

CHAPTER 1 – THE FRIENDSHIP GROWS

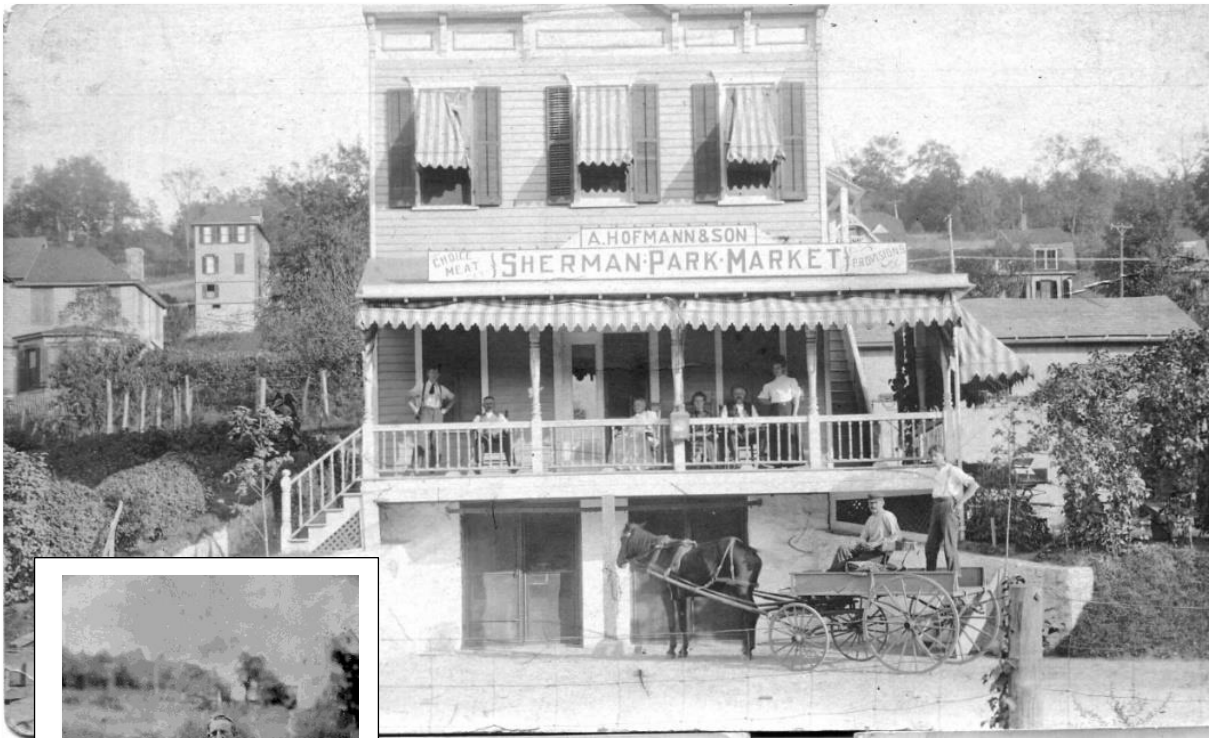
CHAPTER 1

The words had been said many times before - "it was the best of times; it was the worst of times."

Barely in their teens, three young boys, Gibby, George and Mike, were born into a world once again at peace following the "War to End All Wars." As the Roaring Twenties progressed, their friendship would grow. That bond would strengthen as they and their families experienced the stock market crash of 1929 and the Great Depression. They supported each other and shared what little they had, emerging as the best of friends. They lived life as one and, answering the call, would go to war together. This is their story.

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Gibby (Gilbert Andrew Rauh) - Great-Great Grandfather, Martin Hofmann (1817-1880, had two sons, Adam Hofmann, seated at left on porch of the Sherman Market, George Johann, seated at right on the porch. They immigrated from Bremen on the passenger ship Ohio in 1872. Adam and his son, John Frederick (who I knew as Uncle Fred) opened the Sherman Park Market in Thornwood, New York, where both he and Johann started their estates.



