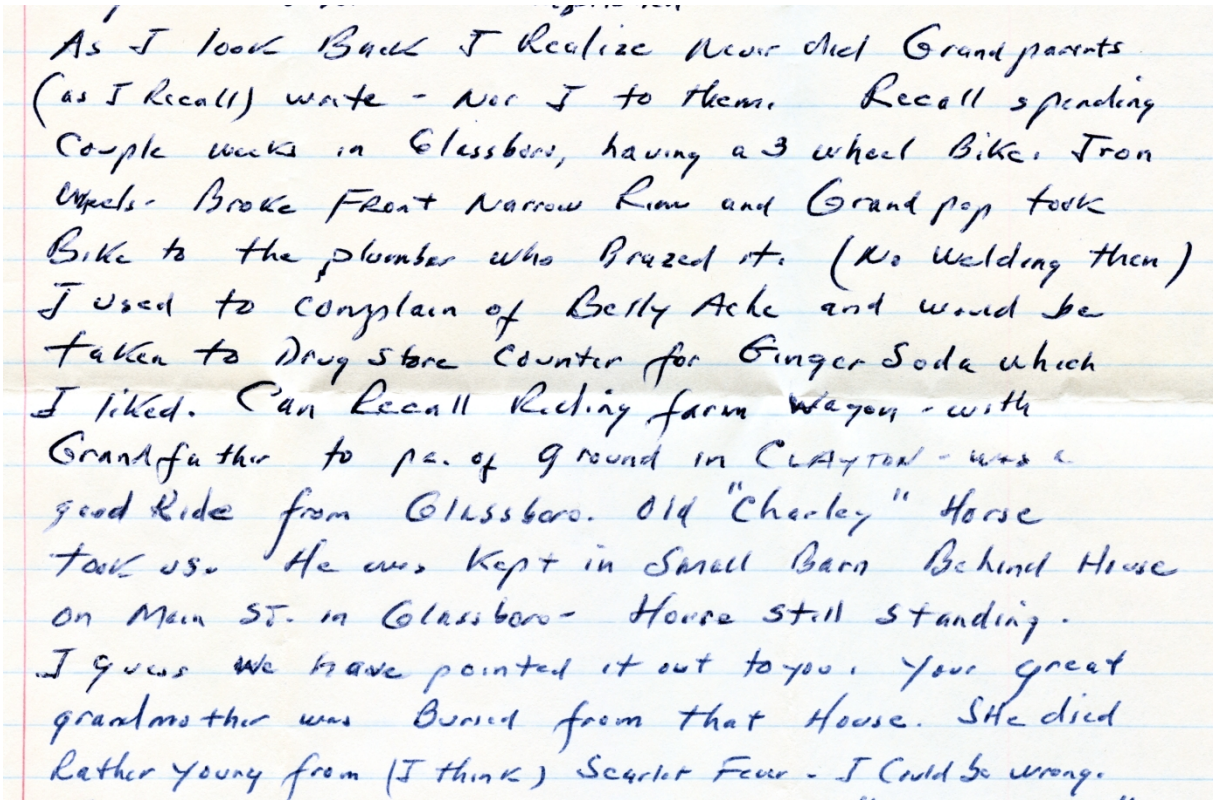


Earl's printing

Harry Skinner

Earl (Harry Earl Skinner) was buddy-buddy with his grandfather Harry Skinner (William Harrison Skinner), for whom he was named. On Saturdays, Earl's parents would take the family on the ferry from Philadelphia to Camden, NJ and then take the train to Glassboro where grandfather Harry lived with his wife, Lizzie, at 66 Main Street in a home that still stands today.

Grandfather Harry and 'Old Charley Horse'



As I look Back I Realize Never did Grandparents (as I Recall) write - Nor I to them. Recall spending Couple weeks in Glassboro, having a 3 wheel Bike. Iron Wheels - Broke Front Narrow Rim and Grand pop took Bike to the plumber who Brazed it. (No Welding then) I used to complain of Belly Ache and would be taken to Drug Store Counter for Ginger Soda which I liked. Can Recall Riding farm Wagon - with Grandfather to pc. of ground in CLAYTON - was a good Ride from Glassboro. Old "Charley" Horse took us. He was Kept in Small Barn Behind House on Main St. in Glassboro - House still standing. I guess we have pointed it out to you. Your great grandmother was Buried from that House. She died Rather young from (I think) Scarlet Fever - I Could be wrong.

Correspondence From Earl Skinner To Me, 26 June 1979

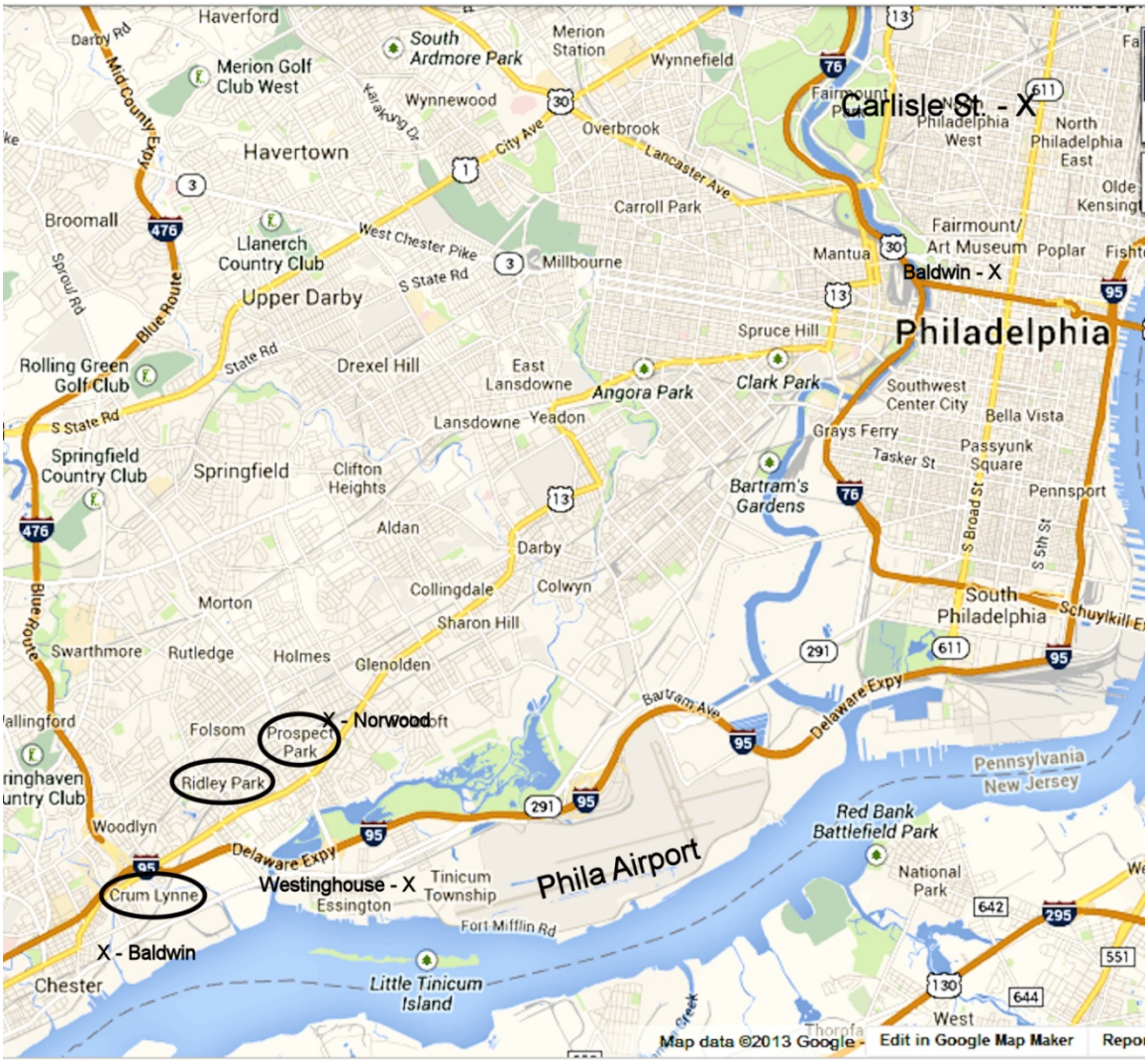
"As I look back, I realize never did grandparents (as I recall) write – nor I to them. Recall spending couple weeks in Glassboro, having a 3-wheel bike. Iron wheels. Broke front narrow rim and grandpop took bike to the plumber who brazed it (no welding then). I used to complain of belly aches and would be taken to drug store counter for ginger soda which I liked. Can recall riding farm wagon with grandfather to piece of ground in Clayton. Was a good ride from Glassboro. Old "Charley" horse took us. He was kept in small barn behind house on Main St. in Glassboro. House still standing. I guess we have pointed it out to you. Your great grandmother was buried from that house. She died rather young from (I think) scarlet fever – I could be wrong."

Norwood, Delaware County

Earl's father had been working at the Baldwin Locomotive Works in Philadelphia. Beginning in 1906, Baldwin had begun moving employees to their new sprawling locomotive plant south of Philadelphia at a town called Eddystone, on the banks of the Delaware River. In 1911, a strike at the Philadelphia plant caused Baldwin to transfer 8,000 employees in that one year alone to break the strike.

Warren was relocated to the Eddystone Baldwin Works some time in the 1911/1912 time frame.

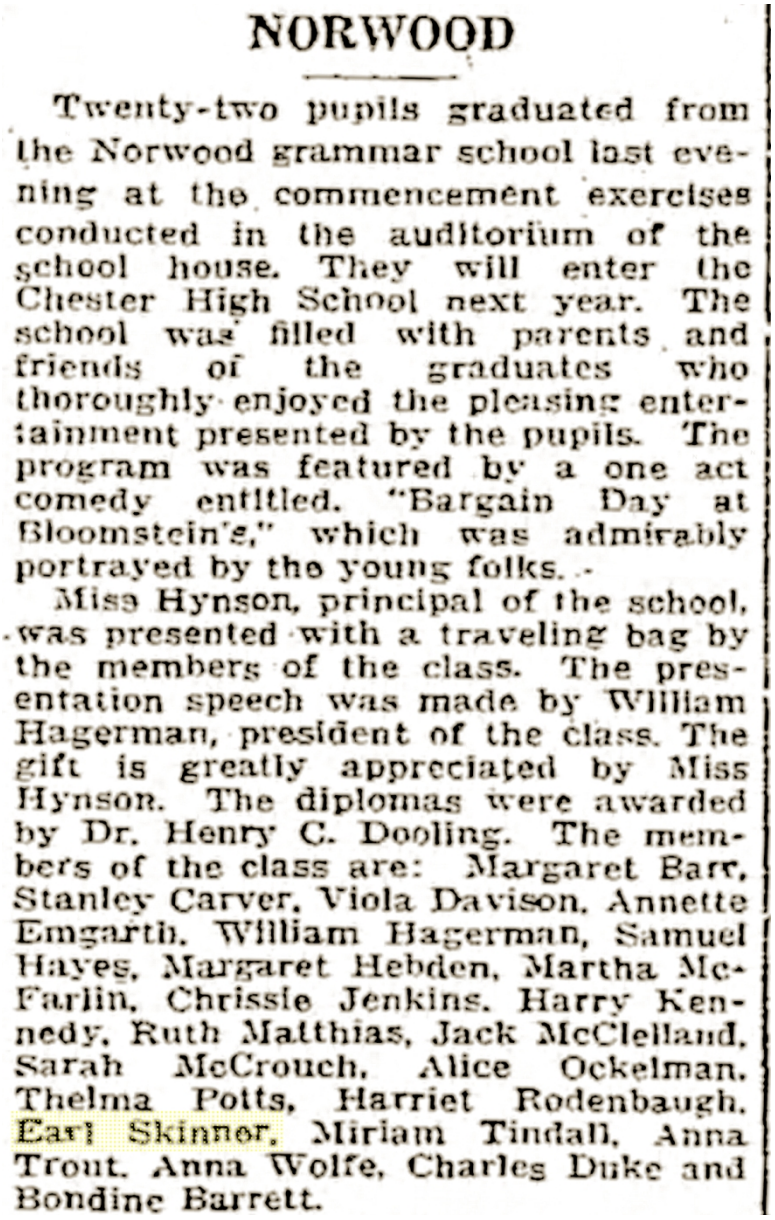
In 1912, the year Earl turned age 11, the Skinners moved from Carlisle St. in Philadelphia to the town of Norwood just up the Chester Pike from the new Baldwin facility. This would have provided Earl's father with easy train access to Baldwin. Earl says they moved in 1912 after he completed the fourth grade of schooling. The year or school grade may be off by a year as he graduated from Grammar School in 1915, but close enough.



Delaware County, PA and vicinity – southwest of Philadelphia

1915, Grammar School Graduation

Earl graduated from the Norwood, PA grammar school in June of 1915. It is not clear what grades constituted 'Grammar School' at the time, but this probably marked the end of the 6th grade.



NORWOOD

Twenty-two pupils graduated from the Norwood grammar school last evening at the commencement exercises conducted in the auditorium of the school house. They will enter the Chester High School next year. The school was filled with parents and friends of the graduates who thoroughly enjoyed the pleasing entertainment presented by the pupils. The program was featured by a one act comedy entitled. "Bargain Day at Bloomstein's," which was admirably portrayed by the young folks.

Miss Hynson, principal of the school, was presented with a traveling bag by the members of the class. The presentation speech was made by William Hagerman, president of the class. The gift is greatly appreciated by Miss Hynson. The diplomas were awarded by Dr. Henry C. Dooling. The members of the class are: Margaret Barr, Stanley Carver, Viola Davison, Annette Emgarth, William Hagerman, Samuel Hayes, Margaret Hebden, Martha McFarlin, Chrissie Jenkins, Harry Kennedy, Ruth Matthias, Jack McClelland, Sarah McCrouch, Alice Ockelman, Thelma Potts, Harriet Rodenbaugh, Earl Skinner, Miriam Tindall, Anna Trout, Anna Wolfe, Charles Duke and Bondine Barrett.

The Chester Times, now Delaware County Times, 7 Jun and repeated 15 Jun 1915 [ancestry.com]

1917, School Drop-Out

Following grammar school, Earl and his classmates entered the 7th grade which was considered to be high school.

Earl told me he quit school after the 8th grade which was common back in the day. Elsewhere, Earl wrote that he quit school after two years of high school, which also translates to the 8th grade being his final year of schooling. Earl would have completed the 8th grade and left school in June of 1917.

Completing the 8th grade in 1917 does not quite fit with Earl previously writing that he had finished the 4th grade in 1912 – there is a one year discrepancy.

Following his schooling, Earl began working a series of jobs as a teenager, working for the John Wanamaker Department Store and the Pennsylvania Railroad.

Clerk, Wannamaker's Department Store, circa 1917/1918

Earl got a job as a young clerk at Wanamaker's Department Store in Philadelphia. This was likely Earl's first 'real' job. I am guessing he was age 16, circa 1917-1918.

Wanamaker's was located in the heart of downtown Philadelphia, just across the street from City Hall, at the corner of South Broad and Market Streets. Young Earl would have traveled to work by taking the Pennsylvania Railroad from his parents' house in Norwood to Philadelphia's Broad Street station, located next to City Hall.

Earl often spoke of this early job, though I don't know how long it lasted. Earl recalled meeting Mr. Wanamaker (1838 - 1922).

For the rest of his life, Earl took great pride in meticulously wrapping gifts, an art he learned as a clerk at Wanamakers.





Wanamakers, completed 1911
Market Street (left) and South Broad (right)
[image per www.byrnmawr.edu]

John Wanamaker

John Wanamaker did not invent the department store, but played a key role in pushing the art forward. Wanamaker had purchased a large tract of land in the heart of Philadelphia which had been the site of a former train depot. In 1877, for the National Centennial, Wanamaker's opened a huge, sprawling outdoor market, organized by departments, on the site. In 1911, he opened the building now standing, which occupies just a small fraction of his original land. The building includes an interior 7-story tall atrium featuring the famous Wanamaker Organ.

The Atrium

The Wanamaker's store was seven floors high. It had a central atrium where you could be shopping on the first floor and see 7 stories up to the ceiling. The keyboard and pipes of the famous Wanamaker's organ could be seen about half way up the atrium on the 3rd or 4th floor.

The Famous Wanamaker Organ

[Per freepages.genealogy.rootsweb.com/ ~apassageint]

The Wanamaker organ was built by the Los Angeles Art Organ Company for the 1904 St. Louis World's Fair.

In 1909, John Wanamaker purchased the organ for his Philadelphia store. The Grand Organ was first heard in the 7-story atrium of his store in 1911, at the moment when England's King George was crowned. Later that year, it was used when President Taft dedicated the store.

The tone of the organ was judged inadequate to fill the huge store atrium. As a result, Wanamaker created an organ factory in the store attic to expand the organ's size.

The number of pipes was eventually increased to 28,500. The largest pipe is made of Oregon Sugar Pine three inches thick and over 32 feet long. The smallest pipe is a quarter-inch in length. The massive organ console has six ivory keyboards and 729 color-coded stop tablets.

The world's finest organists have performed at Wanamakers during the lifetimes of John Wanamaker and his son Rodman.

The Wanamaker Organ is of the American Symphonic design, which can play the great organ masterworks as well as the entire range of orchestral literature. The organ is now a National Historic Landmark.

Earl's niece Connie, daughter of Earl's sister Gladys Hughlett, has been a lifetime organist. I can recall her and her mother playing for us when we would visit their home. Connie played the Wanamaker's organ in the 1970's. Don't know if she did so once or twice or more.

Wanamakers During My Lifetime

Wanamaker's, along with Gimbels, Lit Brothers and Strawbridges, were the destination department stores in Philadelphia when I was growing up. Those were the same stores where my grandparents had shopped before I was born. Wanamaker's was a classy store with marble floors and it's impressive 7-story atrium. It had the old elevators with the brass screens instead of solid doors. An elevator operator pulled a hand-sized knob to actuate the elevator. The escalators had wood flooring.

The toy department was on the 7th floor and that's where sister Susan and I went to see Santa as kids.

Each Christmas, shoppers would stop and look up from the first floor atrium to see the Christmas sound and lite show put on every hour or so. Occasionally during the year, a guest artist would surprise everyone by playing the organ.

End of An Era

The rise of the suburban malls brought an end to the Philadelphia department stores. Wanamaker's, which had ushered in the age of the 20th century department store, survived a long time, disappearing about the year 2000. After that, the store became part of the Macy's chain and in 2025, with Macys fortunes shrinking, the store was vacated.

The Pennsylvania Railroad, 3 to 4 Years, circa 1918-1922

Earl has always told me that one of his favorite jobs was working for The Pennsylvania Railroad. He worked for the railroad for 3-4 years. I am guessing he worked there beginning about 1918 and was recorded working there in the 1920 census.

Don't know if Earl's interest in the Pennsy Railroad was influenced by his uncle Charles Sheppard. Charles spent most of his life working for the Pennsylvania Railroad sorting mail in mail cars.

Working for the Pennsy Railroad was the formative job of Earl's life. While working for the railroad, he was able to learn drafting skills and to move to a drafting career, which then led to jobs with two later employers – O. W. Ketcham and The New York Shipyard. And Earl's travels with the railroad, the result of free passes that came with the job, cemented his travel bug and his interest in traveling the United States.

Earl began with the Pennsylvania Railroad as a 'Messenger' with the Treasurer's Office, carrying railroad correspondence and packages around Philadelphia by foot. This was very similar to his father's job delivering packages for the Adams Ecpress Company 15-20 years earlier.

Per letter from Earl in 1978 – *"Started at the Penna RR in Treasurer's Office as a Messenger. Used to make a trip each day by foot to Front and Walnut Streets at the [Delaware] River with a couple of stops along the way. One stop I recall was around 9th and Chestnut Streets at the Lehigh Valley Railroad office."*

Earl was likely based at the headquarters of the Pennsylvania Railroad in the old Broad Street railroad station. The station was adjacent to Philadelphia City Hall and the Wanamaker's Department Store.

The railroad station is long-gone – it was torn down after a massive fire destroyed the train shed in 1923. The station was rebuilt a few blocks away at 17th street where it stands today.

Night Drafting School, Drexel Institute

The head of the Engineering Department at the Pennsylvania Railroad also served as a teacher at the Drexel Institute (today Drexel University) in the evenings where he taught mechanical drawing (drafting). This instructor encouraged Earl to began three years of night schooling at Drexel to learn drafting. I recall Lillian confirming to me that she believed Earl had gone to drafting school in Philadelphia at some point in time.

The head of Engineering also suggested that Earl move from the Treasurer's Office to the Engineering Dept. of the railroad where he could use his drafting skills. Earl made the move to the Engineering where he drew railroad right-of-ways from field notes, and drew layouts of freight yards with all the trackage, including a yard at St. Louis.

In Earl's Own Words

Per Earl *"Started going to Night School, Drexel Institute [today, Drexel University], for mechanical drawing. Teacher there suggested I get transferred from the Treasurer's Office [of the Pennsylvania Railroad] to his department – which was drawing railroad right-a-ways from field notes. Also freight yard layouts and all the tracks. So I did."*

"After 3 years with the railroad got laid off. Force of 18 was cut to 8. So there went my railroad passes and $190/month job. Wish I had kept data on my age at that time – 21 I think."

Per letter from Earl 4/25/1976 – *"When I worked for the PRR one was allowed a pass each month either on PRR or some other line or Boat line. Had an annual pass Phila. To Wash. Used to swap with a friend for his Phila. To N.Y. Even one time got the friend to give me a pass in his name for Buffalo by way of Pittsburgh. My father and I went to Niagara and back no trouble. In those days Pullman was the thing. R.R. employees got 33% off. Meals were reasonable in the diner [car]. I went everyplace the Penn. had tracks or leased.*

Started to work in the Treasurer's office as a clerk and went to Drexel three years at night for Engr. The teacher was head of an Engr. Dept. for the R.R. Suggested I get transferred which I did. Recall making [drafting] a very large lay out of freight yard in St. Louis and taking same there. You know I quit High [school] after two years. Sure glad you are acquiring a good education.

You should see the falls area [Niagara Falls] during a cold winter. Every blade of grass is coated with frozen mist. Walking thru they break with the sound of glass. The RR job ended like this. The dept. I was in had 18 employees. After one year in that dept. the powers to be decided to save some money and cut down to six. All together I spent 4 yrs. with the outfit. All were lots of fun.

Many times I left the office at 4:30. Had dinner on the fly at Automat [Horn & Hardarts] – you put your coins in, opened a glass door, and pulled out a sandwich or complete meal] across from Wanamaker's (was downstairs) then right in the same block went to the Globe theatre, movies and live show. Caught a 10:10 train to Norwood. In those days it was Broad St. Station at 15th not as now at 17th. So much for my reminiscent. Sign of old age."

