

CHAPTER 1 – THE FRIENDSHIP GROWS

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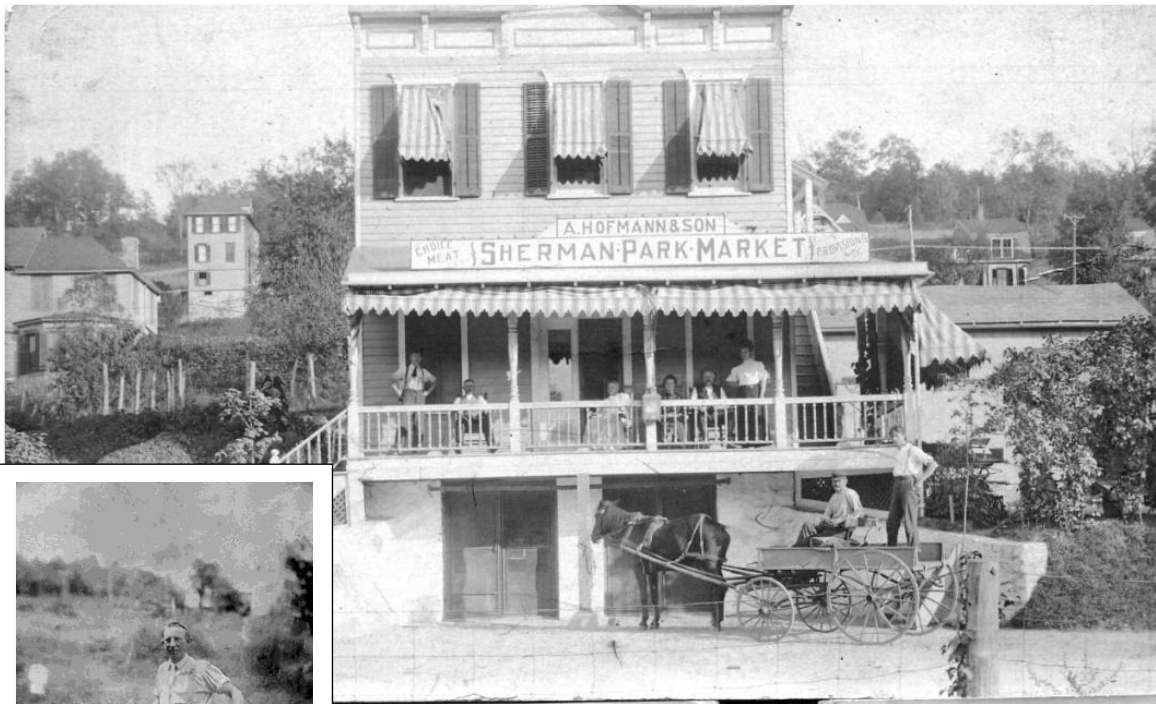
The words had been said many times before - "it was the best of times; it was the worst of times."

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. Gibby was first. This is his story.

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The First Best Friend - Gibby (1915 – 1943), Gilbert Andrew Rauh

Great-Great Grandfather, Martin Hofmann (1817-1880), had two sons, Adam Hofmann, seated at left on the porch of the Sherman Market, George Johann, seated to the right. They immigrated from Bremen on the passenger ship Ohio in 1872. Adam and his son, John Frederick (1878 - ~1960), 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 (1882 – 1959), 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 late 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 (1887), Helena (1884 - Helen, Lena or as I knew her, Aunt Lena - in German, Tante Lena) and Gertrude (1887 – 1971 - Aunt Gert). Gert married Julius Christian Rauh, in 1910, starting the family relationship between the Hofmann's and Rauh's in Westchester County. Julius would go on to serve in World War I and watch his son, Gilbert, go off to serve in World War II.



Fred and Lena - Franklin Street, Thornwood, NY



"Tante" Lena – circa 1925



Gertrude Hofmann/Rauh
Circa 1955



Fred Hofmann and Rose Schuch
on the Hofmann Market Porch – 1950
Corner of Commerce and Franklin, Thornwood, NY



Lena – circa 1900

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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 at everything as he was here sitting in front of his older sister, Edna, on the family horse.