Uncle John Frederick 'Fred' in
Thornwood

Adam, born in Germany in 1846, married Anna Katherine and had two sons, Frederick John and George (who I only saw twice – once peeking through a ceiling vent at Uncle Fred's house and at his funeral [they said George was a little strange!]). That was the first funeral I ever attended sometime in the early to mid-fifties and all I remember is how much George looked like my father.

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Adam and Anna also had three daughters, Annie, Helena (Helen, Lena or as I knew her, Aunt Lena [in German, Tante Lena] and Gertrude (Aunt Gert) who married Julius Rauh and started the family relationship between the Hofmann's and Rauh's in Westchester County.



Fred & Lena 1952

1903



"Tante" Lena - 1930



Thornwood Railroad Station
Large Garden on Public Land



Franklin Street
Hofmann General Store,
Thornwood

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Cousin Gibby, born in 1915 to Julius and Gertrude (Hofmann) Rauh, the oldest of the three best friends, grew up on the family farm in Westchester County. Gibby was an assertive young boy and liked being first as he was here sitting in front of his older sister, Edna, on the family horse.



Gibby also spent time working with his father, Julius, keeping mechanical farm equipment running, and, whenever time permitted, horsing around with his best friend and cousin, George and their mutual best friend, Mike. Their inseparability began before they were teens.



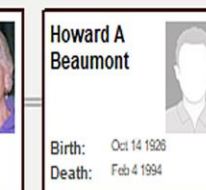
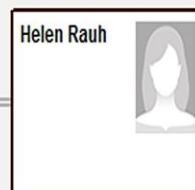
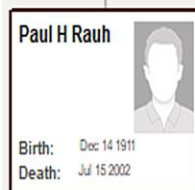
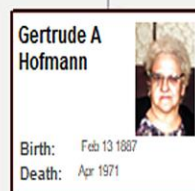
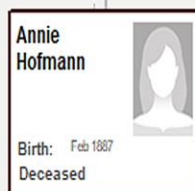
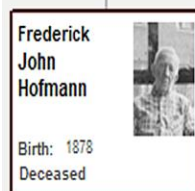
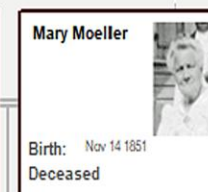
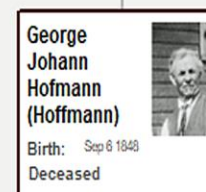
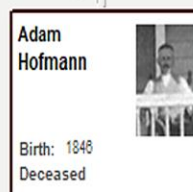
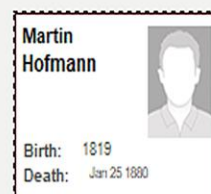
Julius & Gibby



George & Gibby – circa 1926

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Descendants of Martin Hofmann



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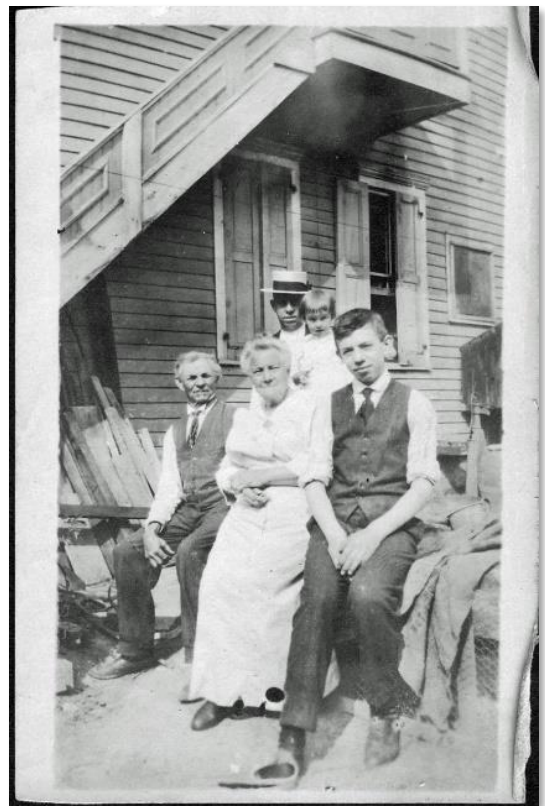
George (George Adam Hofmann) - Adam's brother, George Johann, born in Germany in 1846, took the American name John. He and his wife, Mary, had six children, John Arthur (1876-1942), Mary (1877), Margaret (1878), Jacob (1880), Henry (1883) and George (1890).