1920 Federal Census

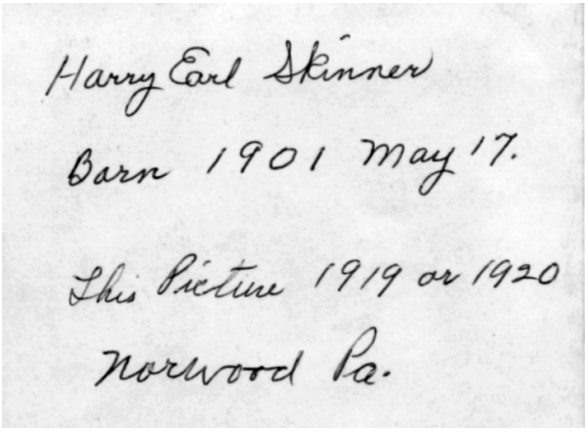
The 1920 census recorded Earl Skinner, age 18, as being a "Clerk, Railroad".

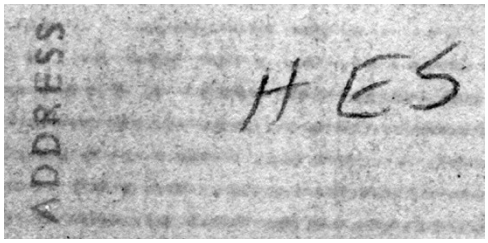


Earl Skinner
40 Winona Avenue, Norwood
Looks like age 18, circa 1919

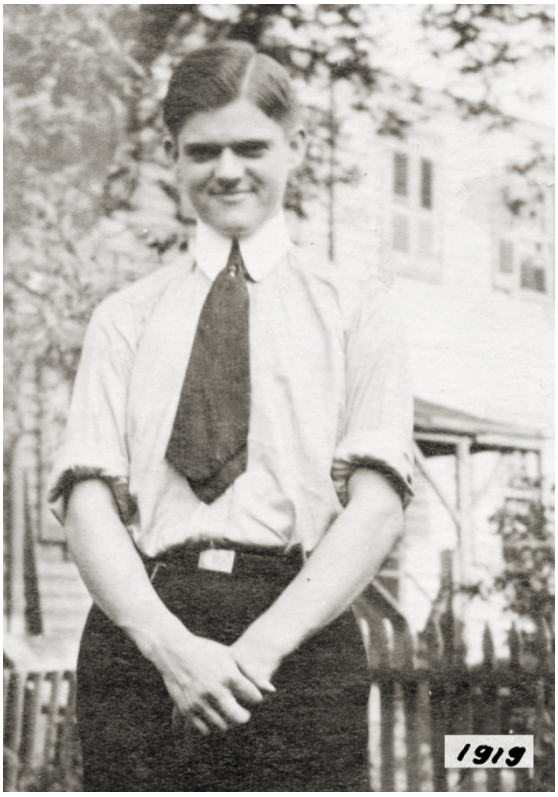


Earl Skinner
40 Winona Avenue, Norwood





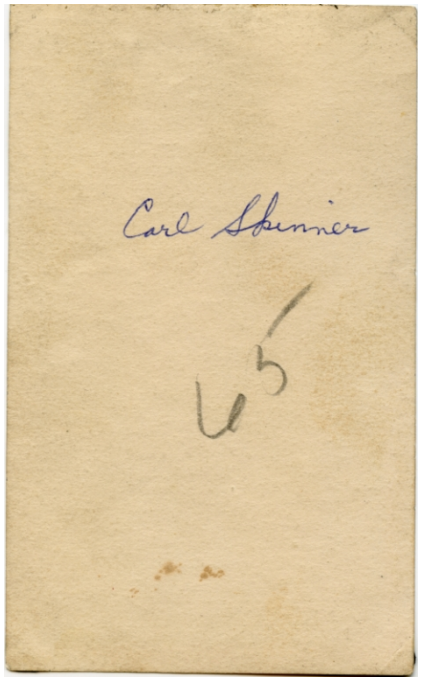
Earl's printing

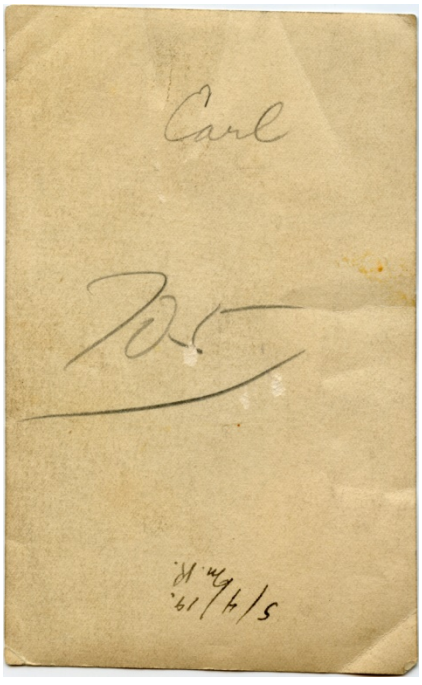


1919
Same belt as previous photo



9 May 1919
Dressed for his railroad job

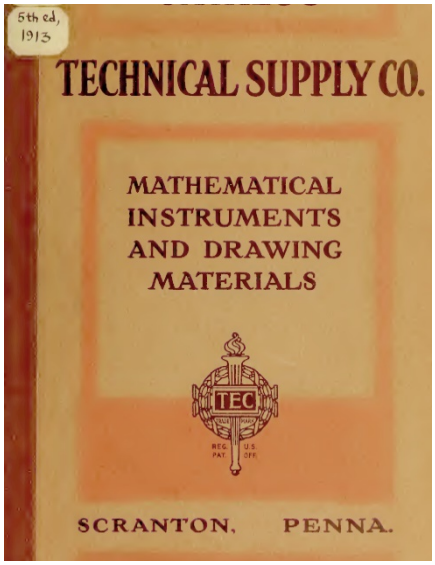


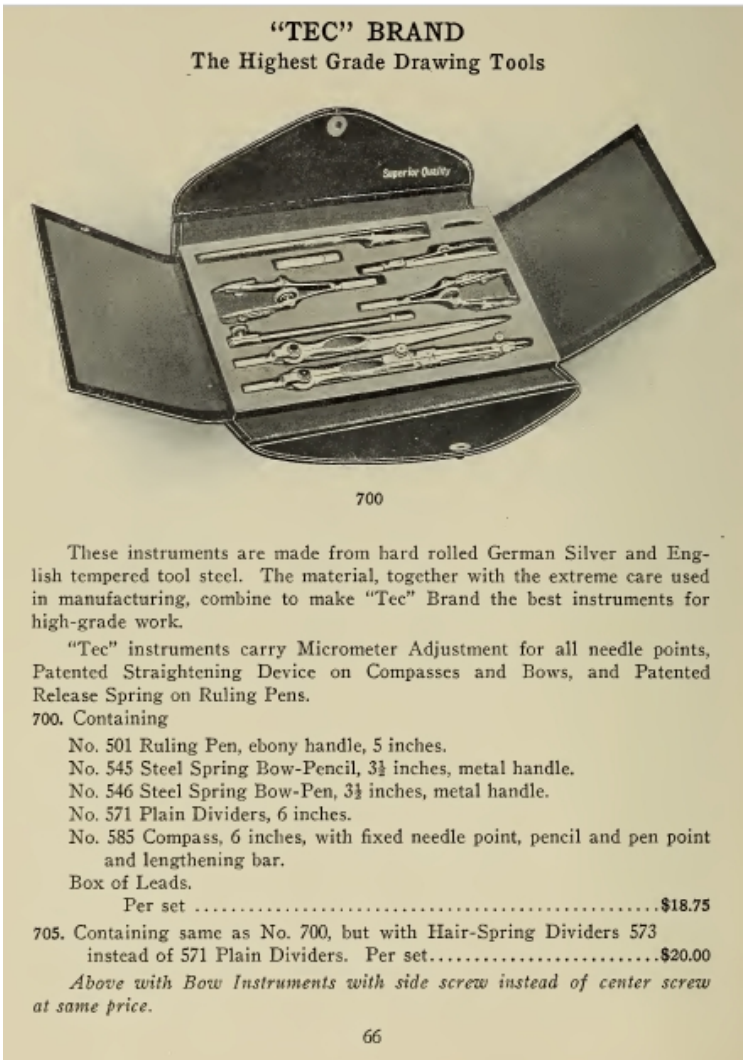


Earl's Drafting Tools



Earl's drafting tools, likely of the 1920 time frame





"TEC" BRAND

The Highest Grade Drawing Tools

700

These instruments are made from hard rolled German Silver and English tempered tool steel. The material, together with the extreme care used in manufacturing, combine to make "Tec" Brand the best instruments for high-grade work.

"Tec" instruments carry Micrometer Adjustment for all needle points, Patented Straightening Device on Compasses and Bows, and Patented Release Spring on Ruling Pens.

700. Containing

No. 501 Ruling Pen, ebony handle, 5 inches.
No. 545 Steel Spring Bow-Pencil, 3½ inches, metal handle.
No. 546 Steel Spring Bow-Pen, 3½ inches, metal handle.
No. 571 Plain Dividers, 6 inches.
No. 585 Compass, 6 inches, with fixed needle point, pencil and pen point and lengthening bar.
Box of Leads.
Per set $18.75

705. Containing same as No. 700, but with Hair-Spring Dividers 573 instead of 571 Plain Dividers. Per set..... $20.00

Above with Bow Instruments with side screw instead of center screw at same price.

66

1913 Drafting Tool Catalogue showing drafting tools similar to Earl's set

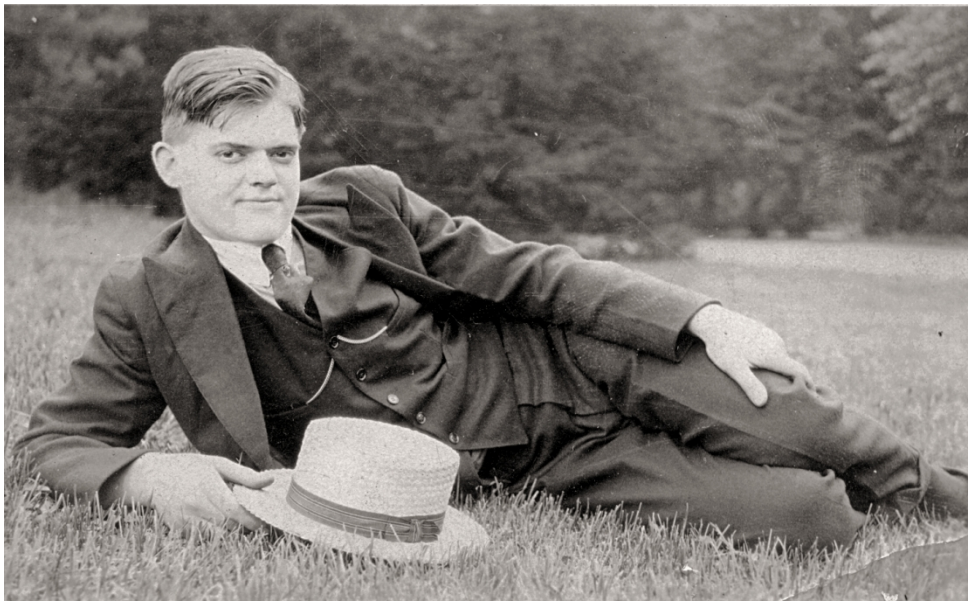
Early Travel Bug

Earl always had the travel bug and took full advantage of the complimentary railroad passes that came with his job with the Pennsy Railroad.

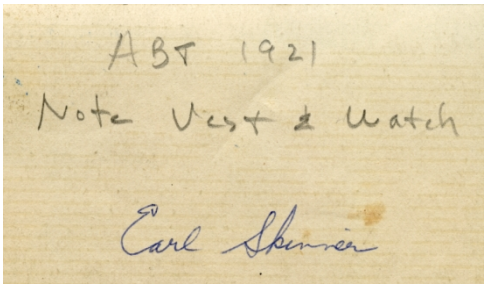
Per correspondence from Earl, circa 1977 – *"Have not seen Niagara Falls for numerous years but was there seven times. – 3 by train when worked for the RR. One of those trips I managed to get my father a free trip. Friend of mine got a pass and my father used it. We made the trip by way of Harrisburg, Pittsburgh and north. Return normal by Harrisburg. No "Trip" up. [a play on words] In those days, brakemen and conductors paid little attention to pass holders – one glance and walk on. In those days, I rode everywhere the Penna RR went + some passes on foreign RR's and a boat line. The latter from Cleveland to Detroit (at night). So your Grandpa had the travel bug many years."*

One of Earl's early trips to Niagara Falls was in his father's 1919 Model T Ford – probably done with his sister and parents. In the 1930's, Earl began having fun with airplane trips.

Per letter from Earl, 1976 – *"My total trips to Niagara by train, car, and plane are seven but none since about 55. First in a 1919 Model "T". Few times when your Grandma went to Lancaster [her sister's] for the week and I over-tempted to take a short flight, usually she never knew. I recall one day went to Phila. Airport and asked at counter if there was a flight to Buffalo that stopped few times? Reply – one leaves in 10 minutes (DC3) with a look to me of what kind of nut do we have here. I was the only passenger until Williamsport. None on at Reading [Pa]. Had lunch together with the hostess. Business picked up some at Elmira, Corning and at Rochester. Came back on DC6 one stop, Rochester, that night."*







Niagara Falls,
circa early 1920's.
[Earl's printing; Lillian's writing]



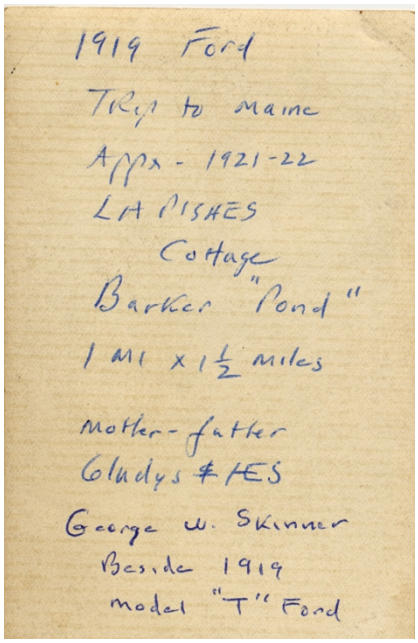
I think Niagara F.
Aug. 1924?

Circa 1921/1922

Earl accompanied his parents and sister on a vacation drive up to Maine. They stayed for some time at 'La Pishes' cottages on Barker's Pond in the popular Sebago Lake region. Can only imagine the bumpy ride on primitive roads in the father's 1919 Model T Ford with the parents, son Earl - about age 20 and daughter Gladys - about age 12, The model T had a luggage area on the outside of the car, behind the driver's door, somewhat visible in the photo.



Father Warren Skinner reading the map



Earl's printing

Off the Rails

Around 1922, Earl lost his drafting job with the Engineering Dept. of the Pennsy Railroad due to downsizing. He was about 21 years of age. The years of traveling around the eastern half of the United States on free railroad passes came to an end. But Earl was now a draftsman and would eventually go on to do drafting with two other companies. First, however, he took a clerk's job with the Philadelphia Electric Company.

Philadelphia Electric Company, circa 1922

Per Earl *"Got a job at the Philadelphia Electric Company, Chester plant as Assistant Yard Master. Kept track of how many tons of coal were in the yard and in the 4-story tall bunkers. Furnaces were gravity-fed. After a year, quit that job.*"

Philadelphia Electric was located in a distinctive building on the banks of the Delaware River at the city of Chester south of Philadelphia. Coal was off-loaded at the plant from ships on the river. The building is still standing today and is just south of the Commodore Barry Bridge. I can still remember looking at the building while riding the ferry that was there before the bridge.



Philadelphia Electric, Chester, PA
[wilimedi.org]

4-story coal towers at each end of the building.

Per Earl's son (my father) – "A guy shoveling coal deep in one of the huge coal bins quit, and Earl was asked to go down into the bin to take his place. Earl declined the invitation and quit." I actually don't think that Earl, as yardmaster, ever picked up a shovel, so a twisted memory by my father.

O. W. Ketcham – 11 ½ years; circa 1922-1934

Earl began working as a draftsman "drawing what's necessary" for the O. W. Ketcham Terra Cotta Works. He worked there 11 ½ years. This job came as a direct result of the mechanical drawing courses he took at night at Drexel and the drafting work he had done with the Pennsylvania Railroad.

O. W. Ketcham was located in Crum Lynne, Pa, a few miles down the Chester Pike, and down the tracks of the Pennsylvania Railroad, from Norwood where Earl was living with his parents. Earl's father worked a short distance away at Westinghouse, located just south of today's Philadelphia airport. He had previously worked at Baldwin Locomotive which was also nearby.

O. W. Ketcham worked in conjunction with building architects, designing the exterior building trim utilized to adorn the brick skyscrapers and other buildings built in the early years of the 20th century. The company was small, but known around the country for its use of fired clay products covered with colorful glazes, manufactured in kilns at its site in Crum Lynne.

In its simplest form, terra cotta consisted of decorative figurines and trim made of porous, fired clay, same as would have been used several thousand years ago in Greece and Rome. With the advent of brick skyscrapers, large sections of thin, light-weight terra cotta trim (architectural terra cotta) were used to give a distinctive look to the entrances, windows and other points of interest of the otherwise plain buildings. Metal supports and pins were used to secure the terra cotta pieces through the brick exteriors to the metal frames of the buildings.

Earl did drafting for Ketcham, and in addition, was responsible for taking photographs of the clay models that the company worked with. He also made field trips to inspect the progress on buildings under construction, requiring him to clamber in and outside of buildings.

Per my father, it was probably on one such visit to the upper stories of a Philadelphia building that Earl photographed a major fire at the Broad Street Reading train terminal. I have not found any of the photos taken by Earl. There is a chance my father may be referring, not to a Reading Terminal fire, but to the well-known fire that destroyed the Pennsylvania Railroad's Broad St. Station in 1923.

In his spare time, Earl used O. W. Ketcham's large-negative cameras and studios to take photographs of himself and his girlfriend Lillian Showalter.



O. W. Ketcham, Crum Lynne, PA; Artist's Sketch

Earl placed an 'X' on Ketcham's front building, just to the right of the front door, denoting where he did his drafting. This front building is still standing today. The rest of the complex is gone.

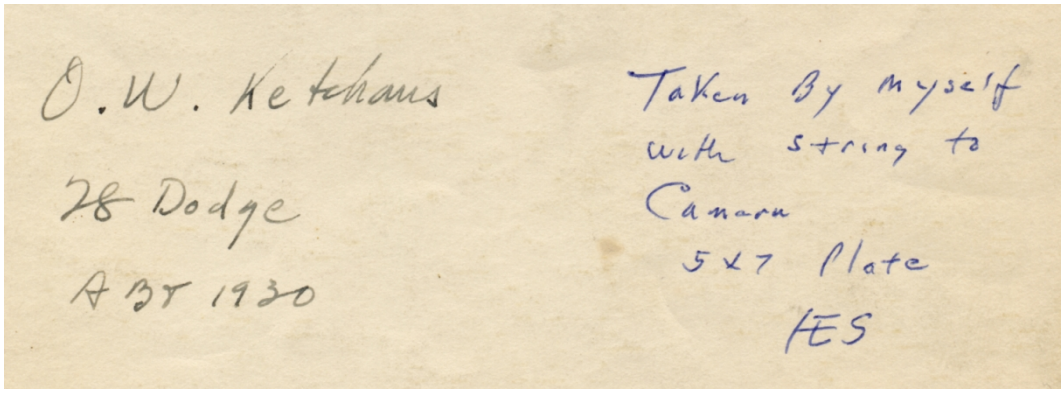
Earl worked at Ketcham's from (roughly) 1922 to 1933 - 11 ½ years. He later wrote in a start date of 1918 and end date of 1931 as seen above – those dates are not accurate.

The above sketch shows the Chester Pike and Pennsylvania Railroad as being parallel to each other (in foreground). The Chester Pike actually runs parallel to the front building and crosses the rail line in the foreground.

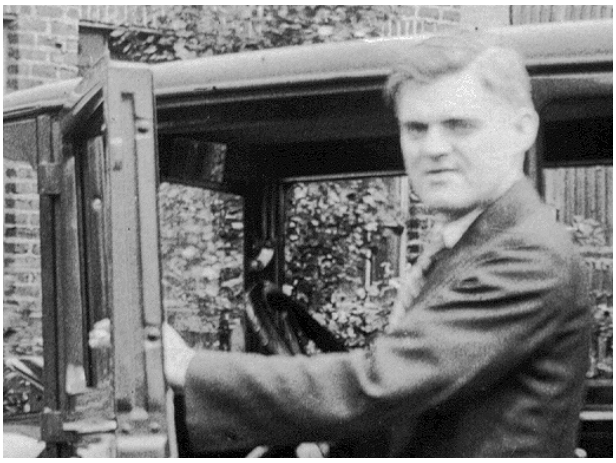


Earl Skinner w/1928 Dodge in front of O. W. Ketcham, 1930

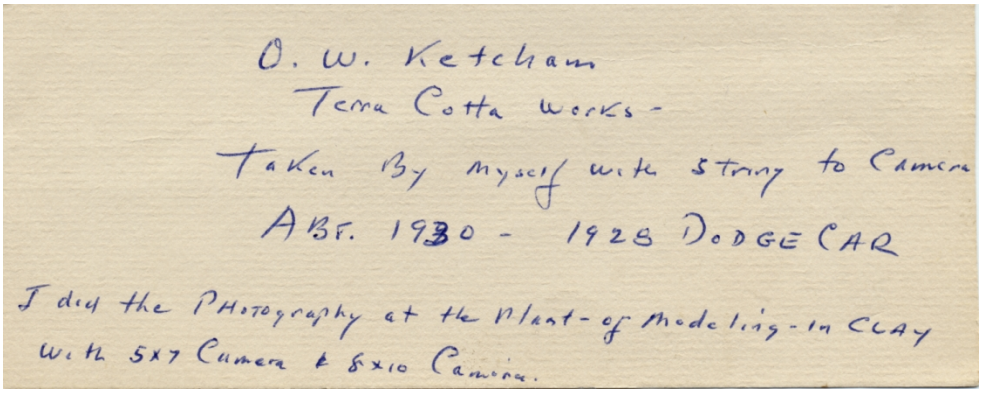
Photo taken by Earl pulling on a string attached to the shutter.
Earl used one of Ketcham's cameras with a large 5x7 negative.
Ketcham's main administration building (rear, right) is where Earl did his drafting.
This building, as well as the side building (rear, left), are standing today.
The kilns and numerous other production facilities of O. W. Ketcham are long gone.