Left, three generations of Hofmann men relax on the porch of the Sherman Park Market. Seated, Great-Grandfather (Grosspop) Johann holding my father, George Adam; left to right – grandsons Arthur (Ardie) and Fred and their father John Arthur.

Below, Johann, seated at left next to Mary. Their son, John Arthur in the straw hat stands behind them holding his daughter Gladys. Her brother Fred, 12 years older, sits to the right of his grandparents.

John Arthur married Minnie Louise Gartner (1872-1933), daughter of Georg and Margaritte Gartner of Schneeberg, Germany, and between them had three sons and one daughter; Fred (1902-1973), Arthur (Ardie – 1904-1992), Gladys (1915-1988) and George Adam (1917-1996).



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While George spent a good deal of his youth at the Hofmann estates and Rauh farm in Westchester County, he was born at home and grew up at 850 Columbus Avenue, at the corner of 104th Street in Manhattan. At that time his father, John Arthur, worked for the railroad and eventually became a chauffeur. His mother was busy at home raising three other children.

CITY OF NEW YORK
DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH
BUREAU OF RECORDS AND STATISTICS

Borough of **MANHATTAN**, New York, N. Y. **APR 16 1970**

Below is a photostatic copy of a certificate on file in the Bureau of Records and Statistics at the Department of Health of the City of New York.

Form 3-11
THE CITY OF NEW YORK, STATE OF NEW YORK
DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH. Registered Number

CERTIFICATE AND RECORD OF BIRTH 47003

Name of Child: *George Adam Hofmann*

Sex: <i>Male</i>	Color: <i>White</i>	Mother's Name: <i>Minnie Hofmann</i>
Date of Birth: <i>Sept 28-17</i>	Mother's Name: <i>Minnie Hofmann</i>	Mother's Name: <i>Minnie Hofmann</i>
Place of Birth: <i>850 Columbus Ave</i>	Mother's Name: <i>850 Columbus Ave</i>	Mother's Name: <i>850 Columbus Ave</i>
By whom: <i>Arthur Hofmann</i>	Mother's Name: <i>NYC</i>	Mother's Name: <i>NYC</i>
Father's Name: <i>850 Columbus Ave</i>	Mother's Name: <i>40</i>	Mother's Name: <i>White</i>
Father's Name: <i>N.Y. City</i>	Mother's Name: <i>House</i>	Mother's Name: <i>House</i>
Father's Age: <i>41</i>	Color: <i>White</i>	Number of Children Born to this Mother: <i>4</i>
Signature: <i>Paul E. Stern</i>	Signature: <i>Henry Friedman</i>	Signature: <i>Henry Friedman</i>
Date: <i>OCT 2 1917</i>	Date: <i>1-17</i>	Date: <i>2 West 109 St</i>

This is to certify that the foregoing is a true copy of a record in my custody.

Paul E. Stern
Acting Director

BY *William Stern*
Acting Director

WARNING: DO NOT ACCEPT THIS TRANSCRIPT UNLESS THE RAISED SEAL OF THE DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH IS AFFIXED THEREON. THE REPRODUCTION OR ALTERATION OF THIS TRANSCRIPT IS PROHIBITED BY SECTION 3.21 OF THE NEW YORK CITY HEALTH CODE.

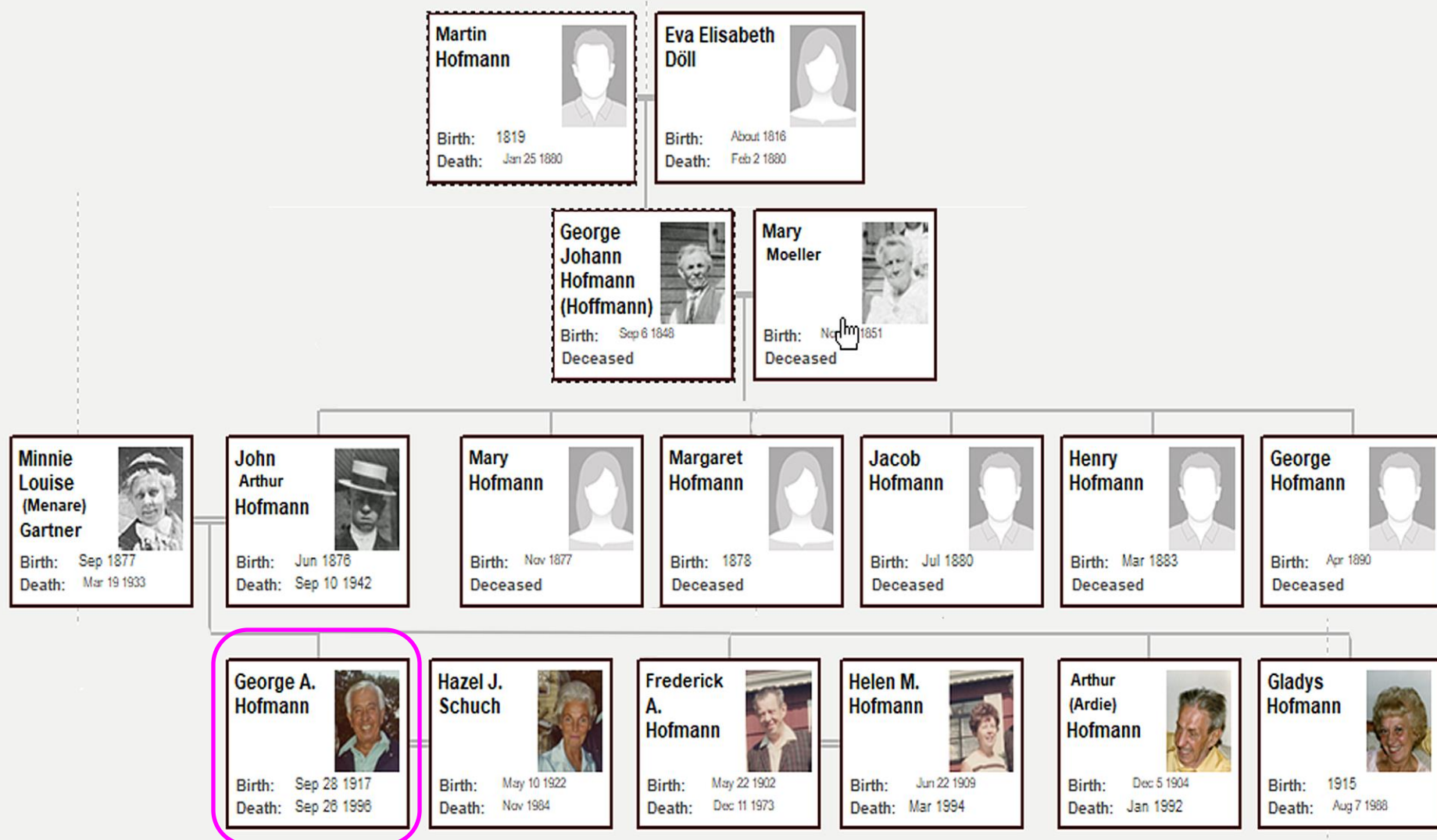
NOTICE: In issuing this transcript of the Record, the Department of Health of the City of New York does not certify to the truth of the statements made thereon, as no inquiry as to the facts has been provided by law.

George and his mother Minnie Louise at his confirmation at Grace Methodist Church in 1925.