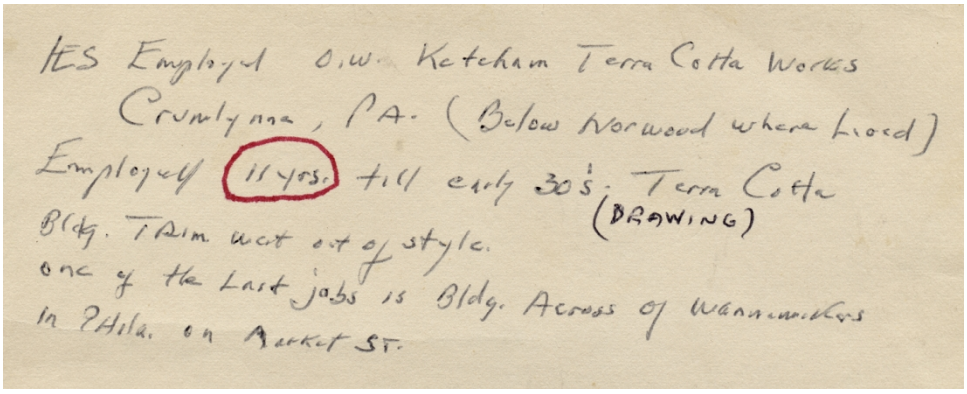
Earl's printing (rear of photograph)



Earl, Close-Up



Earl taped this two-sided note to his photo.



Earl's printing – the building 'across of Wanamakers' is still standing today.



Abandoned main administration building of O.W. Ketcham, yours truly, 3 July 05
Earl did his drafting just to the right of the front door.





Wonderful drafting logo
O. W. Ketcham

This building, formerly part of O. W. Ketcham, sits to the left of the main administration building and partially appears in the photo of Earl and his auto.

	O. W. Ketcham Drafting, undated [philadelphiabuildings.org]
 Fig. 3. Shows a Corner of the Drafting Room, Giving an Idea of the Congenial Working Quarters in All Parts of the Works.	O. W. Ketcham Drafting Room, 1918 – Several Years Before Earl Arrived [Brick and Clay Record, Vol. 53, Google ebook]





O.W.Ketcham Fabrication Shop and Terra Cotta Still
[www.philadelphiabuildings.org]

Home of John and Mable Ringling, Sarasota, Florida

While with O. W. Ketcham, Earl worked two years drawing up the details of the home of John and Mable Ringling (Ringling Brothers Circus) in Sarasota, Florida.

Per letter from Earl, circa 1978 – *" Went to work at O. W. Ketcham terra cotta works, stayed 11 ½ years drawing up many famous places, such as Ringling home at Sarasota – 2 yr. job."*

Mable and John Ringling named their home "CA' D'Zan".

History of CA' D'Zan [www.ringling.org]

The Inspiration

The Ringlings had been traveling throughout Europe for nearly 25 years, acquiring circus acts and art. They greatly admired the architectural style of Venice's Ducal Palace, Ca' d'Oro and the Grunwald Hotel. When they decided to build a home in Sarasota, Florida, where they had been winter residents for a number of years, the Ringlings took these palazzi as their inspiration – and Sarasota Bay as their Grand Canal.

Building Begins

The Ringlings hired the famous New York architect Dwight James Baum, to design the home and Owen Burns to build it. However, Mable, who had kept an oilskin portfolio filled with postcards, sketches and photos she had collected during her travels, oversaw every aspect of the construction, from the mixing of the terra cotta to the glazing of the tiles. Indeed, so great was her involvement that the original architectural plans called it "The Residence of Mrs. John Ringling."

One of America's wealthiest couples, the Ringlings started building Ca' d'Zan in 1924 and completed it shortly before Christmas in 1926 at the then princely sum of $1.5 million. Sadly, their happiness there was not to last, for only three years after its completion, Mable died from Addison's disease and the complications of diabetes.

The House

The 36,000 square-foot house sits on a waterfront site 1,000 feet long and 3,000 feet deep. It is five stories tall and has a full basement. Constructed from terra cotta “T” blocks, concrete and brick, it is covered with stucco and terra cotta and embellished with glazed tile. Decorative tile medallions, balustrades and ornamental cresting in soft red, yellow, green, blue and ivory highlight the pink patina of the stucco and terra cotta exterior.

Originally roofed with 16th century Spanish tiles imported by the builder, the bayfront terrace was made from domestic and imported marble. Ringling kept his yacht, Zalophus, docked there and often entertained celebrities of the Roaring Twenties, including comedian Will Rogers and New York Mayor Jimmy Walker. Today, the terrace hosts weddings, corporate parties and a number of popular gatherings like ‘Yoga on the Terrace’.

Restoration

John Ringling bequeathed the property to the state of Florida. After decades of decline, the property underwent a massive rehab that was completed in 2002.



CA' D'ZAN
[www.ringling.org]

Drexel University Expansion

Another of Earl's assignments with O. W. Ketcham was to measure existing architectural details on the cornice (upper overhang) of the main building of Drexel University, so that matching details could be fabricated for a planned building addition. Drexel is where Earl had previously attended night school for 3 years to learn drafting.

Per letter from Earl, January 15, 1980 – *"Keep up your engineering. My diploma came from Drexel Institute of Engineering – 33rd & Chestnut Streets. Many years later, I went there and from a special scaffold, I measured – drew full size - the large cornice projecting over Chestnut St. so it could be matched. Bldg. addition. Terra Cotta."*



Drexel University,
Terra Cotta Cornice copied by Earl to create matching cornice for Building Addition
[google street view, 2019]

Ruptured Appendix, circa 1924

In March, 1924, at age 22, Earl Skinner was admitted to Taylor Hospital for an emergency appendectomy, his appendix having ruptured. It was a Saturday night. Taylor Hospital was located in Ridley Park, two towns south of Norwood where Earl was living with his parents. The towns were small, so it was a short drive of just a few miles.

Earl's medical emergency turned out to be a life-changing event. During his recovery, he took a special interest in nurse-in-training Lillian Showalter. Lillian and Earl would marry three years later in 1927. As for the operation, Earl had a scar that was barely visible in later life.

Lillian Showalter, born 1903, West Virginia

For detailed information concerning the childhood of Lillian Showalter and the background of her parents, reference to the family file entitled 'Showalter'.

Lillian Showalter was born in Fairmont, West Virginia, in 1903. She was 2 ½ years younger than her future husband Earl.

Growing up in Fairmont, Lillian was surrounded by her mother's side of the family - grandparents, aunts, uncles and cousins. Lillian's father had been raised in Huntingdon County in southwestern Pennsylvania, several hundred miles to the northeast. Fairmont and Huntingdon, though far apart, were in the same coal-rich mountain ranges that run up thru West Virginia into western Pennsylvania.

Move to Pennsylvania, 1911 or 1912

When Lillian was about 7-8 years of age, her father, struggling to find work in West Virginia, relocated the family to Huntingdon, PA where he had been raised. Lillian was about 7-8 years of age at the time. In western Pennsylvania, her father eventually found steady employment with the Harbison-Walker Refractories Company, where he was responsible for doing quarry blasting, and later, supervising quarry operations.

Downingtown, circa 1918

By 1918, when Lillian was age 14, Harbison had transferred Lillian's father to new quarries in eastern Pennsylvania. The family settled at Downingtown, a distant suburb of Philadelphia.

This move, from western to eastern Pennsylvania, brought Lillian into contact with her future husband Earl Skinner. Upon graduating from the Downingtown school system, Lillian decided to train to become a registered nurse. The training took place at Taylor Hospital, the main hospital serving Earl's hometown of Norwood.

[blank]

LILLIAN SHOWALTER - NURSE'S TRAINING

Lillian left home and went into Nurse's Training at Taylor Hospital, Ridley Park, PA September, 1921 just before her 18th birthday - youngest girl in training. Lillian entered training six months after the death of Mr. Taylor, the hospital's founder, but knew Mrs. Taylor, who ran the hospital after Mr. Taylor's death.

"Enjoyed it so much and felt it was the best time of life." [Lillian]



Lillian Showalter
'Taken by Dr. Rodgers after lab, Mar 1st, 1922'



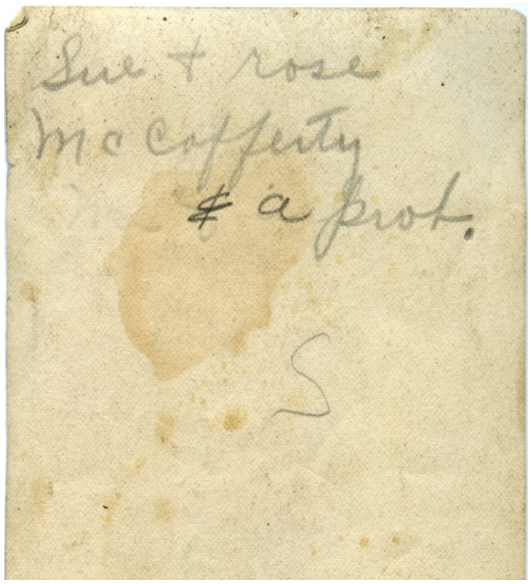
Lillian Shaw-alter
March 1, 1922.
Taylor Hospital
Ridley Park
Pa.



you dont know
who this is?



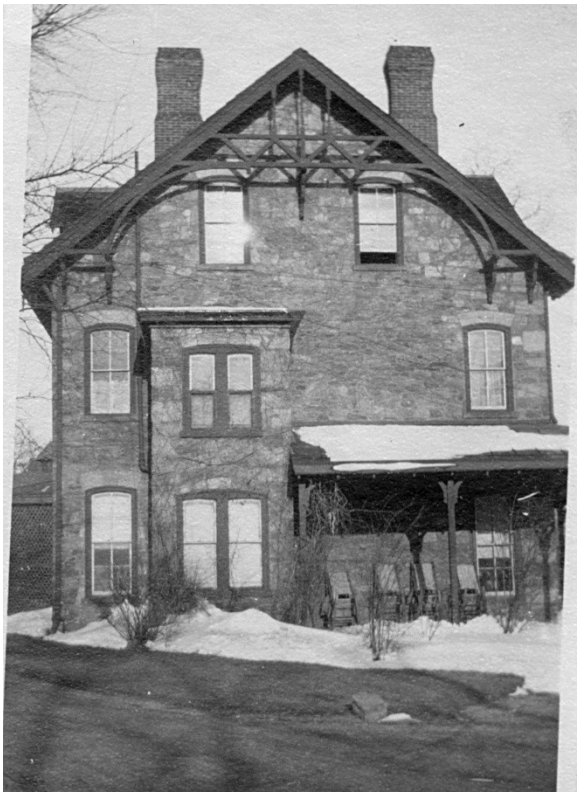
Sue & Rose McCafferty, Lillian and a professor



Taylor Hospital, Ridley Park, PA

Dr. Taylor originally ran his practice out of his home, where he had installed a few beds for overnight care and recovery. In 1909, he purchased an estate at 15 Dutton Street that included a large home, called the 'Mansion House'. The home was outfitted with ten beds and became Taylor Hospital. The home occupied at least three floors and had winding staircases, so may not have been an ideal hospital. In 1912, a new hospital was built on a large plot of land on neighboring Felton Street. This new facility had 29 beds.

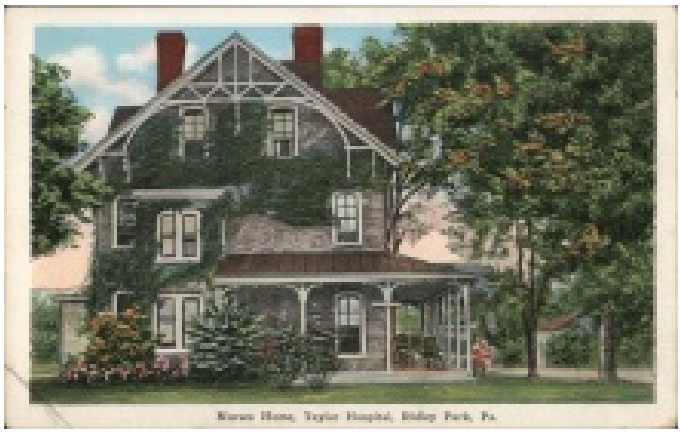
Dr. Taylor died young in 1920 and wife Katharine took over. She had always been his assistant and had served as his early anesthetist (ether). Taylor Hospital underwent a major renovation in 1925, while Lillian Showalter was studying there, a fact that she made note of. Today, the hospital site is home to the Chester-Crozier Burn Center.



Originally called "The Mansion House"; served as Taylor Hospital, 1909-1912
Later, served as the Nurse's Quarters where Lillian lived during her training

Lillian said the home was the best place she ever lived – winding staircase, four porches, but old.



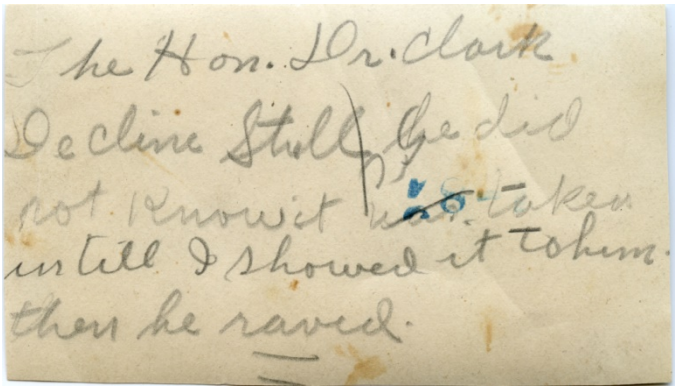


Nurse's Home, Taylor Hospital
[worthpoint.com]



Rose McCafferty and Horace Taylor,
son of the late Dr. Taylor and wife Katharine.

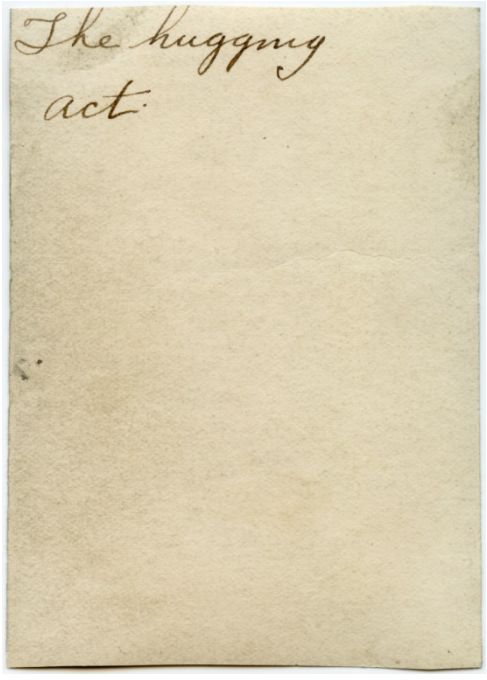


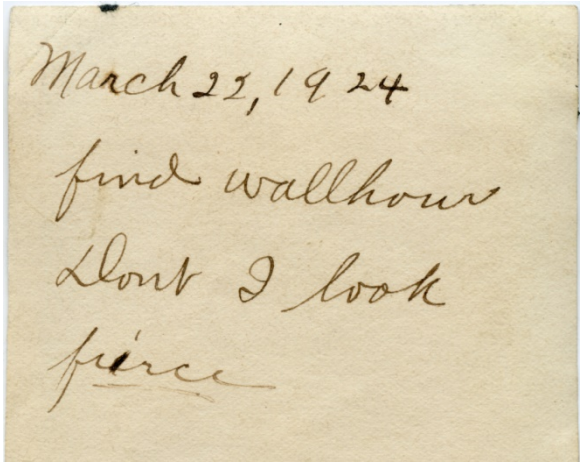


Dr. Clark Decline Stull was a surgeon at Taylor Hospital. His father, George Stull, was a bigwig in the Wanamaker Department Store organization and had been on the Board of Directors of Taylor Hospital for many years.









"final wallhour (exam?),
Don't I look fierce."



Reid - Howalts Singles



1925; my guess – Reid, Mae Singles, Lillian, Rose McCafferty





1924 Nursing School Graduation

Lillian graduated from three years of Nursing School at Taylor Hospital on May 24, 1924. She stayed on into 1925 to take additional courses and to take the State Board exams to become a Registered Pennsylvania Nurse.



The nineteen hundred and twenty-four Class

of the

Nurses Training School of the

Taylor Hospital

Requests the pleasure of your presence

at the Graduation Exercises

Friday Evening, May the twenty-third

nineteen hundred and twenty-four

eight-thirty o'clock, daylight saving time

The Auditorium

Ridley Park, Pennsylvania



Taylor Hospital

RIDLEY PARK, PA.

This Certifies that

Lillian Charlotte Showalter

has completed the term of three years at the

TAYLOR HOSPITAL TRAINING SCHOOL FOR NURSES;

that she has given sufficient evidence of skill and competence as a nurse; that she has passed the required examinations; and that her conduct has been satisfactory.

In Testimony whereof the Officers have hereunto set their Signatures and the Seal of the Corporation this Twenty third day of May 1924

M J Comerford — President of the Board of Managers

Secretary of the Board of Managers

C. L. Parkhurst, M.D. — Chief of Medical Staff

Katherine J. Taylor R.N. — Superintendent

Certificate of Completion of Three Years of Nursing Training, 1924
Taylor Hospital, Ridley Park, PA
Signed by Katherine Taylor

Courtship of Lillian and Earl

In March, 1924, Earl Skinner underwent an emergency appendectomy at Taylor Hospital. He met nurse-in-training Lillian Showalter during his recovery. They dated 3 years until their marriage in 1927.

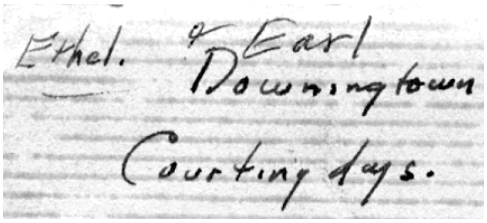


Lillian Showalter & Earl Skinner
Earl resembles me here, but stocky like my Dad



Earl with a cigar and Ethel, Lillian's sister.
Per Lillian - "Never really friends"

Showalter home at Downingtown, PA.
Note the driveway, stakes and planter (Ethel's left hand) common to both photos.



Courting Days - Earl's writing

O. W. Ketcham Photos

Earl photographed girlfriend Lillian at the studios of O. W. Ketcham where he worked as a draftsman and had access to their photography equipment.



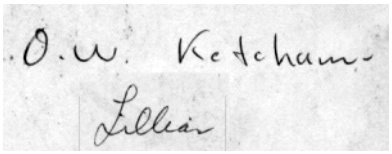
Lillian, circa 1925-1927

Taken By Earl
Studios of O. W. Ketcham



Lillian, circa 1925-1927

Taken By Earl
Studios of O. W. Ketcham

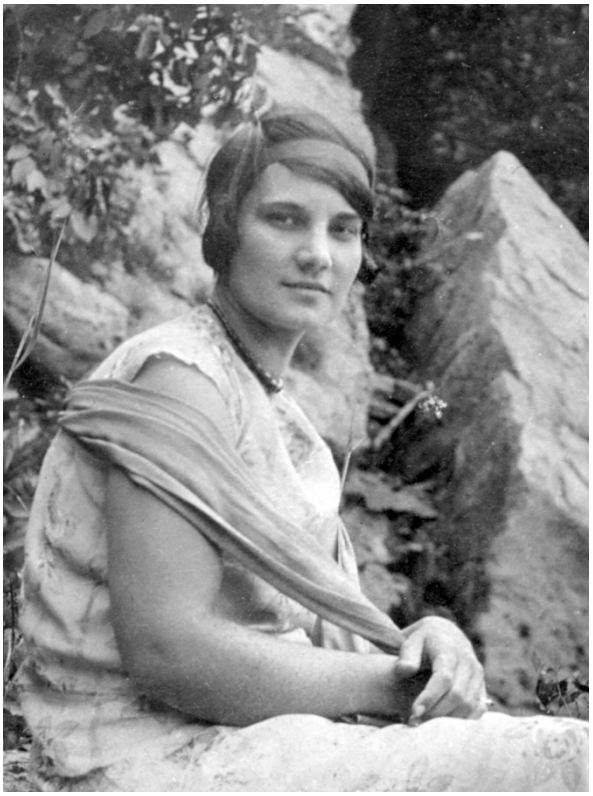


Earl's printing, Annette's writing



At left, Lillian Showalter

Taken By Earl
Studios of O. W. Ketcham?



Lillian Showalter,undated
Resembles my sister Susan.