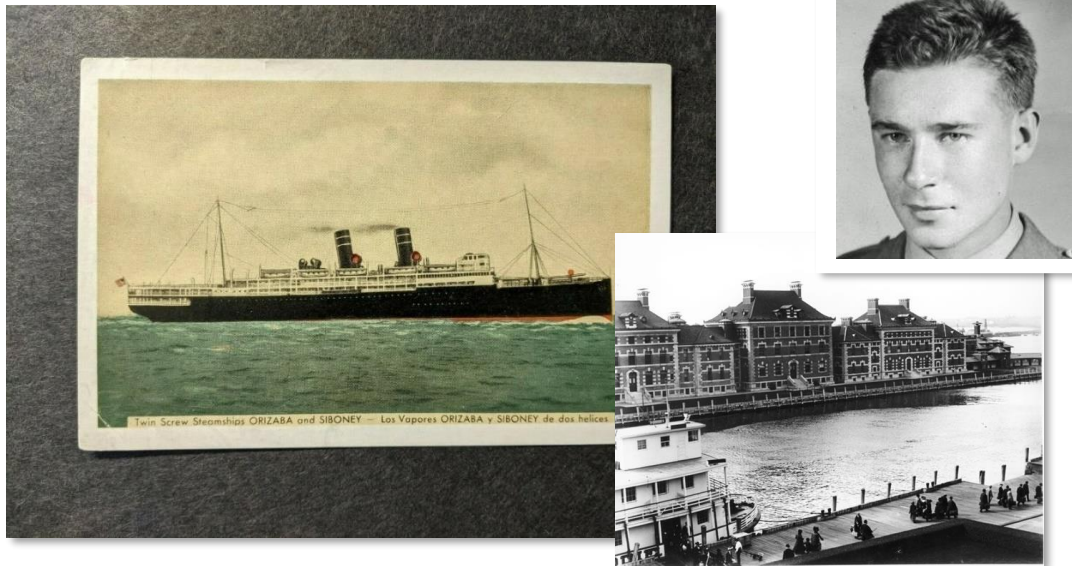
Four years later, the Roaring Twenties ended with the stock market crash of 1929. Although family survival was severely tested, now thirteen, life went on with young George frequently visiting family properties in Thornwood, NY.

Descendants of Martin Hofmann



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Mike - Mike Iriarte was born on March 16, 1919, in New York City to immigrants from Puerto Rico. As shown on the SS. Siboney manifest at Ellis Island, at the age of seven, he and his mother and grandmother were living on the upper west side of Manhattan and were neighbors both George and his future wife, Hazel Schuch on 104th Street.