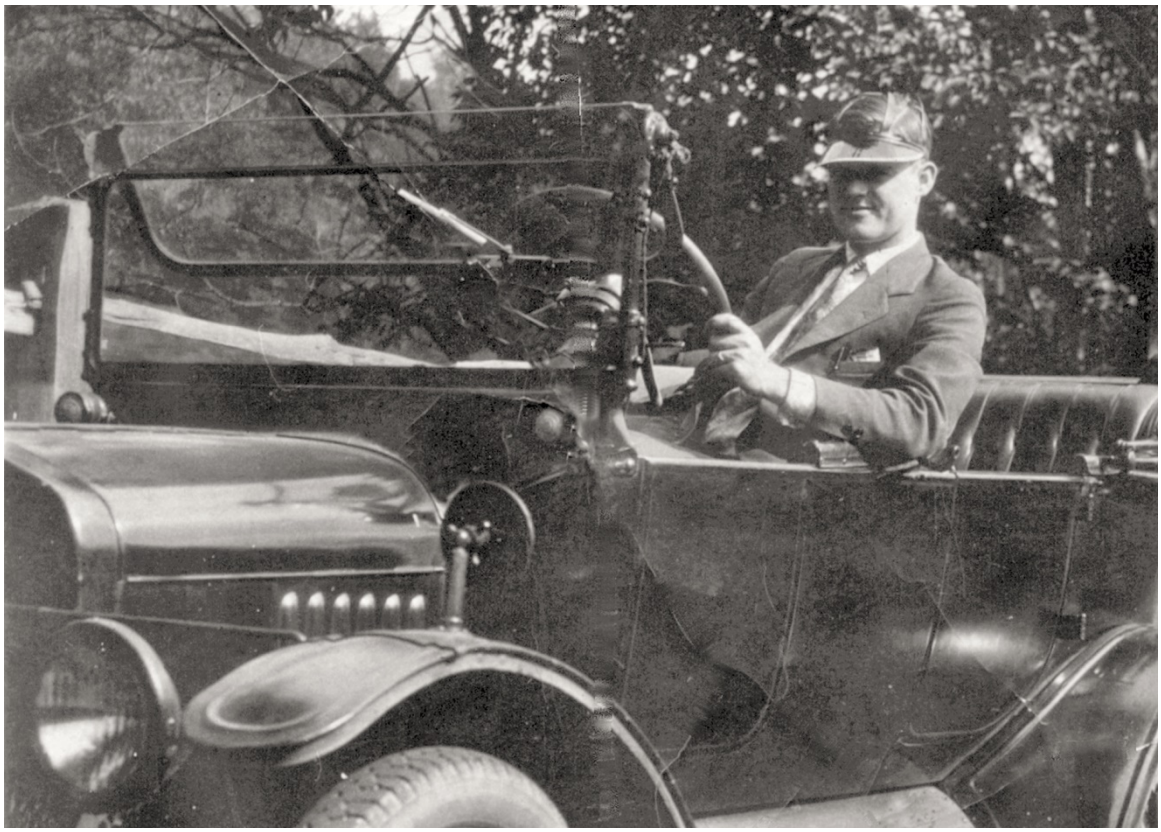
Lillian, Nursing Outfit
Taken By Earl



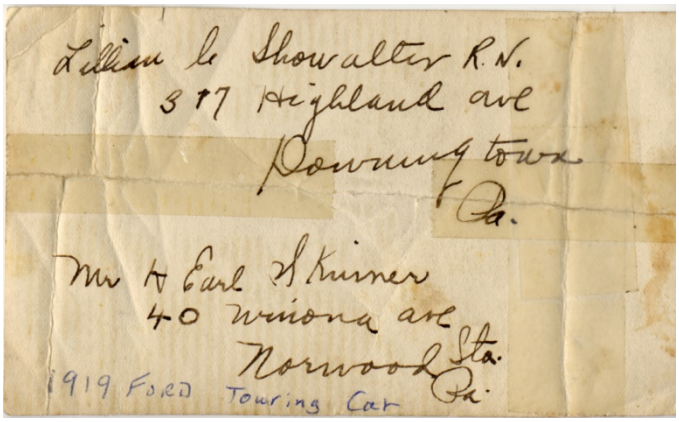
Earl's father, Warren, reading the map next to his 1919 Ford Model T, Maine, circa 1921-22.



Earl driving his father's Model T with the top down, circa 1925. Photo probably taken by Lillian



Earl Skinner, Close-Up of Previous Photo



Lillian's writing; Earl's printing

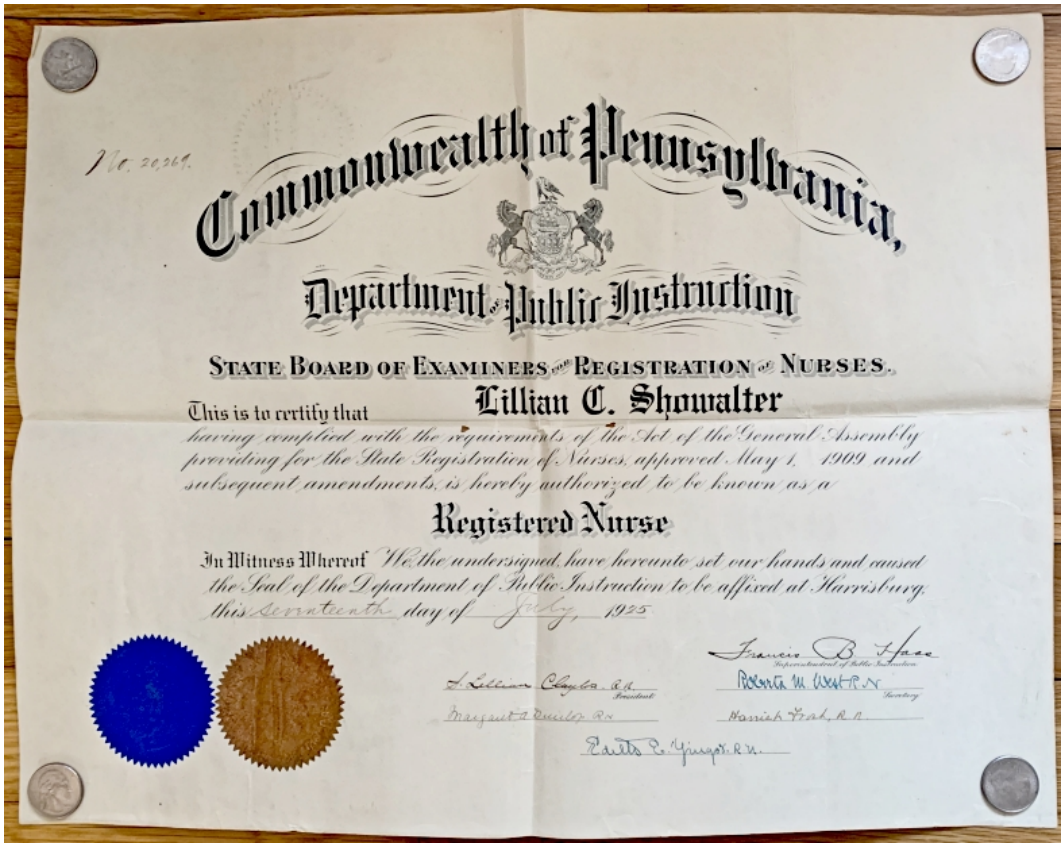
Dating Days – circa 1925. Earl was photographed in his father's 1919 Model T. On the back of the photograph, Lillian listed their respective addresses.

Registered Nurse

Lillian completed the nursing program at Taylor Hospital in May of 1924 at age 24. She says she was still taking courses until January, 1925 and that she stayed a longer time, until March, to take the State Board exams. Lillian passed the State Boards in March, 1925, and became a Pennsylvania Registered Nurse (R.N.).

Registered nurses were typically sent to Philadelphia hospitals – Pennsylvania Hospital (University of Pa. Hospital?) for Medical or Philadelphia Children's Hospital as Taylor Hospital, Ridley Park, was mostly surgical and accident cases. Lillian returned home to Downingtown after graduation and went to work for a hospital on a hill above Coatesville. Her sister Ethel, who also lived in Coatesville prior to a divorce, occasionally visited.

Lillian also worked briefly for doctors in the vicinity of Taylor Hospital, taking care of sick patients in their homes, or working at Taylor Hospital, a few weeks at a time, to fill in her schedule. She recalls disliking hospital work - sore feet from standing and walking all shift long.



Commonwealth of Pennsylvania,

Department of Public Instruction

STATE BOARD OF EXAMINERS AND REGISTRATION OF NURSES.

This is to certify that Lillian C. Showalter

having complied with the requirements of the Act of the General Assembly providing for the State Registration of Nurses, approved May 1, 1909 and subsequent amendments, is hereby authorized to be known as a

Registered Nurse

In Witness Whereof We the undersigned have hereunto set our hands and caused the Seal of the Department of Public Instruction to be affixed at Harrisburg this Seventeenth day of July, 1925

Pennsylvania Registered Nurse, 1925

N-10

Date July 21, 1925.

Miss Lillian C. Showalter:

You were granted registration by the Pennsylvania State Board of Examiners for Registration of Nurses on July 17, 19 25. The grades you obtained were as follows: Anat. & Phys. 81

OBSTETRICS: 80
SURGICAL NURSING AND SPECIALTIES: 78
DIETETICS: 87
MEDICAL NURSING AND SPECIALTIES: 70
GENERAL AVERAGE: 79.2

Your number on the register is 20,269

The certificate attesting to this will be forwarded in due course.

(Signed) Roberta M. West R.N.
Secretary-Treasurer.

(Please preserve this card.)



Lillian's Pennsylvania Registered Nurses Pin
PA Registered Nurse #740

Time Together

Earl's estate includes a beautiful pocket watch given to him by Lillian. The watch was made by the Springfield Watch Company. The model name was the Marquis Aristocrat. The serial number of the movement indicates it was manufactured in 1925.

The watch case has two rear covers. Earl's initials 'HES' are on the outer cover. When the outer cover is opened, the inner cover is revealed with an etched inscription 'To Earl From Lillian'.

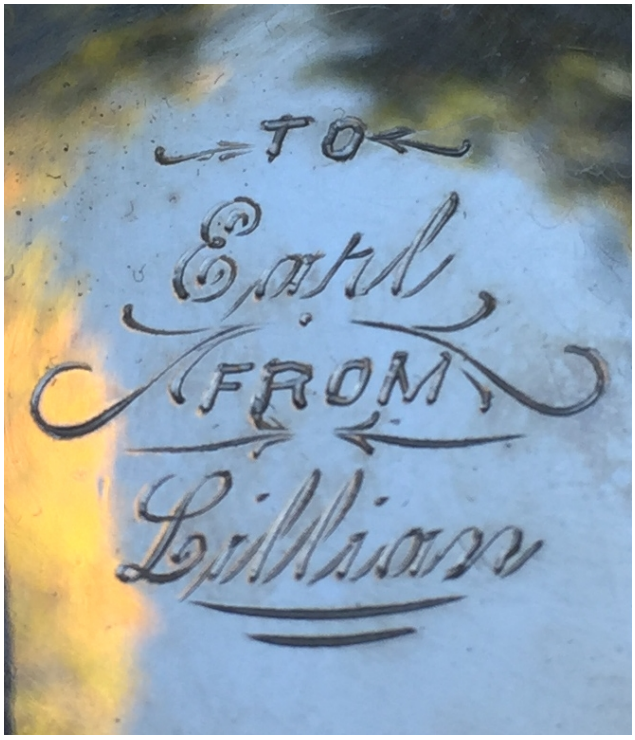
Opening the inner cover reveals the watch movement. The back side of the inner cover indicates that the case of the watch was made by the Keystone Watch Case Company with its own serial number. Off to the edge is some etched signature or quality notes of the maker.

The watch should only be opened with a fingernail or plastic tool, preferably by a watch expert. The edges of the rear covers are slightly wider where the finger or tool should be placed.



Illinois Watch Company Pocket Watch


HES


TO
Earl
FROM
Lillian


KEYSTONE
WATCH CASE
14K
GOLD FILLED
7869890


THE
MARQUIS
AUTOCRAT
ILLINOIS
WATCH CO.
SPRINGFIELD
ADJUSTED
3
POSITIONS
17 JEWELS
MOTOR BARREL
4658132

36 Garfield Avenue, Norwood – Earl's First Home

Earl's parents had been renting a house at 40 Winona Avenue in Norwood since 1912. Earl was living there with his parents while working at O.W. Ketcham and dating Lillian.

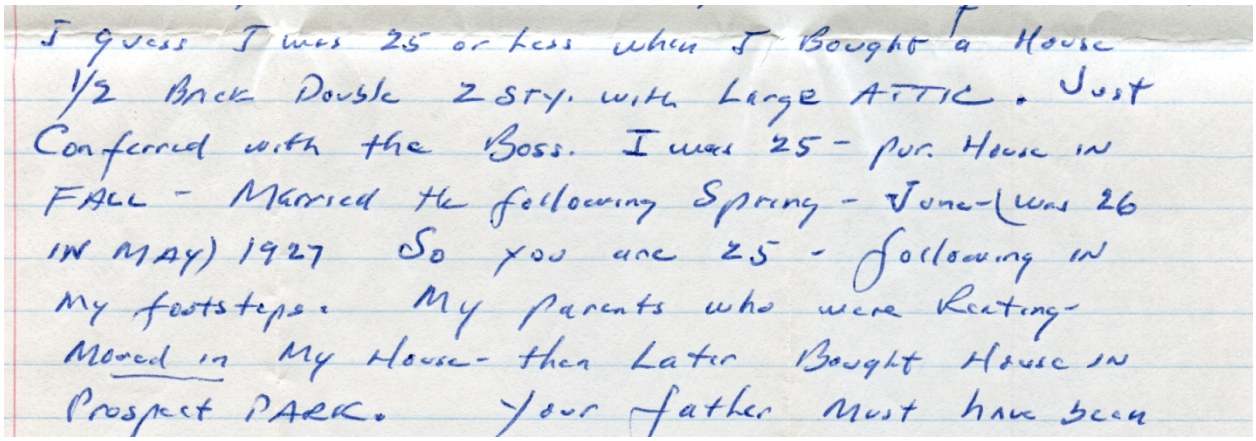
On December 8, 1926, at age 25, Earl made the purchase of his first home. The home was located at 36 Garfield Avenue, Norwood, a few blocks away from his parent's rental home where he had been living.

Earl's Garfield home was one-half of a twin. Earl put one dollar down with a mortgage covering the rest – total purchase cost unknown. Per Earl, the home purchase was made with the consent of the Boss. They would be married 6 months later.

Earl's parents moved into the small house with him, as well as his younger sister Gladys.

<u>The Chester Times</u>, Wednesday, 5 Jan 1927.

News and Notes From Norwood – *"Warren Skinner and family, of Winona avenue, have moved to Garfield avenue."*



I guess I was 25 or less when I Bought a House
1/2 Brick Double 2 Sty. with Large ATTIC. Just
Conferred with the Boss. I was 25 - pur. House in
FALL - Married the following Spring - June - (was 26
IN MAY) 1927 So you are 25 - following in
My footsteps. My parents who were Renting -
Moved in My House - then Later Bought House in
Prospect PARK. Your father must have been

1979 Letter From Earl

"I guess I was 25 or less when I bought a house - ½ brick double, 2 story with large attic. Just conferred with the Boss [Lillian!]. *I was 25 – pur. House in Fall – married the following Spring – June [was 26 in May] 1927."*



Left Half 36 Garfield, Right Half 38 Garfield
Earl Purchased the Left Half

Marriage of Lillian and Earl

Lillian Showalter and Earl Skinner were married June 10, 1927 at the Norwood Methodist Church, the church of Earl's parents. Earl was 26 years of age; Lillian was 23. They had dated for three years. I never asked them about their marriage nor do I know any details. I am not aware of any photographs.

Lillian's beloved grandmother – Alice Dodd, attended the wedding, with husband William Dodd. The Dodds, originally from Fairmont, WV, were living under the care of their daughter Ines in Ohio, Ines being a sister of Lillian's mother. Alice Dodd died two years after the wedding. William Dodd lived a long time, dying 11 years later in 1938.

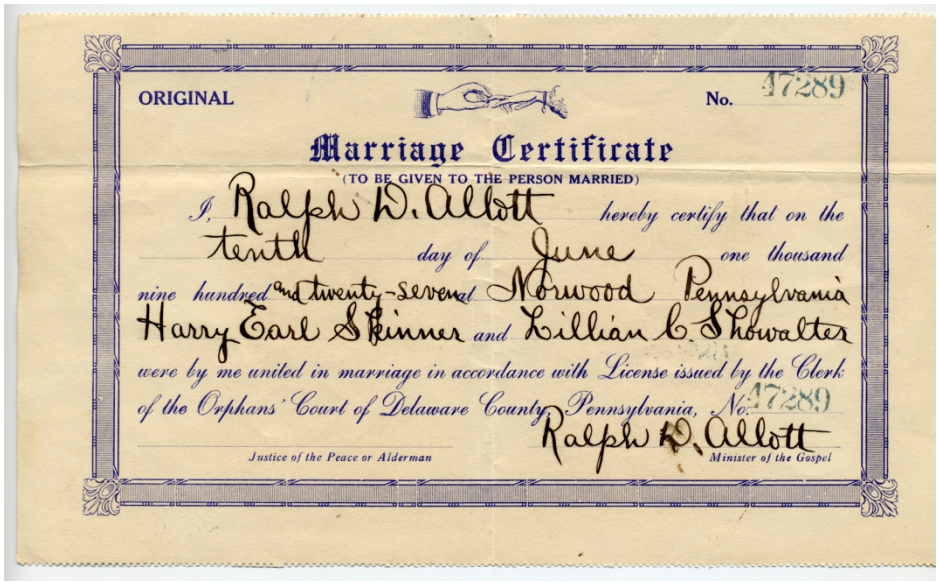


MARRIAGE LICENSES ON INCREASE AT MEDIA

The marriage mart for the month of June keeps right up with the usual record for that month in previous years and yesterday's list added twenty-three more couples to those who have secured marriage licenses at the office of Register of Wills Franklin P. Haller, Jr., at Media during the Month or Roses. The applicants were:

Harry E. Skinner, of Norwood, and Lillian C. Showalter, of Downingtown.

Chester County Times



ORIGINAL No. 17289

Marriage Certificate

(TO BE GIVEN TO THE PERSON MARRIED)

I, Ralph D. Allott hereby certify that on the tenth day of June one thousand nine hundred and twenty-seven at Norwood Pennsylvania Harry Earl Skinner and Lillian L. Showalter were by me united in marriage in accordance with License issued by the Clerk of the Orphans' Court of Delaware County, Pennsylvania, No. 17289

Justice of the Peace or Alderman

Ralph D. Allott
Minister of the Gospel

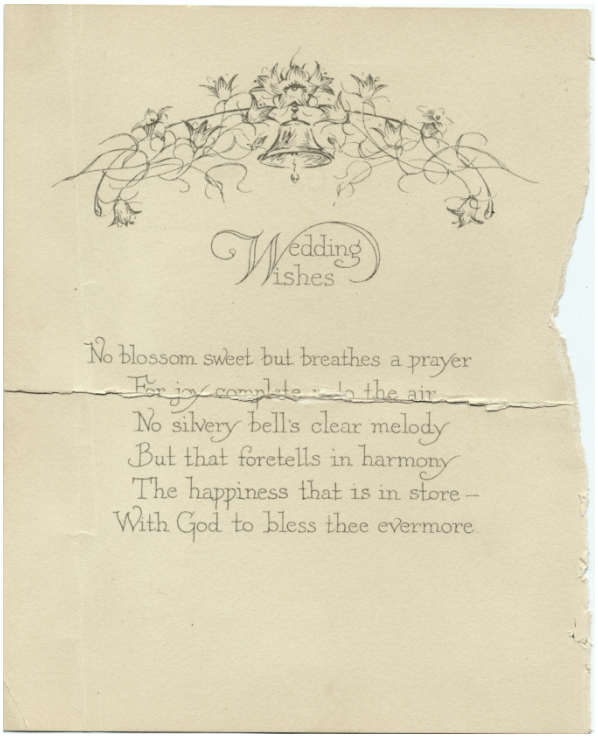


This Certifies that
Harry Earl Skinner
of Norwood Pennsylvania
Lillian L. Showalter
of Downingtown Pennsylvania
were by me united in

HOLY MATRIMONY

at Norwood Pennsylvania
According to the Ordinance of God
and the laws of Pennsylvania
on the 10th day of June
in the Year of Our Lord 1927

Ralph D. Allott
(Minister)



Wedding Wishes

No blossom sweet but breathes a prayer
For joy complete in the air
No silvery bell's clear melody
But that foretells in harmony
The happiness that is in store –
With God to bless thee evermore

Always Trains

A decorative brass plate, embossed with the names of Lillian and Earl, commemorated the marriage. My father used the plate as raw material for the construction of one of his early scratch-built HO model railroad cars, though I have no idea how the plate was incorporated into the model. The model is still in existence, and he displayed it at his 2009 KADE Railroad Open House.

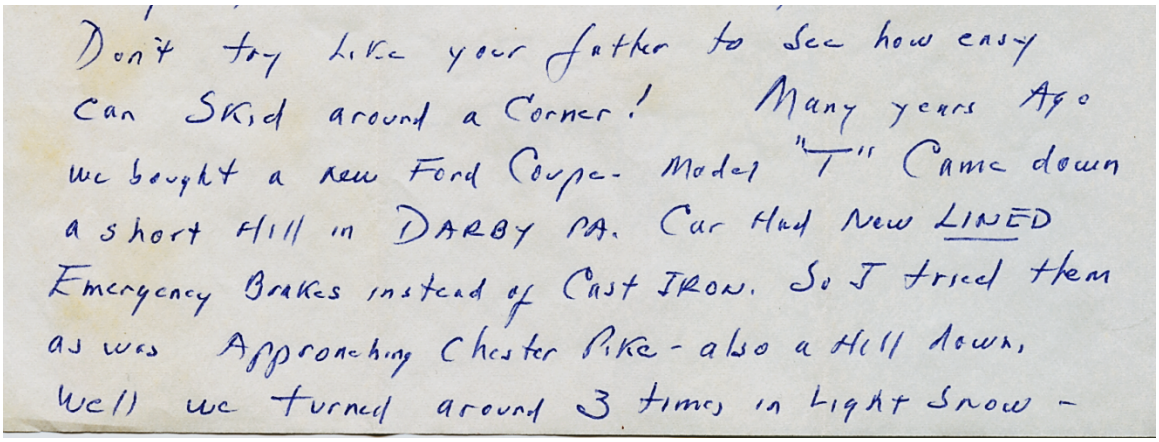


New Wheels

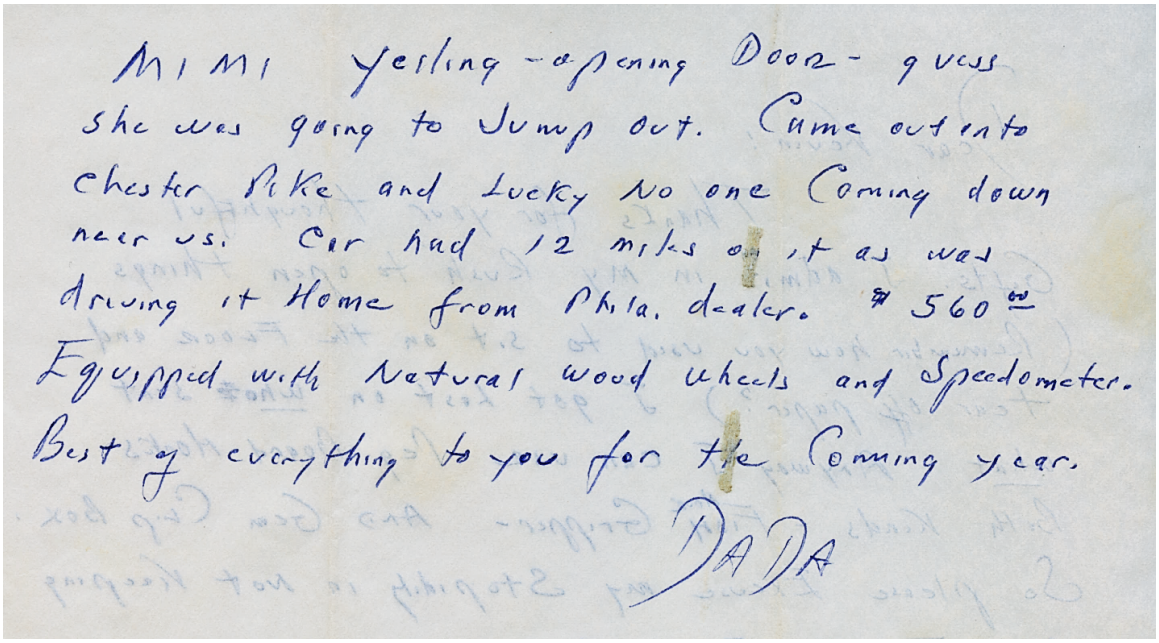
Prior to his marriage, Earl had not only purchased his first house, but also his first auto. The car was a new 1927 Ford Model T coupe. Earl and Lillian drove this car to Vermont for their honeymoon. Up to this point in time, Earl had been driving his Dad's 1919 Model T.

Slippery Slope

The ride home in the new car from the car dealership proved to be memorable.



Don't try Like your father to see how easy
Can Skid around a Corner! Many years Ago
we bought a new Ford Coupe- Model "T" Came down
a short Hill in DARBY PA. Car Had New LINED
Emergency Brakes instead of Cast IRON. So I tried them
as was Approaching Chester Pike - also a Hill down,
Well we turned around 3 times in Light Snow -



MIMI yelling - opening Door - guess
she was going to Jump out. Came out into
Chester Pike and Lucky No one Coming down
near us. Car had 12 miles on it as was
driving it Home from Phila. dealer. # 560 ~
Equipped with Natural wood wheels and Speedometer.
Best of everything to you for the Coming year.
DADA

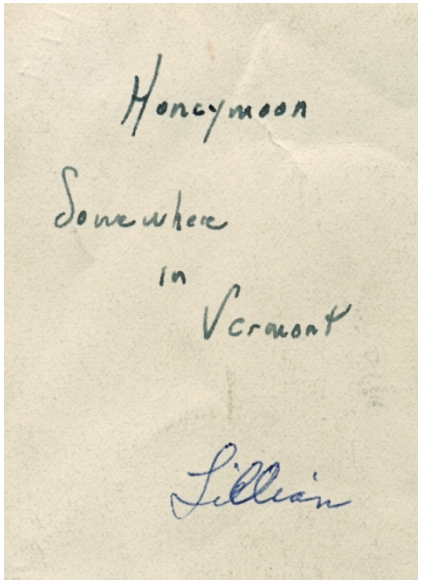
Snow Performance of the 1927 Model T
Letter from Earl to Me, 1970's

Marriage Road Test

Following their wedding, Earl and Lillian drove to Vermont for their honeymoon in the 1927 Model T – not sure where they toured.



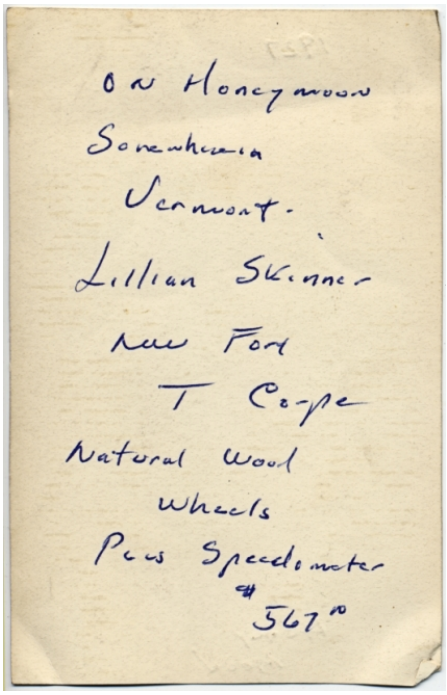
Honeymoon. Lake Champlain maybe?
Appears to be a person standing on a fishing pier.



Earl's printing; Annette's writing



‘Honey Moon’



But who is the woman?

King, Queen, Full House

After their wedding, Lillian moved in with Earl in his house at Garfield Avenue. Earl's parents and younger sister were also living there.. Lillian told me that she recalled living with Earl's parents 'for a time' after the wedding. It would actually be four years – 1927 to 1931 until Earl's parents and sister moved out.

Even before her marriage, Lillian Skinner had spent much time with her in-laws, Warren and May Skinner. Lillian had been working in the Ridley Park area as a nurse, just a few miles down the Chester Pike from Norwood. She was located much closer to Warren and May than to her own family in Downingtown, Pa.

Lillian got to know May Skinner, in particular, very well. Lillian would often take mother-in-law May on errands, as May did not drive. Though Warren did not talk much, May did. It was from May that Lillian became knowledgeable about the family stories. And Lillian recalls sitting with May in the attic going over the old photos in May's trunk.

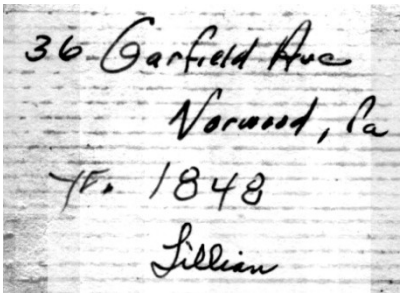
Recollection of Lillian in 1986 – *"I did not fix food like Earl's mother – she creamed everything. I was used to southern fry. And that is what he [Earl] got."*





Lillian Skinner, circa late 1920's
36 Garfield Avenue, Norwood, PA

Earl built the garage barely visible at left



Earl's printing, Annette's writing

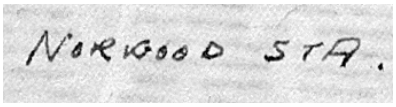


Earl at his place of work, O. W. Ketcham, 1930



Earl Skinner, circa 1930

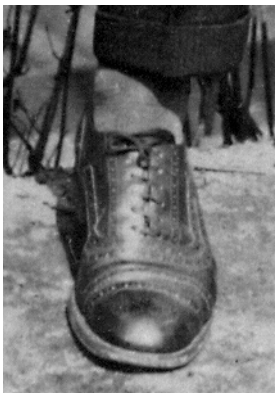
Dressed for Ketcham's;
Similar appearance to 1930 photo of Earl and his auto in front of Ketcham's,



Earl's printing;
Norwood Station, Pennsylvania Railroad



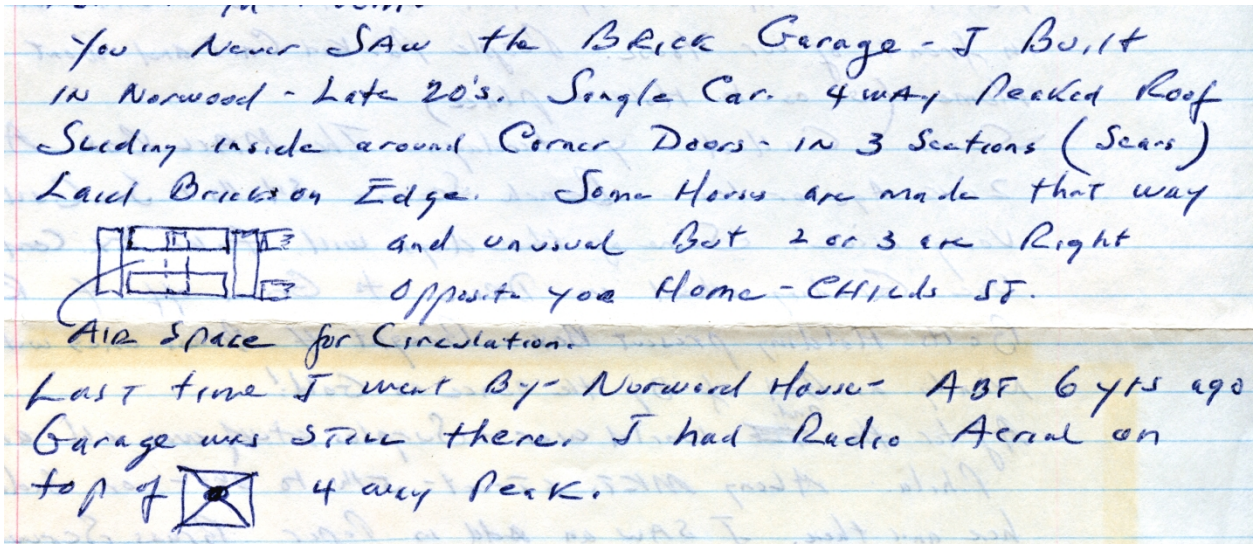
Wedding Band



Nice!

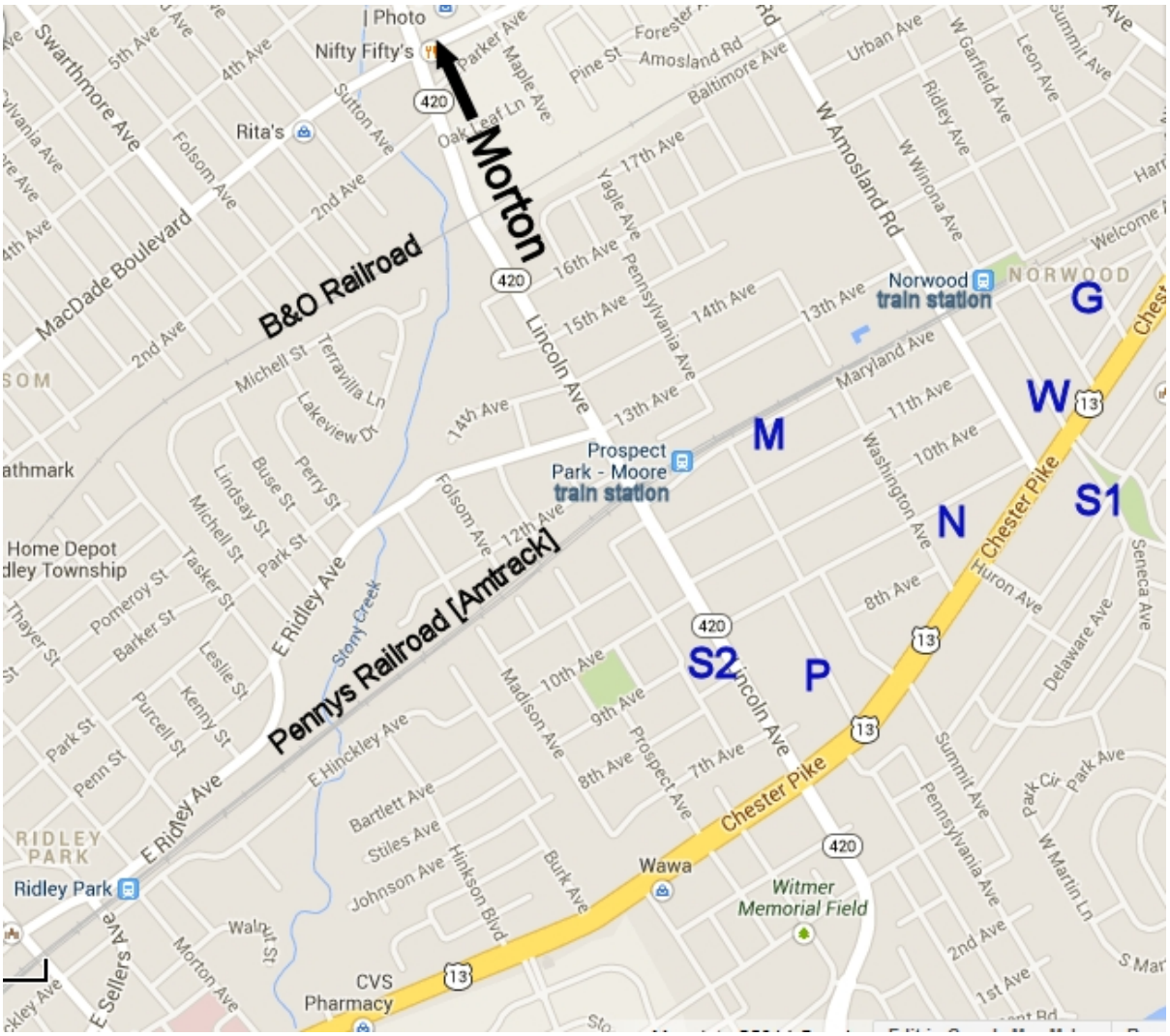
Garage By Hand

Earl, always a handyman, built a garage behind his house.


You Never SAw the Brick Garage - I Built
IN Norwood - Late 20's. Single Car. 4 way Peaked Roof
Sliding inside around Corner Doors - IN 3 Sections (Sears)
Laid Bricks on Edge. Some Homes are made that way
and unusual But 2 or 3 ea Right
Opposite your Home - CHILDS ST.
Air Space for Circulation.
Last time I went By - Norwood House - ABT 6 yrs ago
Garage was STILL there. I had Radio Aerial on
top of 4 way Peak.

1979 Letter from Earl to Me

I looked for the garage in 2019. It was torn down and replaced with an enclosed deck.



Norwood, Prospect Park and Ridley Park

Philadelphia is to the north up Rt. 13;
Chester, PA and Wilmington, DE are to the south down Rt. 13

Earl & Lillian lived:
Garfield Ave, Norwood [**G**], 1926 – 1936.
Mitchell Ave, Morton [**Morton**], 1936 – 1938.
Maryland Ave, Norwood [**M**], 1938 – 1939.
Gladys (sister to Earl) and her husband Bill Hughlett lived:
Pennsy Ave, Prospect Park [**P**], 1949 – 1965.
Warren & May (parents of Earl and Gladys) lived:
Winona Ave, Norwood, [**W**] 1912 to 1926.
Garfield Ave, Norwood [**G**], 1926 – 1930 or 1931.
554 Ninth Ave, Prospect Park [**N**], circa 1930 to 1963.
David went to school [**S1**] kindergarten and first grade while living on Garfield, later at the town of **Morton** and later at [**S2**] while living on Maryland Ave.

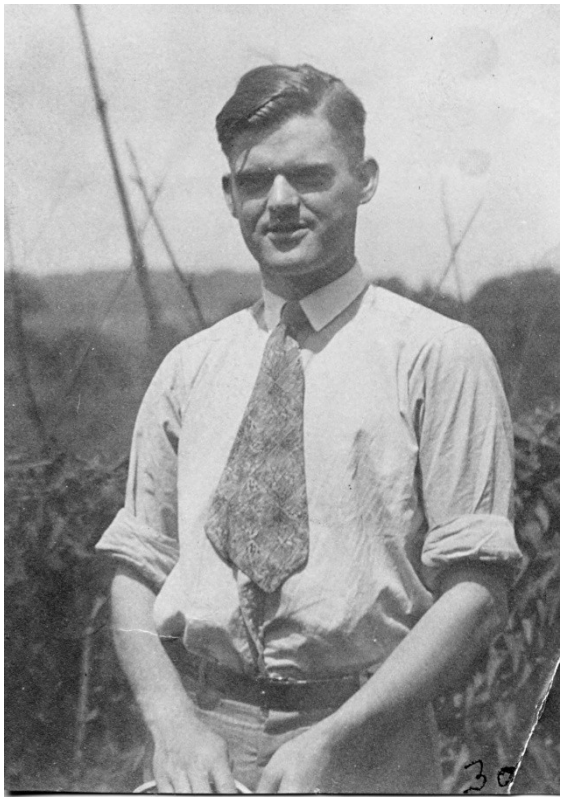
Birth of David Skinner

David Skinner was born November 8, 1929, two and a half years after the marriage of Earl and Lillian. David was born at Taylor Hospital, Ridley Park, the same hospital where his parents had met following his father's appendectomy. Years later, David would also have his appendix removed at Taylor.

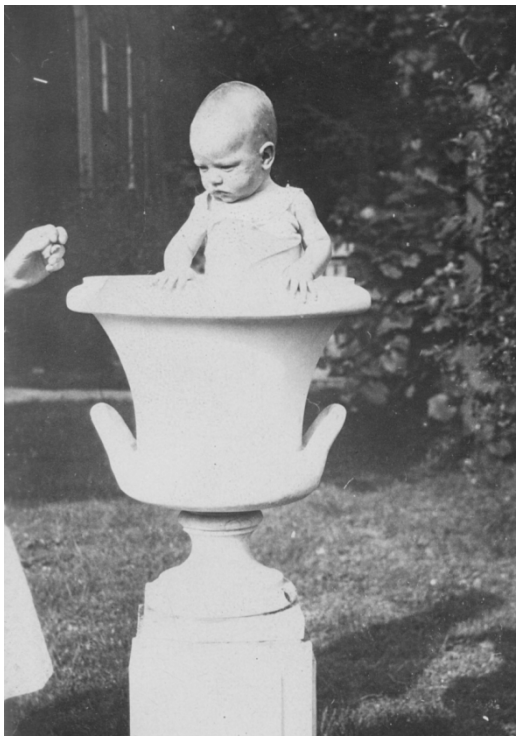
David appears in the census of April, 1930 with his parents. David was named after a blond grandson of a paternal aunt of Lillian - Julia (Showalter) Banks.

Lillian had wanted additional children – Earl did not due to the Depression years. Earl got his wish.

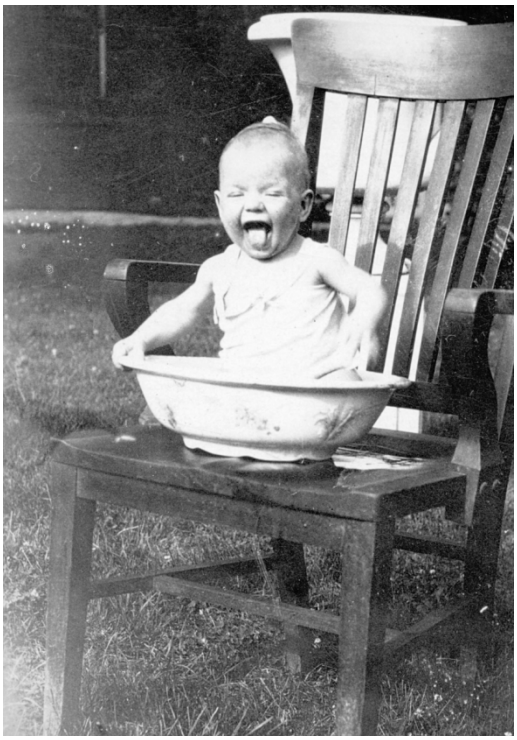
Young David attended kindergarden and maybe the first grade on East Winona Avenue in the center of Norwood. The building is still there today.



Earl Skinner, 1930



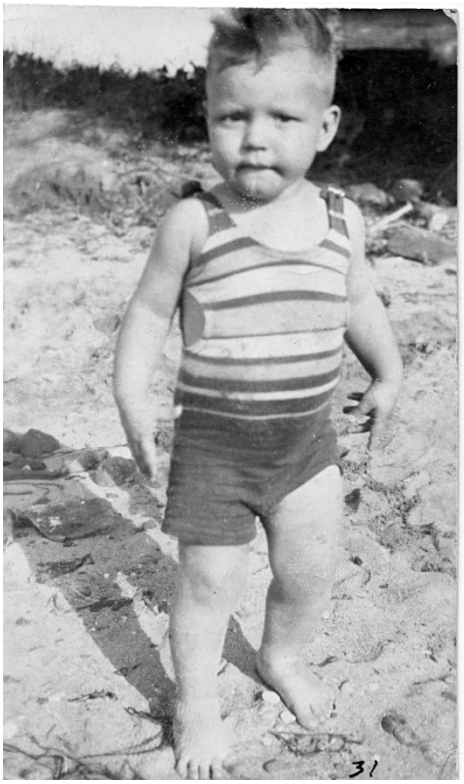
David, 1930, 7 months, Garfield Ave.





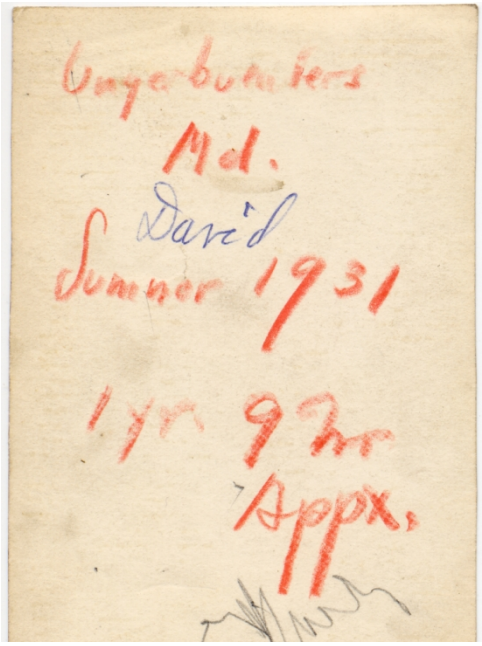


Lillian w/David, 1930, 5 months





Earl in bathing suit w/David, 1931



At a lake near a Ungerbuehler relative in Maryland



Earl, 1933



Lillian w/David, 1933

1930 Census

The census shows Earl as the owner of 36 Garfield Avenue. He appears with his wife and new son David. Earl's parents were still living there as renters along with his sister Gladys. Earl's occupation was draftsman for the 'terra cotta works' (O. W. Ketcham). The census indicates that Lillian was no longer working as a nurse. She now had her own new-born son, my father, to attend to.

Bye Bye to Parents

Sometime between March, 1930 and August 1931 [per the Chester Times], Warren, May and daughter Gladys moved out of Earl's home at Garfield Avenue, Norwood. They had been living with Earl since Earl purchased the home in late 1926. Had they known how serious the Depression would be, perhaps they would have shared the home expenses together for a few more years.

The Depression Years

The Depression technically started with the collapse of the stock market in 1929. However, the real impact did not spread around the economy until the 1931-1933 timeframe, when bank closings and unemployment reached their peak. It lasted a long time - the military build-up of 1939-1940 started to turn the tide.

The Depression years had a big impact on the Skinner family. Earl's father lost his savings during the Depression when his bank abruptly closed.

Earl lost his job at O. W. Ketcham's, probably in late 1931. Earl would spend eight years trying to find comparable work, work that only became available with the advent of WWII. In 1935, Earl lost his Garfield home to the bank.

Another casualty of the Depression was the size of the American family. In 1991, Lillian told me that Earl did not want to have any additional children, other than son David, due to the Depression. Earl got his wish.

Lillian, who was not working in 1930 per the Federal Census, got back into nursing during the Depression years. Her typical job involved helping ill people at their homes. Her favorite shift was to work 7pm to 7am. Though tough on the marriage, it enabled her to be home in the morning to send her young son David to school and home in the afternoon when he returned.

During the height of the Depression, the nursing work ran out. Lillian made cakes and sold them. Taylor Hospital offered free food to their former nurses, but Lillian was never that desperate.

Demise of O. W. Ketcham

Earl lost his job at O. W. Ketcham, probably in late 1931. Don't know how long the company survived after that. Earl had been working at Ketcham's since 1922 or so. The labor-intensive, ornate terra cotta building trim fabricated by O. W. Ketcham went out of style by the time of the Depression. And the depression years saw a decline in the construction of new buildings.