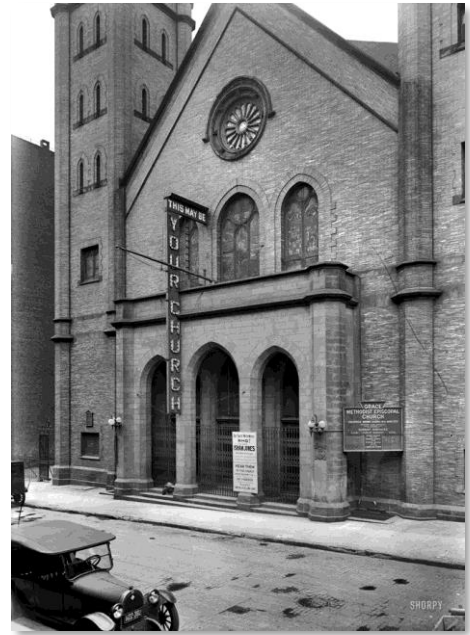
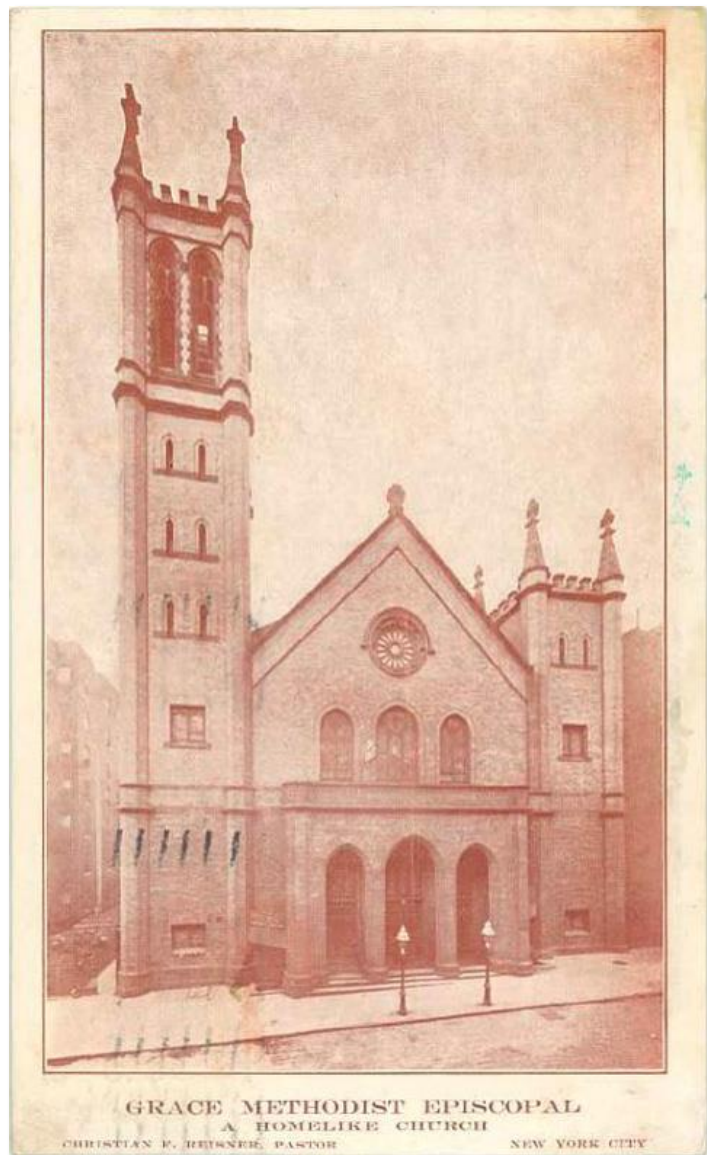
LIST OF UNITED STATES CITIZENS (FOR THE IMMIGRATION AUTHORITIES)									
S. S. Siboney		Sailing from Havana, Cuba		May 28th, 1926		Arriving at Port of New York		June 1st, 1926	
Line No.	Passenger Name	Age	Sex	Place of Birth	Date of Birth	Place of Birth	Date of Birth	Place of Birth	Date of Birth
1	Atwater, Frederick	60	M	St. Thomas, S. I.	January 24, 1876	St. Thomas, S. I.	January 24, 1876	St. Thomas, S. I.	January 24, 1876
2	Atwater, Anna	59	F	St. Thomas, S. I.	March 7, 1887	St. Thomas, S. I.	March 7, 1887	St. Thomas, S. I.	March 7, 1887
3	Fier, Frances	84	F	Brooklyn, N. Y.	Oct. 8, 1902	Brooklyn, N. Y.	Oct. 8, 1902	Brooklyn, N. Y.	Oct. 8, 1902

IRIARTE	MEMRONDES	50	F	WD SAN JUAN, P. R.	JUN. 24. 1876.	121 W. 104 th ST. N.Y.
IRIARTE	BLANCA	28	F	SAN JUAN, P. R.	DEC. 3. 1898.	WITH MOTHER.
IRIARTE	FRANCIS L.	7	M	NEW YORK, N. Y.	MAR. 16. 1919.	WITH GRANDMOTHER