When Earl had started working at Ketchams, he was a single teenager living with his parents. When he lost his job, he was married with a two or three year old child.

Earl recalls that one of the last buildings he worked on was across the street from the Wanamaker's Department Store in downtown Philadelphia:



Market Street National Bank, 1319-1325 Market St., Phila., completed 1930
Across the street from Wanamakers and adjacent to Philadelphia's City Hall

Colorful terracotta trim designed and fabricated by O.W. Ketcham.

Most of the Ketcham buildings and terra cotta stills at their headquarters in Crum Lynne, PA are long-gone. But the administration building in which Earl did his drafting is still standing and is on a list of architecturally important buildings. The building is closed, but I was excited to discover it with my father on 3 July 2005. The building is constructed of very ornate Ketcham brick with terra cotta details adorning the window frames.

Today, the remaining archives of Ketcham are held at a library called the Athenaeum in Philadelphia [reference Ketcham Collection at philadelphiabuildings.org.]

Nash Suits and Odd Jobs

Earl did odd jobs following the loss of work at O.W. Ketcham in 1931. My father and his cousin Dick Hughlett recall that Earl worked many years for the Nash Company, measuring people for custom-made, mail-order suits. Nash was a well-known suit manufacturer headquartered in Cincinnati. Earl would walk the streets and stop passers-to pitch the suits. He showed sample materials from a book, took people's measurements and then ordered the suits through the mail. I recall Earl telling me stories about measuring people for men's suits out on the city sidewalks.

My father believes Earl sold Nash suits for most of the 1930's. He continued that work on the side in the 1940's, selling suits to people he worked with as a draftsman during the war.

Cousin Dick Hughlett says that Earl worked for a WPA street crew for a while. [Per Wikipedia] – the Works Progress Administration (WPA) was the largest of Franklin Roosevelt's New Deal agencies, employing millions of workers on public works projects, including the construction of buildings and roads.

Earl may have been speaking of his days with the WPA in a letter to me:

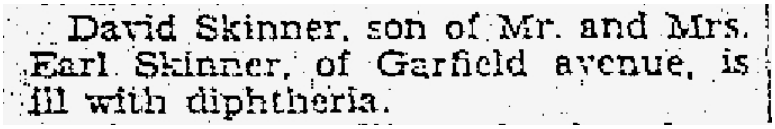
Sunday, Aug 12, 1979 – '**Good thing I taught your father all the facts of life – repairs, etc, !! Jack of all trades – Painting, Carpentry, Plumbing and Electrical – all the necessarys. One thing your father never did was painting from a stage or putting a new platform around a high water tank – though I did.'**

Earl's relatives helped out during the Depression. Uncle Franklin Ungerbuehler hired Earl to help move his garage. And Uncle Charles Shepherd hired Earl to help him with some painting. Both uncles lived at Wilmington, DE.

Earl was always a handyman. During the Depression, he made tables and chairs for the Sunday school of the Norwood Methodist Church.

Diptheria

In 1931, David Skinner, son or Earl and Lillian, contracted diphtheria. I am happy to say he survived. This must have been a scare for Lillian, whose older brother Llewelyn had died from diphtheria when they were young. On the same day as this news article, Earl and Lilliam sold their Garfield home, so this must have been a time of great stress for the family.


David Skinner, son of Mr. and Mrs. Earl Skinner, of Garfield avenue, is ill with diphtheria.

Chester Times, October 7, 1931

Flip This House, 1931

On October 7, 1931, Earl and Lillian sold their home at Garfield Avenue. This may mark the timing of Earl's loss of his job at O. W. Ketcham. On the next day, however, Earl repurchased the home from the seller. Not sure what happened.

The home was repurchased with a mortgage of $3000 plus a building association mortgage of $2000. Sometime later, Earl took out a mortgage with Delaware County Trust and paid his other loans off in full.

Loss of Garfield Avenue, 1935

In late 1934, the Delaware County Trust Company filed suit against the Skinners for non-payment of the mortgage associated with Garfield Avenue. On March 2, 1935, the sheriff of Delaware County turned the property over to the bank. And so the Skinners moved on to a rental in the neighboring town of Morton, PA.





David, 1934, chair and trellis in left rear



David, age 6

All photos Garfield Avenue, previous to loss of the home in spring, 1935

916 Mitchell Avenue, Morton, PA, 1935 - 1939

In the spring of 1935, Earl and Lillian lost their home on Garfield Avenue in Norwood. They moved a few miles away to 916 Mitchell Avenue in the town of Morton, PA. My father (born 1929) recalls that they moved when he was in the middle of kindergarten or 1st grade – good memory as he was in kindergarten at the time. This was the only time the Skinners would move in the middle of a school year.

The Morton home was a rental, but very spacious. The home was a two-family with the Skinners occupying the second floor. My Dad had a bedroom in the third floor attic. There was a barn in the back that has since been torn down.

My Dad learned to swim nearby at a local pool that was fed by a spring. A swim club is still there today. Dad's small elementary school at Morton is now the Calvary Baptist Church.

Young David Skinner was a very allergic child for Earl and Lillian. Lillian recalls he had asthma as well as a bad case of eczema on his face and head. Lillian thinks it was the cow's milk. Like his father, David's appendix was removed, though it had not ruptured – circa age ten – Taylor Hospital.



David Skinner with Sam, 1938
Barn at rear of 916 Mitchell Avenue, Morton, Pa

Sam was too vicious with the mailman and was given away.



David (b. Nov, 1929) and Lillian
Easter?, circa 1937





Earl and Lillian with son David, circa 1938

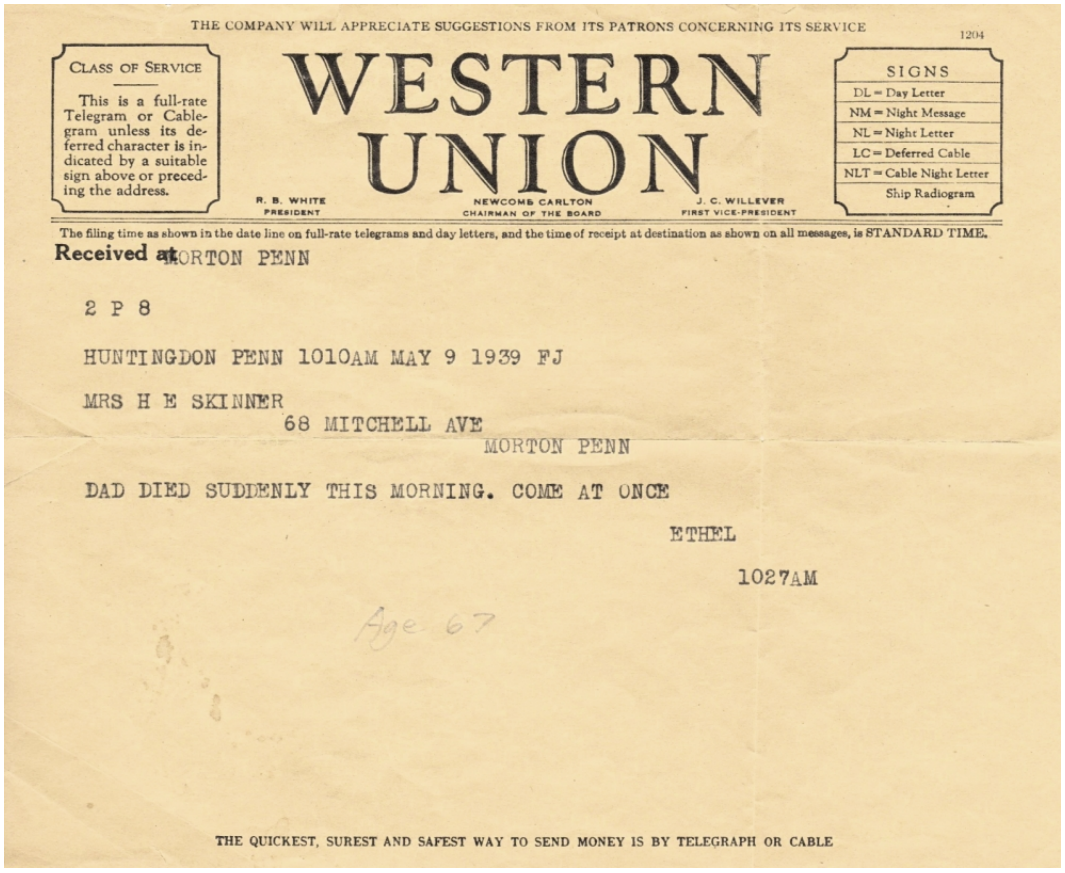


916 Mitchell Avenue, Morton, PA; 3 July 2005
Dave Skinner, at right, with property owner.

Death of Joseph Showalter

In April, 1939, Lillian received a telegram from her sister, Ethel, informing Lillian of the death of their father – Joseph Showalter. He died in the sitting room of his doctor's office in Huntingdon, PA (western PA).

The telegram was addressed to Lillian at 68 Mitchell Ave. (today it is 916 Mitchell Ave.) in the town of Morton.



THE COMPANY WILL APPRECIATE SUGGESTIONS FROM ITS PATRONS CONCERNING ITS SERVICE 1204

CLASS OF SERVICE
This is a full-rate Telegram or Cablegram unless its deferred character is indicated by a suitable sign above or preceding the address.

WESTERN UNION

R. B. WHITE, PRESIDENT — NEWCOMB CARLTON, CHAIRMAN OF THE BOARD — J. C. WILLEVER, FIRST VICE-PRESIDENT

SIGNS
DL = Day Letter
NM = Night Message
NL = Night Letter
LC = Deferred Cable
NLT = Cable Night Letter
Ship Radiogram

The filing time as shown in the date line on full-rate telegrams and day letters, and the time of receipt at destination as shown on all messages, is STANDARD TIME.

Received at MORTON PENN

2 P 8

HUNTINGDON PENN 1010AM MAY 9 1939 FJ

MRS H E SKINNER
68 MITCHELL AVE
MORTON PENN

DAD DIED SUDDENLY THIS MORNING. COME AT ONCE

ETHEL

1027AM

Age 67

THE QUICKEST, SUREST AND SAFEST WAY TO SEND MONEY IS BY TELEGRAPH OR CABLE

New Opportunities, circa 1939

The Depression era finally began to come to an end. The recovery of the US economy was helped by the military build-up of the country that began in 1939.

After years of unemployment or under-employment, Earl got a job at the Heintz Manufacturing Company, probably in 1938 or 1939.

Heintz Manufacturing Company

Heintz Manufacturing was at the intersection of Front and Olney Streets in the Olney section of Northeast Philadelphia, about four miles north of Philadelphia City Hall. I assume Earl did drafting or design-related work at Heintz.

The firm produced a wide range of sheet-metal products, especially as a subcontractor to automotive and railroad manufacturers.

Per Earl – ***"After a lapse of hard times, got a job at Heintz Mfg. Co., North Philadelphia. They made auto tops, pans, wheels, Navy boat hatches, etc. They lost a contract with Budd Manufacturing Co. so I got the axe. However, this was good as my boss gave me good recommendation to New York Ship and Newport News Shipyards."***

Budd Manufacturing was a well-known manufacturer of rail car bodies, and other 'pressed' sheet metal products. Earl lost his job with Heintz when the company lost their contract with Budd.

1940 Federal Census

The 1940 census shows that Earl worked 32 weeks in 1939, so I am guessing that some of that represented his time at Heintz Manufacturing. The census, taken in March of 1940, shows Earl working at his next job at NY Ship.



Heintz Manufacturing
[digital.librarycompany.org]

652 Maryland Avenue, Prospect Park, 1939 - 1940

In mid-1939, the Skinners moved from the town of Morton a few miles back to the Norwood/Prospect Park area, renting a small house at 652 Maryland Avenue, Prospect Park. They lived at that address during son David's 1939/1940 school year (fifth grade).

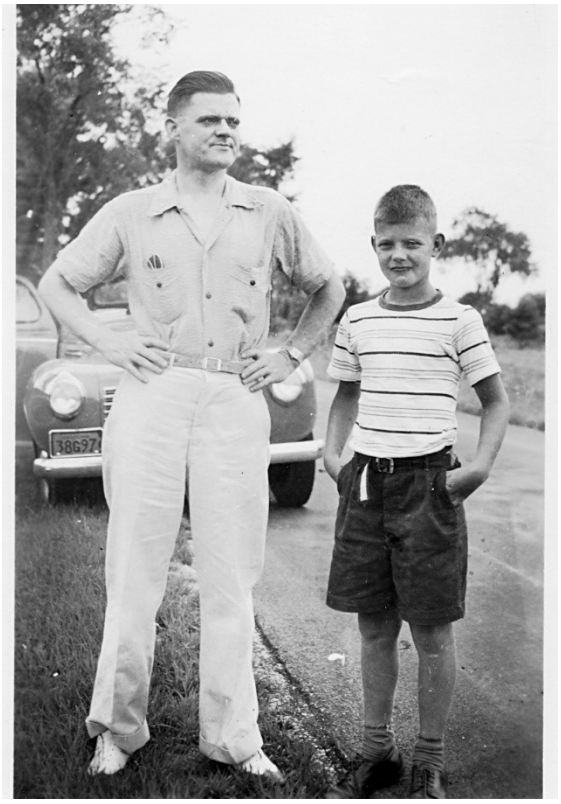
The move to Maryland Avenue was likely done to put Earl within walking distance of the Pennsy Railroad tracks for a commute to his job at Heintz Manufacturing or NY Ship.

Maryland Avenue is a small lane with a few homes on one side and railroad tracks on the other. The tracks were the heavily traveled, mainline tracks of the Pennsylvania Railroad (formerly the Maryland Division of the P. B. & W. Railroad) that ran between Philadelphia and Wilmington, with connections to all major cities from there. The tracks also saw heavy commuter service with local trains servicing towns between Philadelphia and Wilmington. Today, the tracks are part of the high-speed Amtrak corridor up and down the east coast of the US.

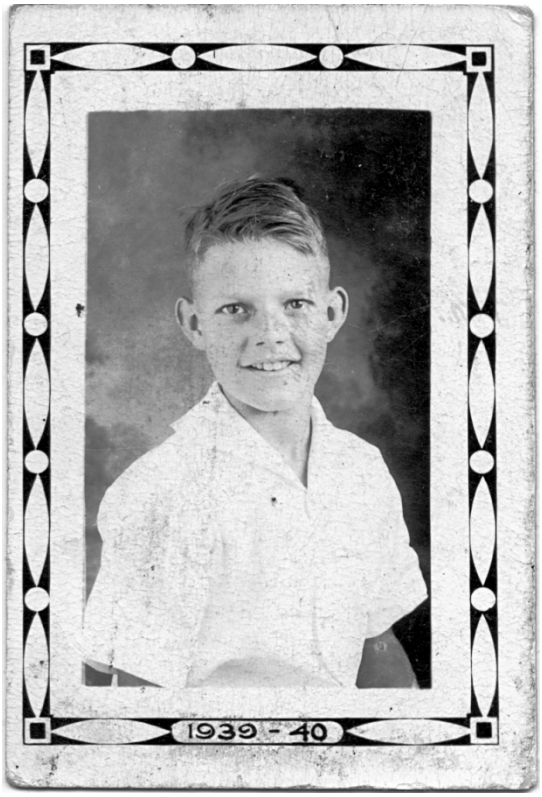
The Skinner home was a short walk from the railroad station at the neighboring town of Norwood. A chicken in the back yard helped put food on the table.

My father, 10 years of age at the time, had a bedroom in the second floor attic. Christmas saw the arrival of his first Lionel train set, which he set up in his bedroom. His life-long hobby of model railroading had begun.

Dad attended the 5th grade at the school at the end of Ninth Avenue in Prospect Park. The school was several blocks past 554 Ninth Avenue - the home of his grandparents, Warren and May Skinner. They had rented this home when they moved out of Earl's house back in 1931 and later purchased it. Young Dave walked by his grandparent's home each school day.



Earl and Coleman, circa 1940



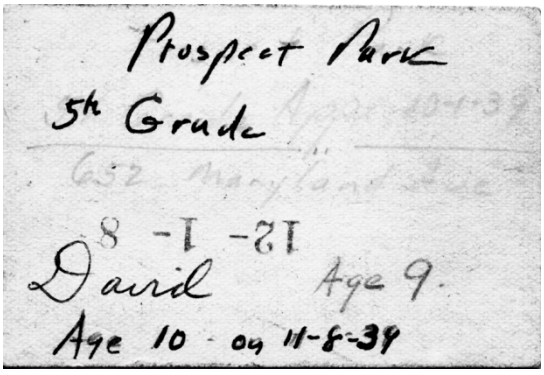


Photo taken approx. 1 Oct 1939; David turned age ten 8 Nov. The family lived 652 Maryland Ave., Prospect Park where David attended 5th grade.

Newport News Shipyard

Earl's boss at Heintz Manufacturing gave him a good recommendation that landed Earl a job as a draftsman at NY Ship along the waterfront of the Delaware River in Camden, NJ.

NY Ship had to await the completion of a new building to accommodate the hiring for the war build-up, so Earl was sent to the massive shipyard at Newport News, Virginia for his first three months of employment.

Camden's NY Shipyard

Earl began doing drafting work for New York Ship some time in 1939. He worked there until the layoffs at the end of World War II in 1945/1946. He worked many late evenings to support the war effort.

The name - New York Ship Building Corporation, was a misnomer as it was not in New York. The shipyard occupied a large stretch of the Delaware River in Camden, NJ, across the river from Philadelphia, situated between the Walt Whitman and Ben Franklin bridges. New York Ship was one of the nation's 'Big Five' shipyards at the start of WWII, and employed as many as 30,000 people during the War. The commute to NY Ship from Prospect Park meant taking the train to the Pennsy Railroad ferry docks in Philadelphia and crossing the river directly to NY Ship or near by.

1940 Census

The census of April, 1940 shows the family living at 652 Maryland Avenue, Prospect Park. Earl was age 38, Lillian was age 36, and son David was age 10. Earl's occupation was draftsman – shipyard. Lillian was not working.

Miscellaneous information included in the census shows that Earl had been employed for 32 weeks in 1939. As a result, I am guessing that 1939 represented some months of unemployment ending with a job at Heintz Manufacturing and followed a month or so later by steady work at NY Ship.

The census also asked where people were living 5 years earlier in April of 1935 – the Skinners had been living in Norwood [Garfield Ave].

The Candy Man

Earl was always a salesman. He would keep candy in his drawer that he purchased in bulk from Philadelphia. His fellow employees would take the candy and leave change in the drawer. Earl would also hold raffles in which the winner would win a Nash suit. Of course, there was a profit involved there as well.

SS America, 1941

In 1941, NY Ship assigned Earl to do drafting work associated with the world's largest passenger ship - the 'SS America'. The ship had been brought into dry dock at Newport News, Virginia, for modification to support the war effort. Earl did his drafting work at his desk at NY Ship in Camden, NJ, but made inspection trips to Newport News to review the ship. Newport News, like NY Ship, was one of the 'Big Five' shipyards of WWII, cranking out a massive amount of ships and ship conversions during the war.

The SS America had originally been built and launched at Newport News in 1939. Eleanor Roosevelt had christened the bow. The ship would be the largest passenger ship in the world for several decades. However, in 1941, the US government took temporary control of the ship in support of the war effort. The ship was returned to Newport News for conversion to a troop-carrying ship and renamed the 'USS West Point'.

As a part of the conversion, the passenger capacity of the ship was increased from 1200 to over 5000 persons. Other changes included the covering of the windows and the addition of armaments.

Earl did drafting work associated with a portion of a floor two or three levels below deck. He made several trips to Newport News where he inspected the ship in dry-dock. My father recalls that Earl took him along on one of the trips for a walk-through of the ship. Earl showed him some of the improvements that had been implemented as a result of his suggestions. My father was sometimes confused, as it seemed Earl was documenting work that had already been done - Perhaps some of Earl's work included the preparation of 'As-Built' drawings.

Over the next four years of WWII, the USS West Point saw service all over the world and carried more than 500,000 troops. It was occasionally a target of German aircraft.

In 1946, the ship was again returned to Newport News for conversion back to a first-class passenger ship. In the 1950's, a sister ship was built at Newport News called the SS United States. The SS America and SS United States would be the most impressive passenger ships in the world until the rise of European ships, like the Queen Elizabeth, in the 1960's.

The SS America ran aground in the Canary Islands in 1974 and has been sinking into the sand ever since. Little is visible today.

The drawings created by Earl were huge in size – not something that would fit on a desk. My dad saved some of Earl's drawings which were stored in long cardboard tubes in the attic of our home at Clements Bridge Road. The drawings were eventually discarded.

The drawings had a high linen content and contained a blue dye. Lillian washed the color out of some of them to create handkerchiefs for the family.



Earl’s WWII-Era Drafting Tool Chest
Built By H. Gerstner & Sons, Dayton, OH

Earl and later, my father, both stored drafting tools in this chest so the tools still there today would be of mixed vintage.



SS America



USS West Point (SS America war-time conversion)

564 Salem Avenue, Woodbury, NJ, 1940 - 1941

Earl spent a year commuting to the NY Ship in Camden from his rental home on Maryland Avenue in Prospect Park, PA while son David completed the 5th grade in 1940. At the end of the school year, the family moved to a rental home in Woodbury, South Jersey so that Earl would be a short drive away from the shipyard at Camden. The rental house was located at 564 Salem Avenue in South Woodbury (*564 County Rd 551* today),

This was now the Skinners third rental home – Mitchell Ave. in Morton, Maryland Avenue in Prospect Park and Salem Avenue in Woodbury. They remained at Salem Ave. until the owners of the property wanted to move back in.

The family stayed in the house one year and report cards show that son David spent the sixth grade (1940/1941) in the Woodbury, NJ school system.

Son David had moved from Lionel to HO trains creating an HO train layout in the basement. HO trains would remain his principal hobby for the rest of his life.

Not knowing any doctors, Lillian thought she would not be able to do any nursing work in NJ, but recommendations from a friend got her assignments at clinics in South Jersey supporting Camden's canning factories – testing the workers for venereal disease and the like. She also ended up working for a Dr. Tapper in Camden for quite a while, somewhat bored with staying at home.