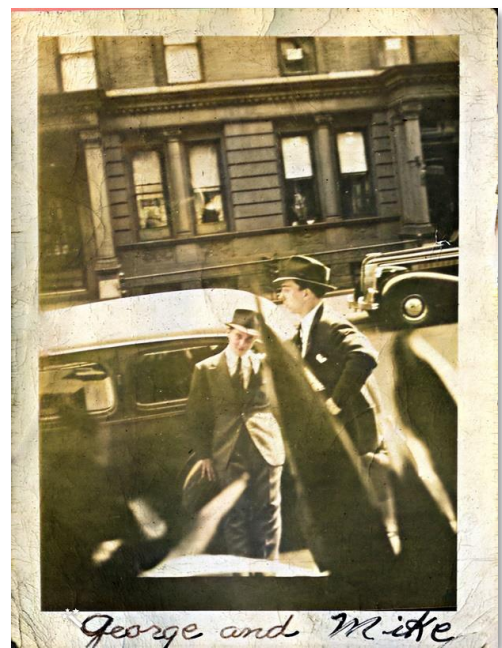
1	Lawrence	Alfred	58	M	Brooklyn, N. Y.	Nov. 11, 1903	Brooklyn, N. Y.	Nov. 11, 1903
2	Maddalena	Morris	40	M	Brooklyn, N. Y.	May 16, 1903	Brooklyn, N. Y.	May 16, 1903
3	Hansen	Samuel	50	M	Brooklyn, N. Y.	May 16, 1903	Brooklyn, N. Y.	May 16, 1903
4	Seamus	Marjorie	20	F	Brooklyn, N. Y.	July 6, 1900	Brooklyn, N. Y.	July 6, 1900
5	Belohl	Joseph	40	M	Brooklyn, N. Y.	July 6, 1900	Brooklyn, N. Y.	July 6, 1900
6	Stewart	Reuben	48	M	Brooklyn, N. Y.	Nov. 22, 1897	Brooklyn, N. Y.	Nov. 22, 1897
7	Freeland	Clarence	40	M	Brooklyn, N. Y.	Nov. 22, 1897	Brooklyn, N. Y.	Nov. 22, 1897
8	Atata	William	30	M	Brooklyn, N. Y.	Nov. 22, 1897	Brooklyn, N. Y.	Nov. 22, 1897
9	Ward	William	30	M	Brooklyn, N. Y.	Nov. 22, 1897	Brooklyn, N. Y.	Nov. 22, 1897
10	Ward	William	30	M	Brooklyn, N. Y.	Nov. 22, 1897	Brooklyn, N. Y.	Nov. 22, 1897
11	Ward	William	30	M	Brooklyn, N. Y.	Nov. 22, 1897	Brooklyn, N. Y.	Nov. 22, 1897
12	Ward	William	30	M	Brooklyn, N. Y.	Nov. 22, 1897	Brooklyn, N. Y.	Nov. 22, 1897
13	Ward	William	30	M	Brooklyn, N. Y.	Nov. 22, 1897	Brooklyn, N. Y.	Nov. 22, 1897
14	Ward	William	30	M	Brooklyn, N. Y.	Nov. 22, 1897	Brooklyn, N. Y.	Nov. 22, 1897
15	Ward	William	30	M	Brooklyn, N. Y.	Nov. 22, 1897	Brooklyn, N. Y.	Nov. 22, 1897
16	Ward	William	30	M	Brooklyn, N. Y.	Nov. 22, 1897	Brooklyn, N. Y.	Nov. 22, 1897
17	Ward	William	30	M	Brooklyn, N. Y.	Nov. 22, 1897	Brooklyn, N. Y.	Nov. 22, 1897
18	Ward	William	30	M	Brooklyn, N. Y.	Nov. 22, 1897	Brooklyn, N. Y.	Nov. 22, 1897
19	Ward	William	30	M	Brooklyn, N. Y.	Nov. 22, 1897	Brooklyn, N. Y.	Nov. 22, 1897
20	Ward	William	30	M	Brooklyn, N. Y.	Nov. 22, 1897	Brooklyn, N. Y.	Nov. 22, 1897

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121 West 104th Street on the upper west side of Manhattan, is immediately adjacent to Grace Methodist Church. My mother and the Schuch family of 71 West 104th Street and my father and the Hofmann family of 850 Columbus Avenue regularly attended that church as did I as a child in the late 1940's. No doubt, Mike and Hazel met at that church and I was told, he ultimately introduced her to another close friend, my father. The Grace Methodist Church and frequent visits to the Westchester County countryside were the catalysts for Gibby, George and Mike's unbreakable friendship.