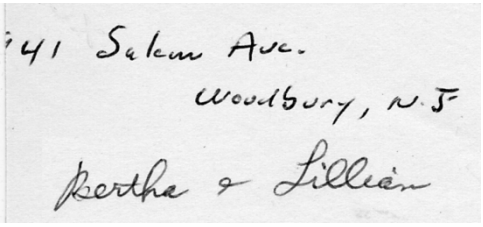


14th Wedding Anniversary, May, 1941

ANNIV. 1941
Salem Ave
Woodbury -
Moved to
Rented House
from
Penna.
Lived about
1 yr. or more
Here - Then
Pur. Home
27 Walnut St
Westville
N. J



Bertha and daughter Lillian, 1941



1941, Salem Avenue

Earl's printing; Annette's writing



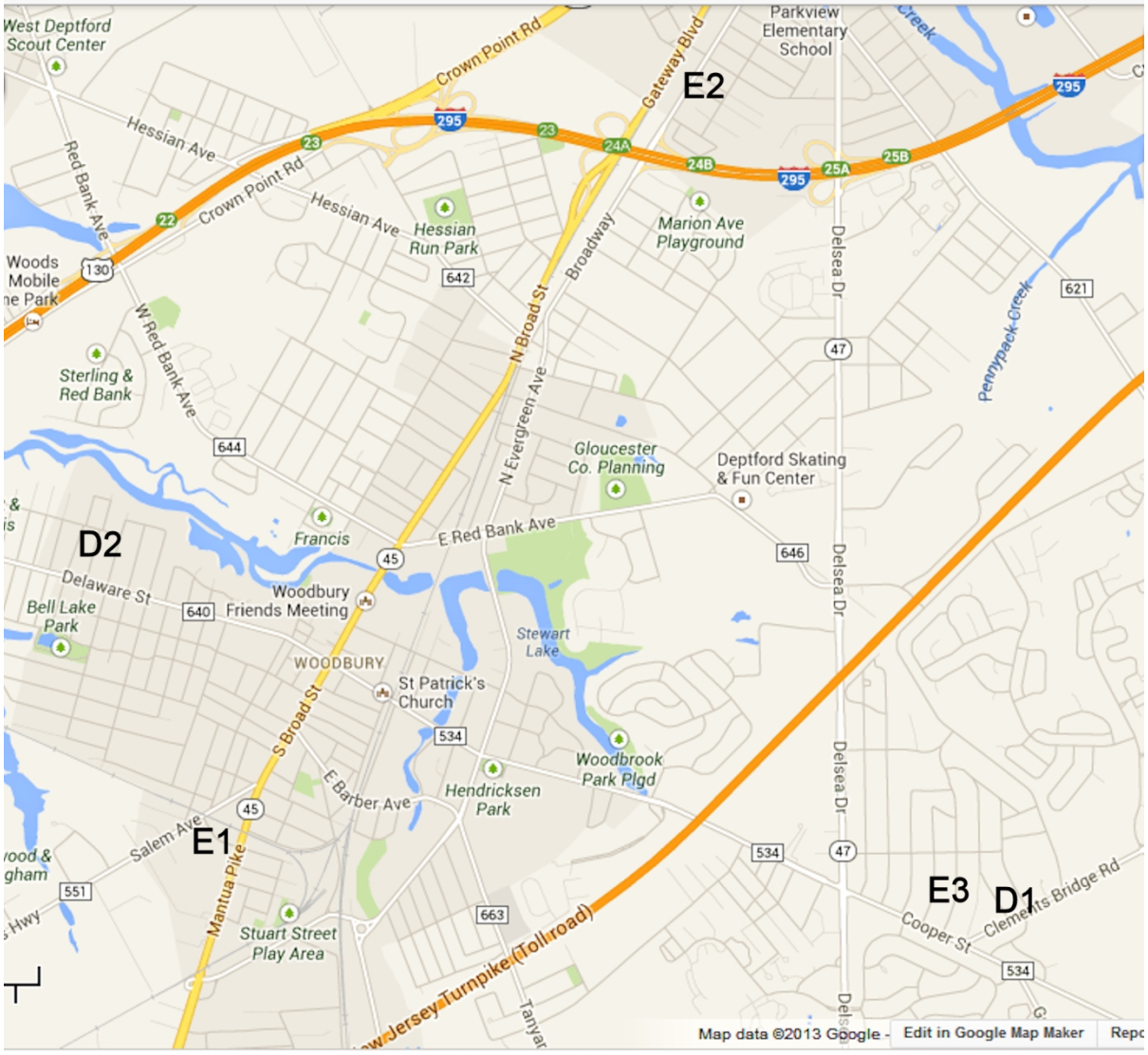
Picture Day
Dave, Lillian and Earl Skinner, 1941, Salem Ave., Woodbury, NJ

Same dress as previous image and same day as following image.



Picture Day (hand-painted)

Not sure what the occasion was, but this is one of my Dad's favorite photos, and the photo has always hung on the wall of Lillian, and later David.



Map of Woodbury, NJ area

Earl and Lillian lived:

564 Salem Ave (1939-1941) - **'E1'**
27 Walnut St. (1941-1955) - **'E2'**
62 Walker Ave. (1955-1966) - **'E3'**

Son David and wife Annette lived:

Corner of Clements Bridge Rd. & Lewis Ave (side street) (1954-1964) – **'D1'**
73 N. Childs St. (6/13/64 – present) – **'D2'**

Summers At The Jersey Shore

Earl and Lillian enjoyed spending time at Atlantic City, much as Earl's parents had enjoyed Atlantic City for many decades. Around 1938, the Skinners started renting at Atlantic City for extended vacations.

Son David recalls a rental home on the bay, looking across at Atlantic City's municipal airport. One of Lillian's favorite activities was to take son David to Atlantic City's famous Steel Pier. The pier contained 6 or 7 movie houses at the time, and the two would spend all day at the movies!

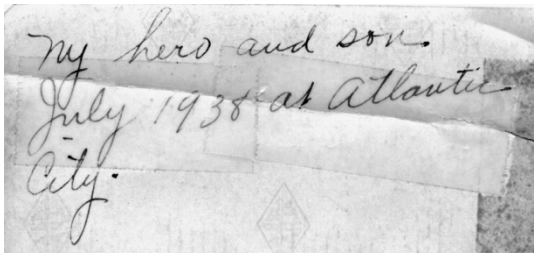


Atlantic City

The Skinner rental looked over at the airport, per my Dad. The Skinners were photographed on the beach in front of a business called Seidel's Rolling Chairs, which helps pin down the street that the Skinner rental was likely on.



Earl w/ son David, 1938, Atlantic City



Lillian's writing – 'My hero and son'



David w/grandparents Warren and May and mother Lillian, 1941

Seidel's Rolling Chair Company is visible in the rear of this image. It was located at 3100 Atlantic Avenue, the intersection of Atlantic Ave. with Morris Avenue.



Example of a rolling chair

Wildwood

The Skinners also enjoyed spending time in Wildwood by the early 1940's and would later purchase a summer home there.

My father recalls visiting Wildwood when he was too young to drive, returning home to his parent's house in Westville on a late night, hitchhiking on a milk train out of North Wildwood. The train stopped at every town, swapping empty milk cans for full ones, so the trip ended up taking seven hours!



David at Hereford Inlet?



Lillian and David; June, 1941
Probably at Hereford Inlet, N. Wildwood

27 Walnut Street, Westville, NJ

In 1941, Earl and Lillian moved out of their rental house on Salem Ave. in Woodbury and purchased a home at 27 Walnut Street in Westville, NJ, just to the north of Woodbury. The home was a small, 3-bedroom bungalow. Earl's drafting job at New York Ship was paying off.

The purchase of a home meant that the tight purse-strings of the Depression were over – a Depression that had cost Earl his drafting job with O. W. Ketcham way back in 1931, a Depression that had caused Earl to lose his Garfield Avenue home in Norwood, PA circa 1935, and a Depression that had resulted in Earl and family relocating four times in the following ten years from 1931 to 1941.

Son David attended the Westville school system in the 7th and 8th grades (1941/1942 and 1942/1943). He was then bused to the Woodbury school system for all of his high school years, beginning with summer school at the end of the 8th grade. Annette Frederick, Dave's future wife, was also bused to Woodbury High School from her home in Woodbury Heights.

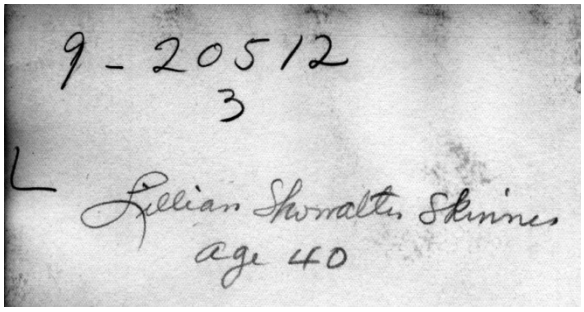
Madeline and Larry Doe lived behind the Skinners in Westville, and two generations of the Skinners and Does would become friends, with the friendships lasting into the 1970's. Stephen Doe, grandson of Madeline, contacted me in 2012. Her friendship with Tryvola Harrington, probably Lillian's best friend, started in this neighborhood as well.



27 Walnut Avenue, Westville
[googlestreetview]



Lillian's 40th Birthday, Dec 1943
[hand-colored]



Lillian's writing

Grassy Sounds

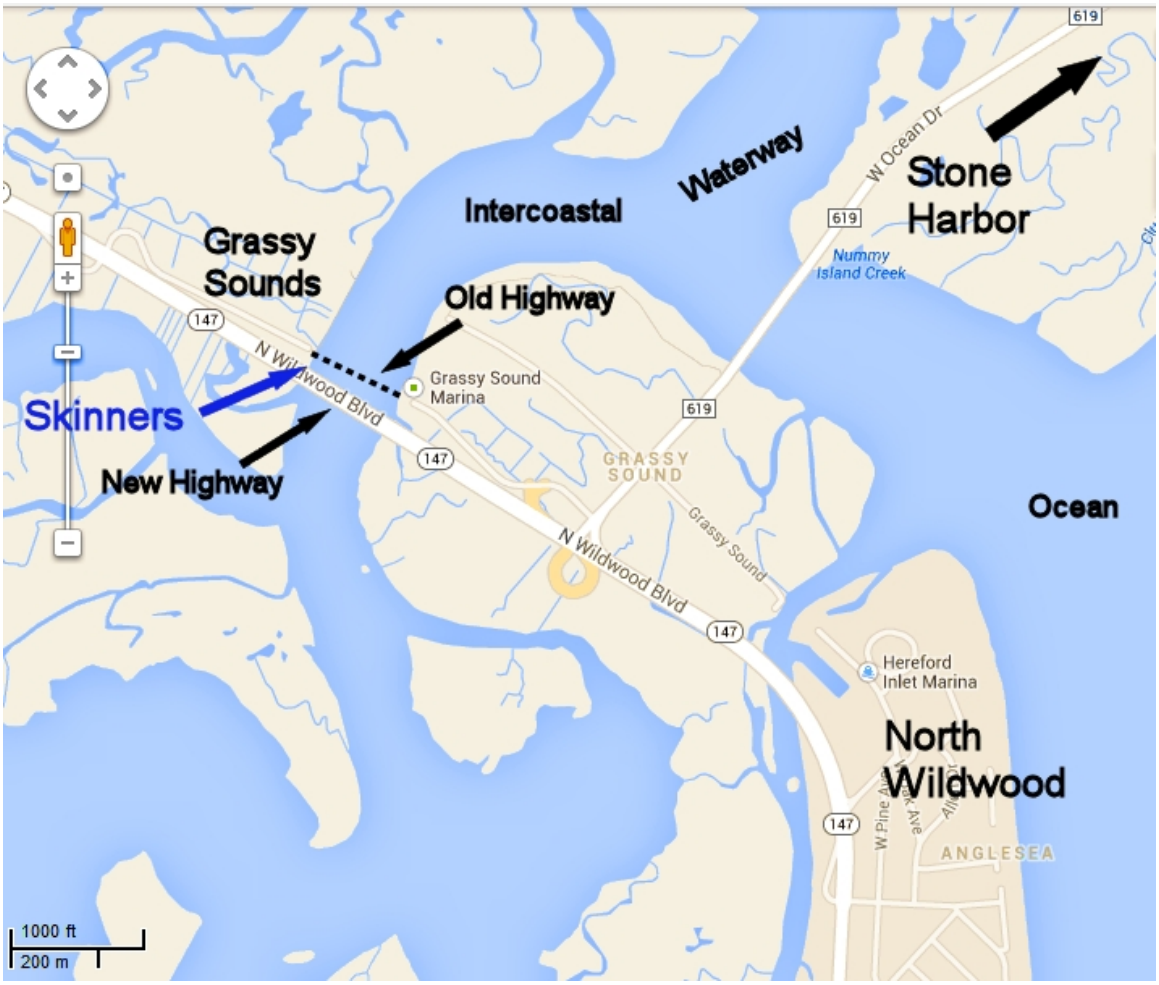
In the mid-1940's, one of the draftsman that Earl was working with mentioned that he wanted to sell two homes and a garage located outside the beach town of Wildwood, NJ. Earl and Lillian took a look at the properties and decided to make the purchase – yet another sign of the money coming in from Earl's drafting job.

The Skinners owned the homes about five years until 1950 or so, despite the fact that Earl lost his drafting job at the end of the war in 1946, not long after purchasing the homes. The properties consisted of two adjacent summer homes in a small community called Grassy Sounds, located in the long stretch of grassy marshes between the mainland and North Wildwood. The homes sat on the intercoastal waterway and were the third and fourth homes south of the drawbridge that led into North Wildwood. The homes were accessed by walking on a series of boardwalks over the grasses from the main highway. The rear of the homes sat on the intercoastal water channel. The homes were small and crude - the toilets dumped into the water below. The properties included a 2-car garage located some distance away on the main road.

My father has many fond memories of summers at Grassy Sounds as a teenager, as did his dog "Fletcher". Fun place to show his girlfriends in the summers of 1946 and 1947 following his junior and senior high school years. The family had a small boat – a rowboat with motor. Grandfather Warren Skinner, an avid fisherman, visited often, catching quite a bit of flounder. Warren showed up one day with a brand new motor for David's boat, but it had way too much horsepower, and David raced across the bay with the nose of the rowboat pointed straight up!

My father recalls time spent with a girl named Lillian, whose family lived in the first house north of the bridge to Wildwood. Her father was the Bridgemaster, ensuring that the drawbridge was raised for boat traffic. Lillian's family was related to the owners of the nearby 'Dad's Place' marina, which remains little changed today. My father also spent time with the daughter of the grocery store located in a small home down the street. Grassy Sounds also offered a chance for my father to invite female friends from back home in Westville. After graduating high school in 1947, my Dad was able to return to Grassy Sounds for occasional weekend outings during his first couple of college summers, and sometimes used the homes as a sleeping place for fun times in Atlantic City.

Another tale - My father recalls that Earl once ordered a bunch of wooden posts for the purpose of constructing dockage or bulkhead protection for the homes. He and Earl had to float the poles to the property from the road where they had been delivered. Each pole was then hoisted into a vertical position using ropes. The poles would quickly sink into the mud below the water. My father would then use a mallet to drive them deeper.



Grassy Sounds, NJ, just outside North Wildwood

Earl's two small homes sat on the intercoastal waterway that runs behind Wildwood and Stone Harbor.

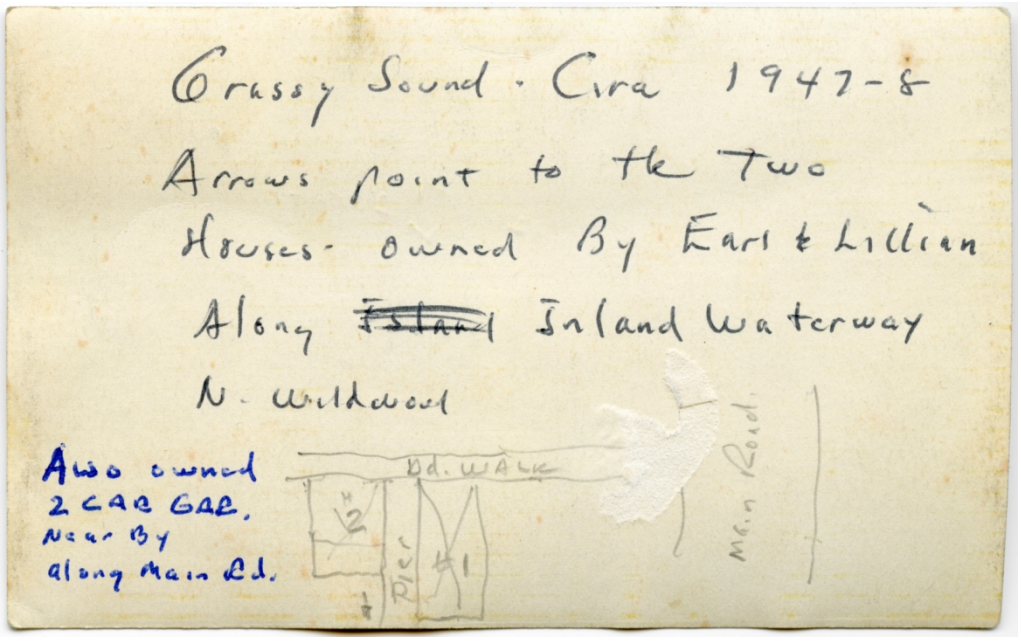
The New Bridge

The Skinner homes remained unchanged long after they were sold by Earl and Lillian, surviving into the 1990's. In 1995, a new road was constructed from the mainland to North Wildwood. The new road was elevated high in the air over Grassy Sounds. The original road was maintained to provide access to the cottages of Grassy Sounds, but the old drawbridge to Wildwood was removed. Part of the bridge on the Wildwood side was saved to serve as a fishing pier.

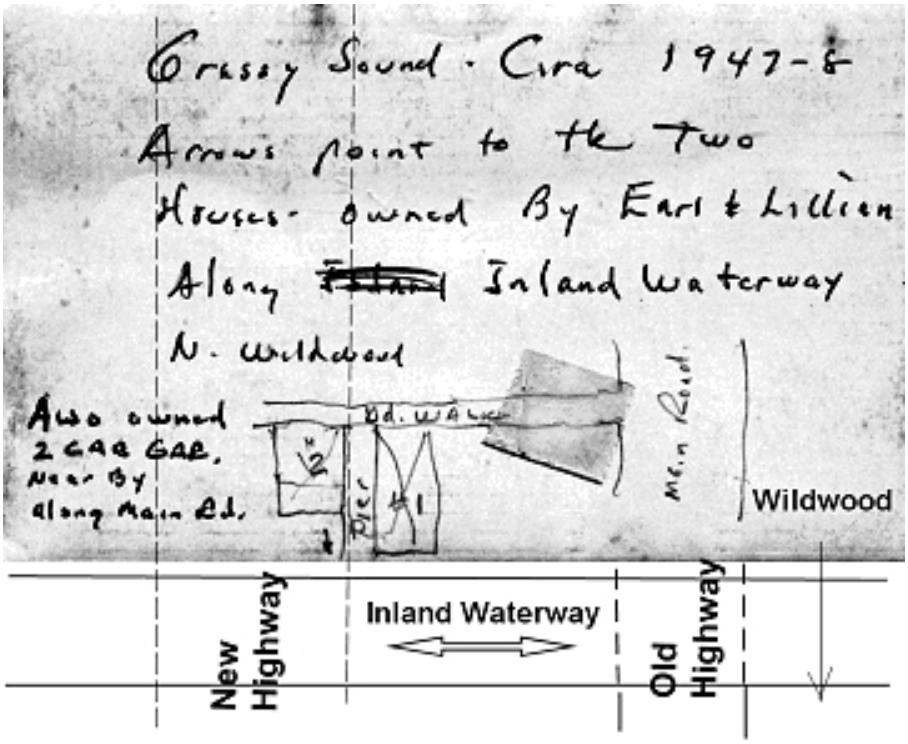
The Skinner homes sat in the path of the supports for the new bridge and were removed. Only the first home south of the original highway remains today. If you stand at the highest point of the north side of the new bridge and look straight down, you will see remnants of the pipes that sat under the Skinner homes.



View of Grassy Sounds from the Wildwood side of old highway bridge (bridge just off picture to right) showing the two Skinner homes. [Earl's printing]. Earl's note – '2 story'.



Earl's notes include the wooden "bd walk" [board walk] leading from the highway over the marsh to the homes. "Also owned a 2 car garage" on the main road.



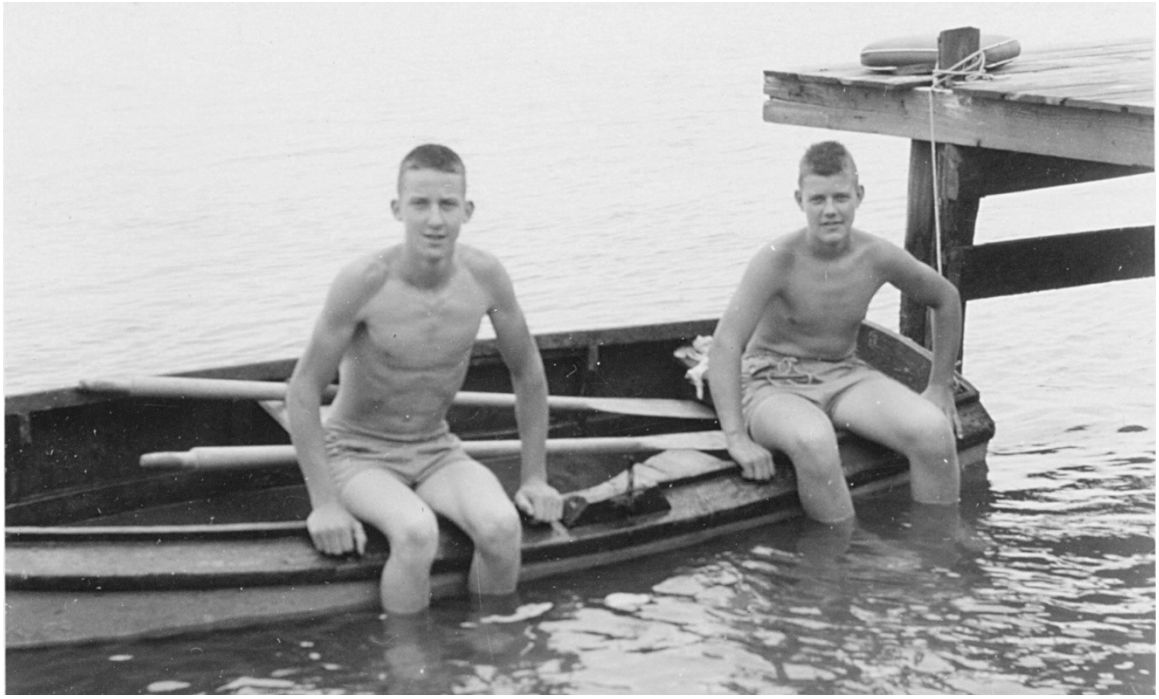
My notes superimposed over Earl's notes.