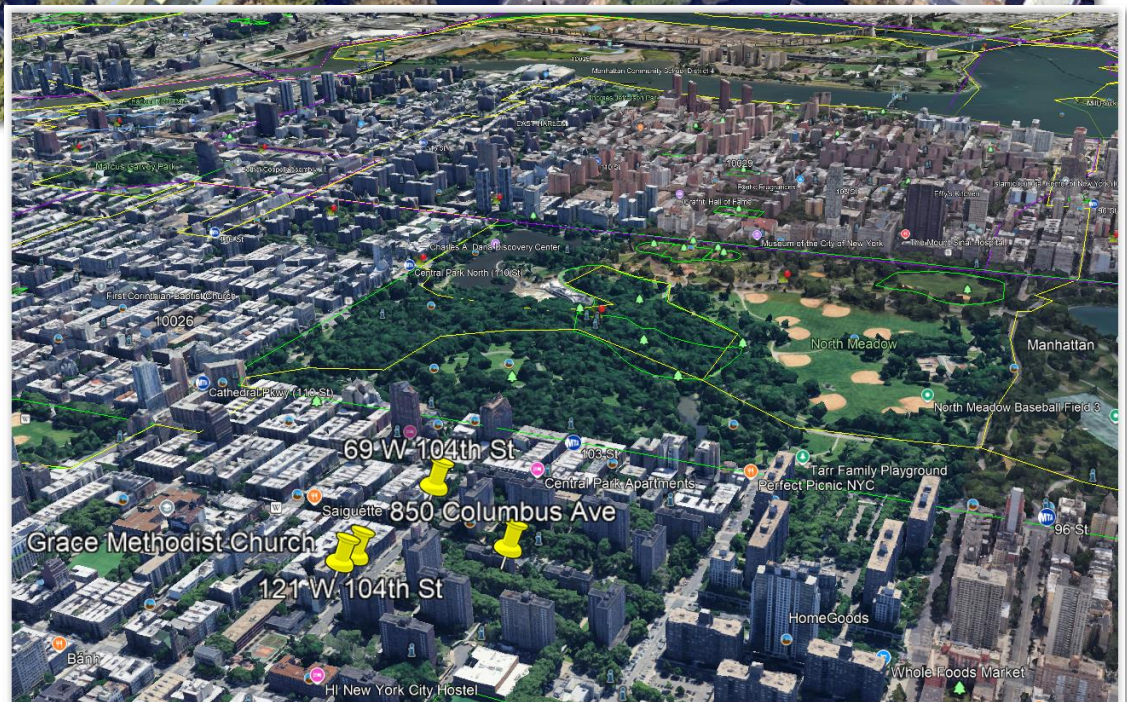
May 1922



This clandestine photo snapped by my mom in her high school dating days was found in one of her many photo albums. She was sitting in her front window at her West 104th Street brownstone behind a few potted plants on the sill. Mike was immediately outside of the window leaning on a parked car. On cue, when he tipped his hat, George walked by and she now had a photo of the man she would one day marry.

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While George did spend a lot of time with aunts, uncles and cousins north of New York City, in the vastness of Manhattan, Mike, Hazel and his world was just one city block – and a beautiful place to be with easy walking distance to the pristine Central Park of the 1930's and 1940's.



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As young men, Gibby, George and Mike had faced the longest, most widespread, and deepest depression of the 20th century. That would certainly toughen them up and that toughness and predictable behaviors it produced were very apparent to children of parents of the depression era. That toughness would also carry them through an even bigger challenge – World War II. Who knew that the innocence in these young faces would be replaced with tragedy and grief.