View from the water – Lillian, Fletcher and the two Skinner homes.



The boardwalk to the homes.



Friend Mort Olsen with David Skinner; Aug, 1945 at the dock



David w/Fletcher; Aug., 1945

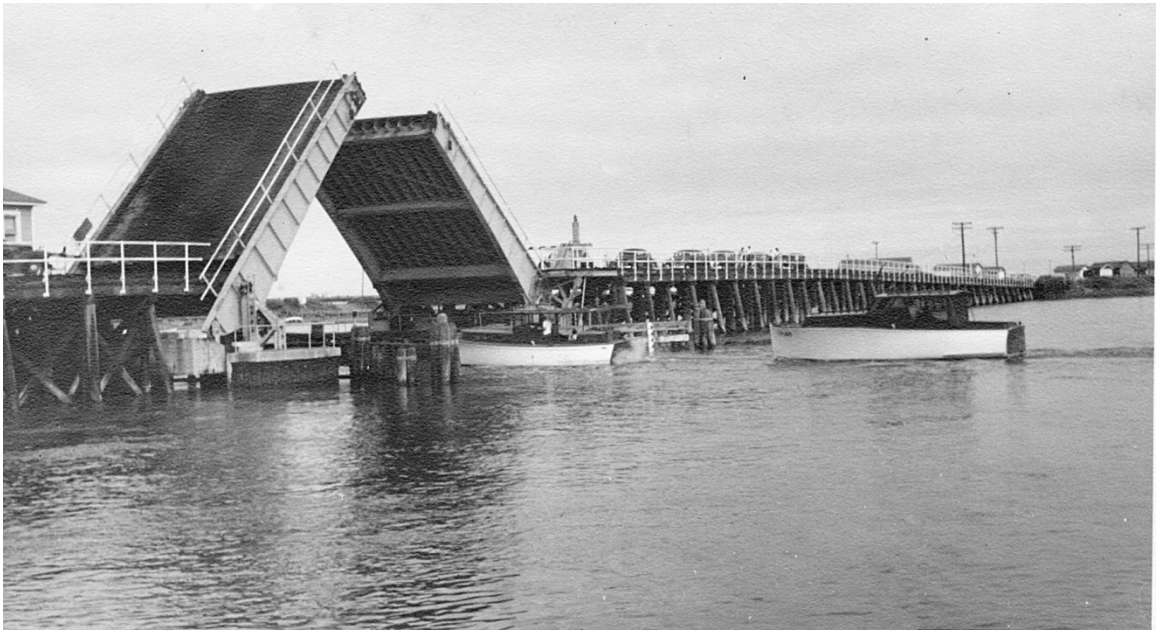


Warren Skinner (Earl's father), Lillian and David at the dock.

The main road and bridge to Wildwood is in the rear,
as is the home of the family of the Bridgemaster.



View from the dock
The summers of ’46 and ’47 saw female guests for David at Grassy Sounds.



Another view from the dock
The main road to North Wildwood until the mid-1990’s.

End of WWII

The close of the War in 1945 saw the cancellation of government shipbuilding contracts and major cutbacks in employment. Earl survived a couple of layoffs but was finally let go in October, 1946.

NY Ship stayed open until 1967, though at reduced workload. The last major project completed was the aircraft carrier USS Kitty Hawk, launched in 1961.

The loss of NY Ship was devastating to the city of Camden, NJ. Over the next several decades, Camden lost the rest of its manufacturing base, including the international headquarters of Campbell Soup and RCA records. These losses precipitated Camden's overwhelming decline – a decline that has changed little in the intervening decades.

The vacated buildings of NY Ship where Earl worked are still visible on the Camden waterfront, just north of the Walt Whitman Bridge.

A Keystone Insurance Policy

What could have been a prolonged post-war recession for the United States turned into a post-war boom of epic proportions?

Earl lost his job at NY Shipyards in October of 1946. But in that same month, he started his next job selling insurance for the Keystone Insurance Company.

Bill Hughlett, husband of Earl's sister and a banker [later an independent repossession agent], had suggested that Earl take a look at working for Keystone. The company was headquartered in Philadelphia company but conveniently had a branch office in South Jersey not far from where Earl lived in Westville.

Per Earl in 1976 – "*Had trouble as one big shot there said I was too old and besides would not be satisfied to eat "crow". I said I would if the Crow did not get too high priced – so they took a chance. My test results were "No Salesman". Tests Bah."*

The Keystone tests showed he was not a sales person. It is true that he was not the image of a blathering used car salesman or polished corporate person. But he was confident, talkative and friendly with people could apparently close deals.

Earl started with Keystone in 1946 at age 45 and continued to work there for the next 20 years until his retirement in 1966. The Keystone job required an initial training period. Lillian assisted him with his studies. Earl went on to become a successful salesman with Keystone. His work there resulted in a pension, and money for two decades of retirement in Florida.

Keystone (continued)

The Keystone job brought relative prosperity to the family, partly because auto insurance became mandatory in the mid-1950's. Keystone would shape the future of son David Skinner as well.

Dave Skinner graduated from Rutgers University with a degree in chemistry in 1951 and completed a two-year stint in the Air Force in 1953. Earl suggested that his son consider the training program at Keystone. Keystone would provide some nominal pay, and Dave would have the afternoons free to look for work more appropriate to his degree in chemistry.

The life of a salesman on the road looked more appealing to Dave than working in a lab. So Dave Skinner ended up staying with his father's employer and went on to become the most successful salesman to work for Keystone.

More On Son David

Son David attended Rutgers University in Brunswick, NJ from the Fall of 1947 until the spring of 1951. ROTC had helped to pay the bills so he spent two years in the Air Force from 1951 to 1953 during the Korean War.

David spent his first year of military service from July, 1951 to July, 1952 at Dow Air Force Base in Bangor, Maine. He spent his second year of service from July, 1951 to July 1953 at Alexandria Air Force Base in Louisiana. In May of 1952, while his unit was packing for the move from Maine to Louisiana, David married Annette Frederick

Two Trips To Louisiana

In October of 1952, Earl and Lillian visited their newlywed son David and wife Annette in Louisiana. Not sure if Earl & Lillian drove or flew.



Dave, Annette and Lillian, Louisiana, 1952

Louisiana For The Second Time

In the spring of 1953, Earl and Lillian made a second trip to Louisiana. They drove down and invited Annette's parents - Liz and Frank Frederick, along for the ride. They turned it into an extensive three week vacation, with one week being spent with their children in Louisiana.

Photographs show that the parents visited Washington D.C. and Birmingham, Alabama on the drive down. They returned home via a much longer route, with stops at Marianna, Florida (on the Florida Panhandle), St. Petersburg, Ft. Pierce, Cocoa Beach, Daytona and Fort Augustine. They enjoyed some fishing along the way.

Frank Frederick took photos of the trip and Earl took photos and movie footage.





1953 Fishing, Ft. Pierce, Florida, 1953





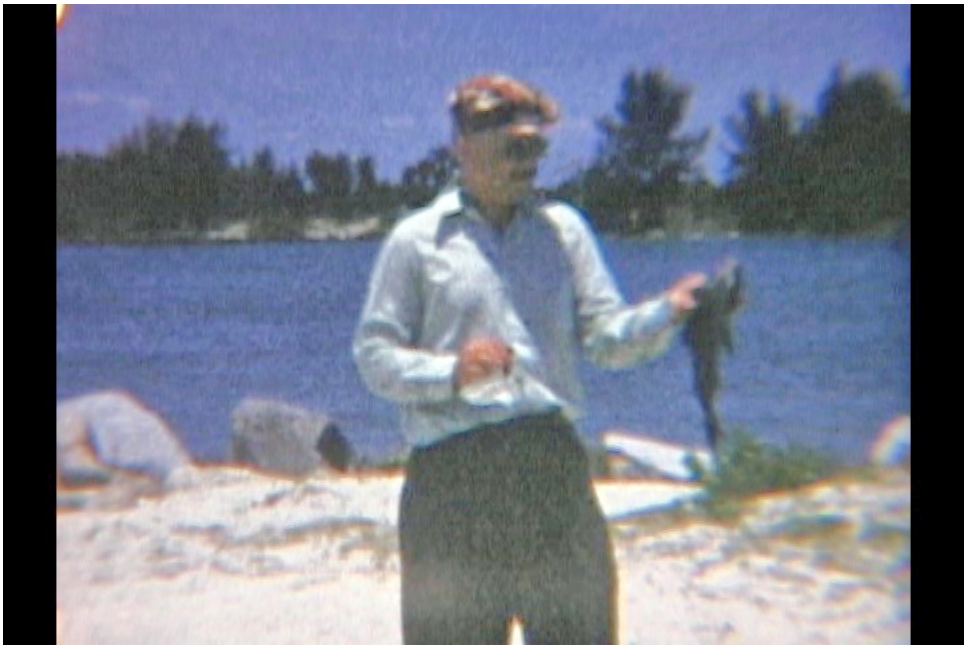
Earl, Liz Frederick and Lillian, Daytona Beach, Florida, 1953



Liz Frederick and Lillian, St. Petersburg, Florida, 1953



Earl & Lillian with Liz Frederick, Marianna, Florida, 1953



Earl with a Cigar and a Fish, Ft. Pierce, Florida, 1953



Earl and Cigar, Cocoa Beach, Florida, 1953
[Earl's movie footage]



Lillian with Liz Frederick, Daytona Beach, Florida, 1953
Earl's 1954 Plymouth Savoy
[Earl's movie footage]





The Fredericks and Skinners
Daytona Beach, Florida, 1953
[Earl's movie footage]





The Fredericks and Skinners
Daytona Beach, Florida, 1953
[Earl's movie footage]

Frank is showing off the Schlitz carton that he and Earl polished off.

The Kids Move In

The Skinners and Fredericks had visited Dave & Annette in the Spring of 1953. Dave completed his stint in the Air Force in the summer, and in July, the couple returned to New Jersey from Louisiana.

Dave and Annette, both age 23 and married one year, moved in with the Skinners on Walnut Ave. in Westville. Now a civilian, Dave took a sales job with the same company that his father worked for – The Keystone Insurance Company.

The Kids Move Out

In the Fall of 1953, Dave and wife Annette purchased their first home – a modest home on an acre of land in Deptford, NJ. The area was called Gardenville Center. Annette was pregnant.

Their home sat at the northeast corner of Clements Bridge Road and Lewis Avenue. Today, the house address is 12 Lewis Avenue. That is where I grew up, living there from 1954 until 1964. Hard to believe, but at the time, there was nothing on the far side of Clements Bridge Road but some grazing cattle and a gas station down at the intersection with Cooper Street. My Dad would send me to the gas station to get his fix of his pack-a-day Kool cigarettes.

62 Walker Avenue (today, 59 Walker Avenue)

In August of 1954, Earl and Lillian sold their bungalow on Walnut Ave. in Westville. They had lived there since 1941. They upgraded to a nice property at 62 Walker Avenue, Deptford. This home was located just a few blocks from the Deptford home that Dave and Annette had purchased a year earlier. Convenient as Dave & Annette now had a son.

The home of Earl and Lillian was a small, one-story ranch - about 1800 sq, ft. It was about the same size as their previous home in Westville, but it was a nicer home, with a large yard and in a better spread-out neighborhood. Middle-class, instead of lower middle-class. The home sat on a beautiful acre of grass with some trees and a white fence. The property included a large stand-alone 2-car garage and an additional garage-sized shed.

The house was shaped like a dog bone with the kitchen, office and dining area at one end, and the two bedrooms and bath at the other. Lillian had the master bedroom, Earl had the smaller one. The middle of the dog bone was the living room, with a fireplace against the front patio and a door leading out to the rear patio. The clean basement had little in it except for Earl's work bench and tools.

I would spend the first ten years of my life in Deptford within short walking distance of Earl and Lillian.

62 Walker Avenue (continued)

Earl and Lillian's Deptford home was marvelous for a kid. An acre of land to explore, a favorite tree to climb, and the novelty of a key-start riding mower. In the summertime, Earl and Lillian would set up netting for an outdoor dining area 'festooned' with colored lights for barbecues and parties. I had friends in the surrounding streets in the neighborhood.

Lillian always loved animals. She would hang meat gristle for the birds and feed stray cats. Lillian had a dog 'Shine' born the same year as me (1954). An ugly mutt but she did not care.

The Skinner living room, heavy with the smell of Earl's cigars, was decorated with a southwest American theme - American Indian and horse-related paintings and artwork collected on trips to the American southwest that Lillian enjoyed. Decades later, Earl and Lillian still wore turquoise jewelry from the Southwest, though their travel preferences had changed to the northwest Oregon coast.

Towards the end of the 1950's, their travels included Bermuda and Sanibel and Lillian developed an interest in shell collecting. Earl built a glass-topped coffee table for their living room which Lillian filled with shells. The table had fluorescent lights in it so Earl had to put an electrical outlet on the floor in the middle of the Persian rug. The coffee table, sans lighting, reappeared in Sanibel years later.

They had a detached 2-story tall garage and a shed. By the late 50's, the shed, about the size of a 1-car garage, was filled with boxes of shells.

Earl had a home office for his sales job with Keystone Insurance, just off the kitchen. He had the corporate grey metal desk and metal file cabinets that you saw in every company in the 1950's. Same setup that my dad later had in Woodbury. I can still see Earl leaning back in the chair of his office, about 1965, with his thinning hair combed straight back.

I recall Earl pouring cement, dyed red and green, into rectangular molds to create stepping stones for the lawn.

A hand-made sign at the entrance to the Skinner driveway said 'Wind 'n Trees', and was illuminated at night with a railroad lantern that came from one of my mother's relatives. The beautiful property was surrounded by a well=kept white fence.

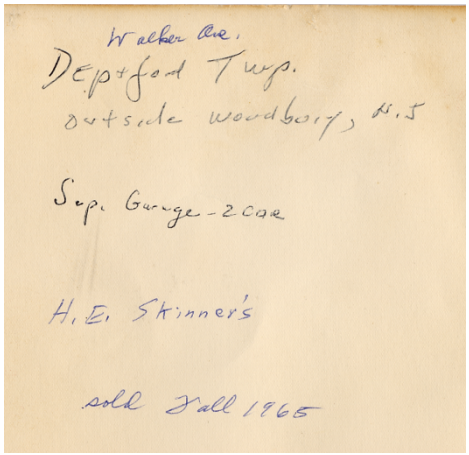


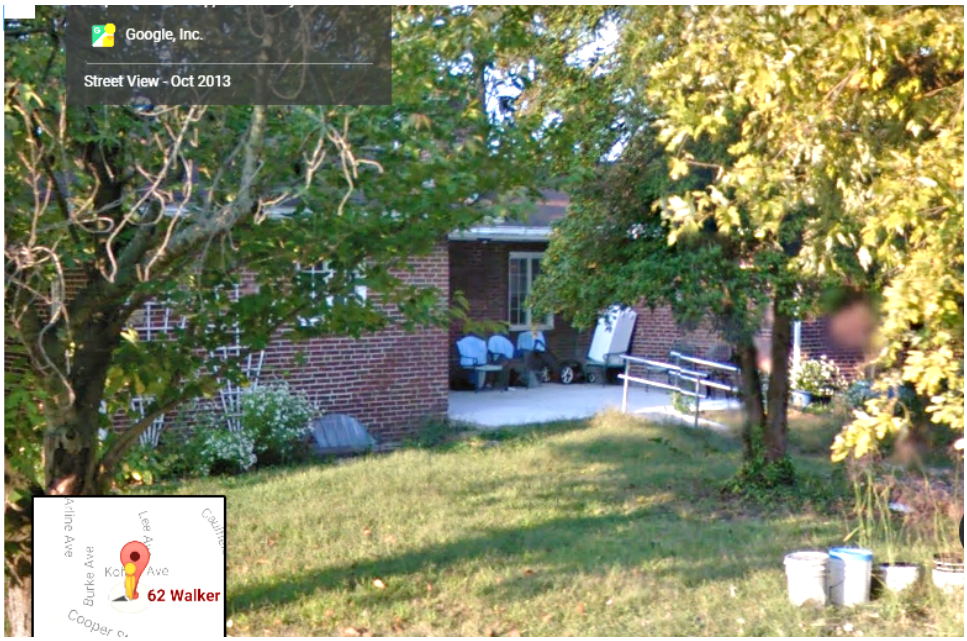
My Grandparents -
Earl & Lillian Skinner; Elizabeth & Frank Frederick
Earl and Lillian's home, 62 Walker Ave., Deptford

My 8th birthday, 14 June 1962
First photos taken with my birthday gift - Kodak Brownie camera.

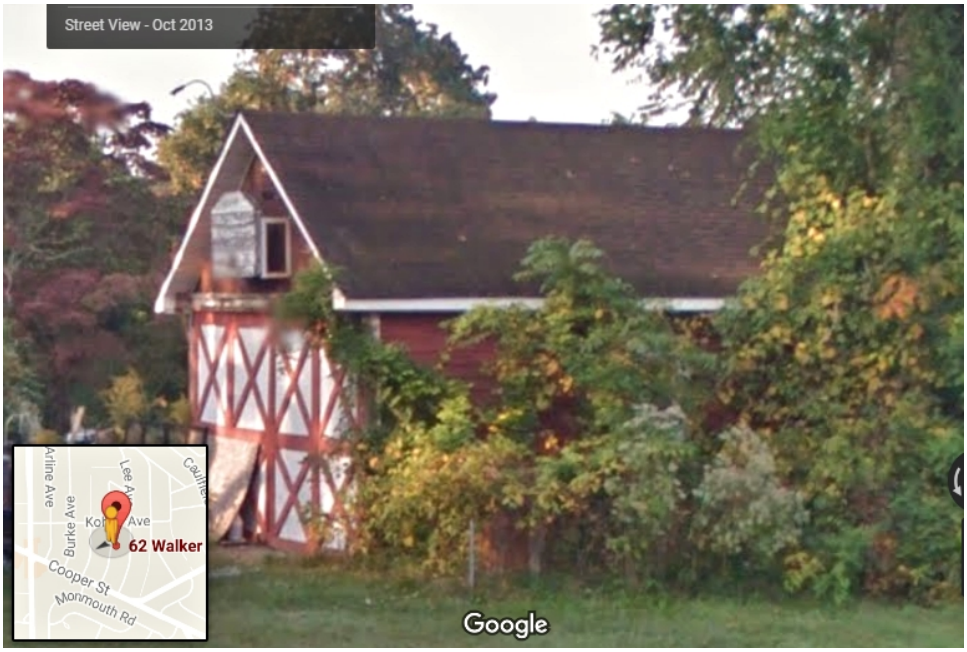


62 Walker Avenue (Rear)





62 Walker Avenue (front), Run Down, 2013



Earl's large Garage, 2013 – torn down 2017
[google street view]



This painting hung in their Walker Ave. living room. Entitled 'Valencia, Spain' by the artist Ladislao Szody (1902-1973), painted or sold to them 11 May, 1960. I sold it 2020. It was a part of her southwestern US theme, but not quite.



They had a second painting on the wall which was likely disposed of at the time of the sale of Walker Ave. in 1965. The second painting looked something like this painting (this image from the internet and also by artist Szody).



June, 1955

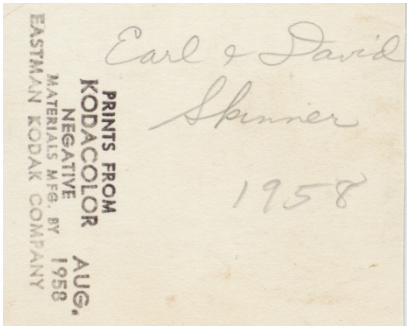




October, 1956, Home of Warren & May Skinner, Prospect Park, PA



Father & Son, Talking Keystone, 1958



Annette's writing







Susan, Kevin & Shine, Walker Ave., 1959 [DES slides]







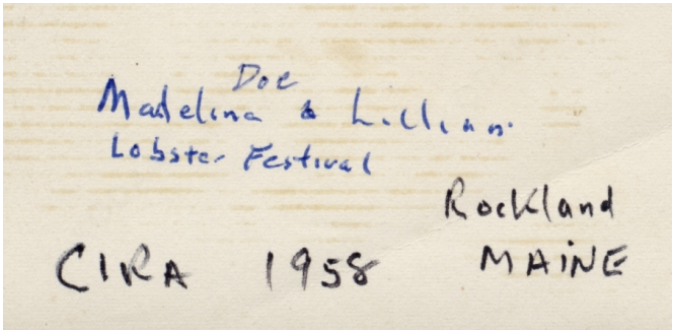
Keystone Sales Prize for Earl and David
Split Rock Lodge, Poconos, 1960
(DES slides)

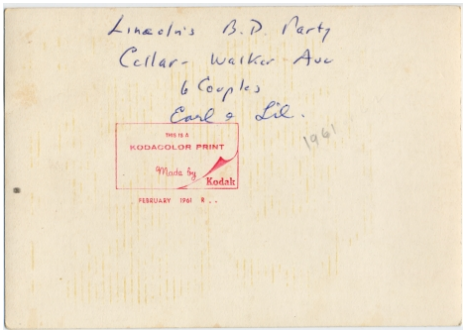

Madeline Doe 58

1958


Lincoln's Birthday Party 61

1961


Madelina Doe & Lillian
Lobster Festival
Rockland
CIRA 1958 MAINE


Lincoln's B.D. Party
Cellar - Walker Ave
6 Couples
Earl & Lil.
1961
KODACOLOR PRINT
Made by Kodak







Christmas, 1960, Walker Avenue [DES Slides]

Home of Earl and Lillian with Annette & Susan and Earl's parents (May & Warren)









Easter, 1962 [DES slides]



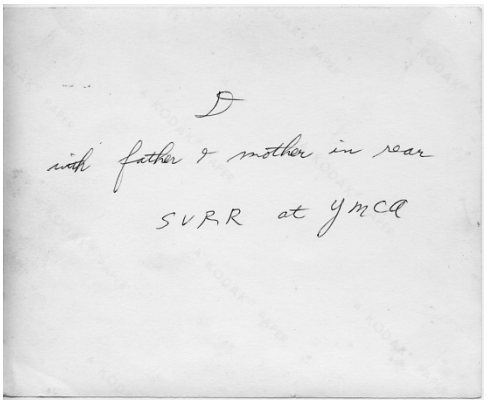
Susan & Kevin Birthdays, June,1964, Walker Avenue;
Earl's Mercedes in rear [DES slides]



Christmas, 1964, Childs St., Woodbury {DES slides]



Dave with parents Earl and Lillian (rear)
Silver Valley Railroad, circa early 1960's
Dave's railroading friend, Walt Price, at left



End of Part 1. Download Part 2 (1963 to 1996) to continue.