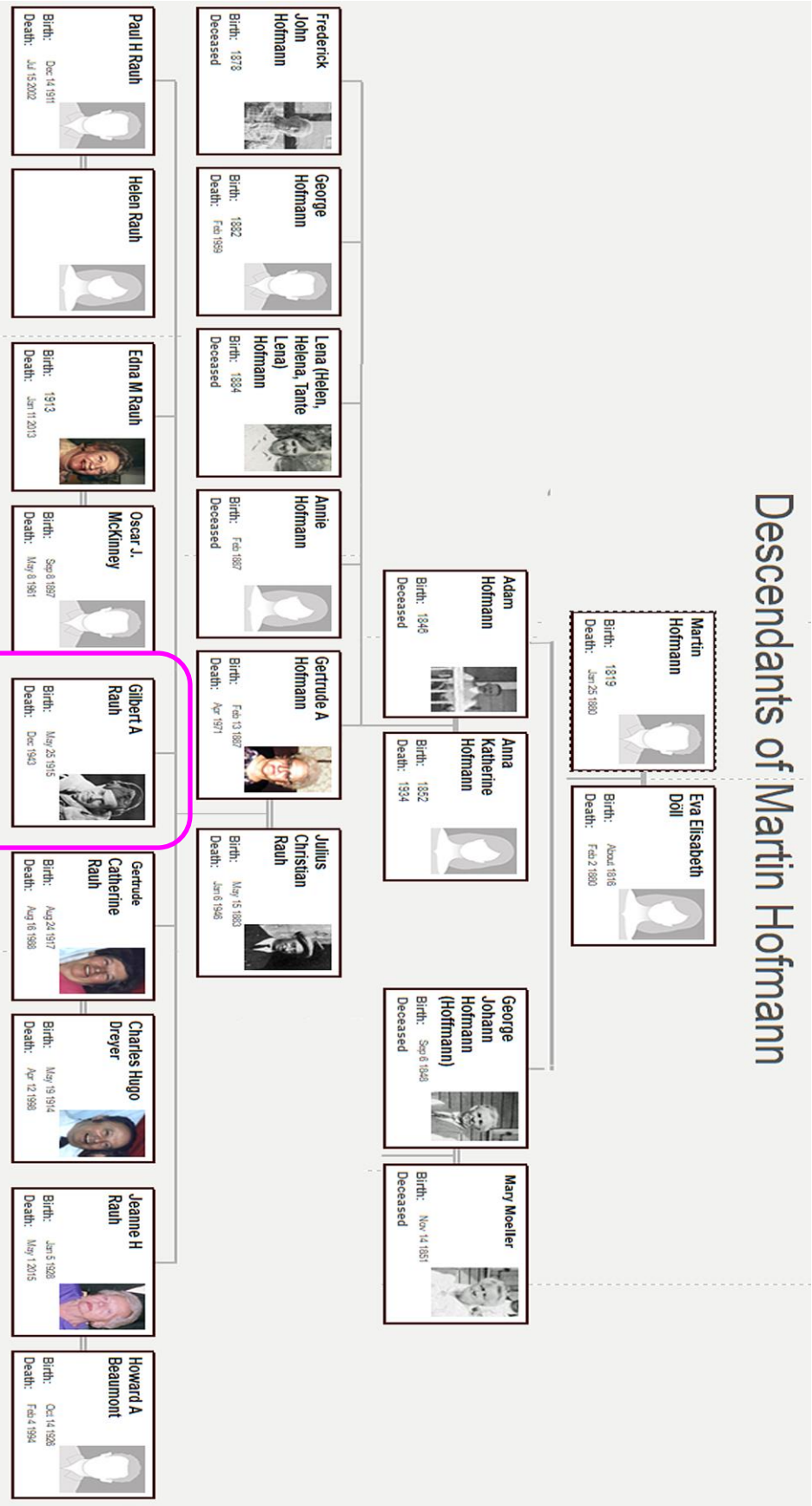
Gibby also spent time working with his father, Julius, keeping mechanical farm equipment running, and, whenever time permitted, horsing around with his best friend and cousin, George and their mutual best friend, Mike. Their inseparability began well before they were teens.



Julius & Gibby



George & Gibby – circa 1926



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The Second Friend - George (1917 – 1996), George Adam Hofmann

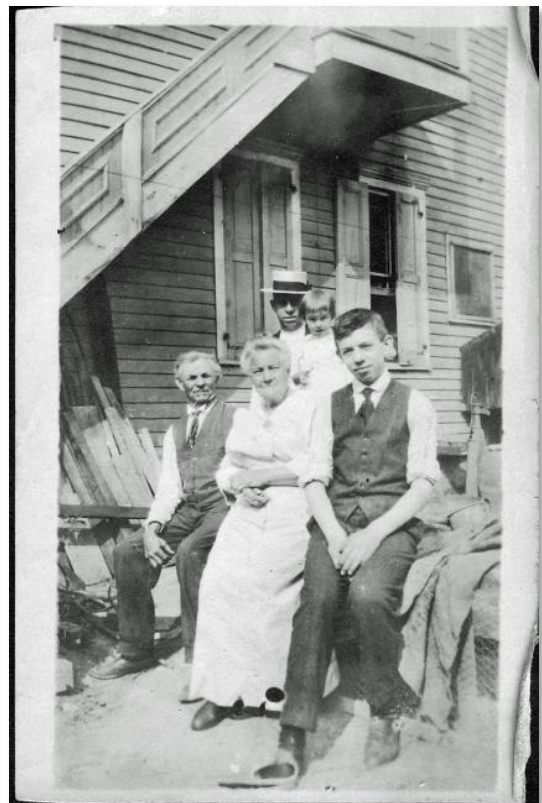
Adam's brother, George Johann, born in Germany in 1846, took the American name John. He and his wife, Mary, had six children, John Arthur (1876-1942), Mary (1877), Margaret (1878), Jacob (1880), Henry (1883) and George (1890).



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.



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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 3.21
THE CITY OF NEW YORK, DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH, STATE OF NEW YORK, Registered Number

CERTIFICATE AND RECORD OF BIRTH 47003

OF

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 Birthplace: <i>850 Columbus Ave</i>
Place of Birth: <i>850 Columbus Ave</i>	Mother's Birthplace: <i>850 Columbus Ave</i>	Mother's Age: <i>40</i>
Father's Name: <i>Arthur Hofmann</i>	Mother's Birthplace: <i>N.Y.C.</i>	Mother's Color: <i>White</i>
Father's Birthplace: <i>850 Columbus Ave</i>	Mother's Age: <i>40</i>	Mother's Religion: <i>House</i>
Father's Birthplace: <i>N.Y. City</i>	Mother's Religion: <i>House</i>	Father's Age: <i>41</i>
Father's Color: <i>White</i>	Number of Children Born to this Mother: <i>4</i>	Number of Children of this Mother Now Living: <i>4</i>

Signature: *Henry Friedman*
Date: *Oct 2 1917*
Residence: *2 West 109 St*

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*
Bureau Rep't

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.

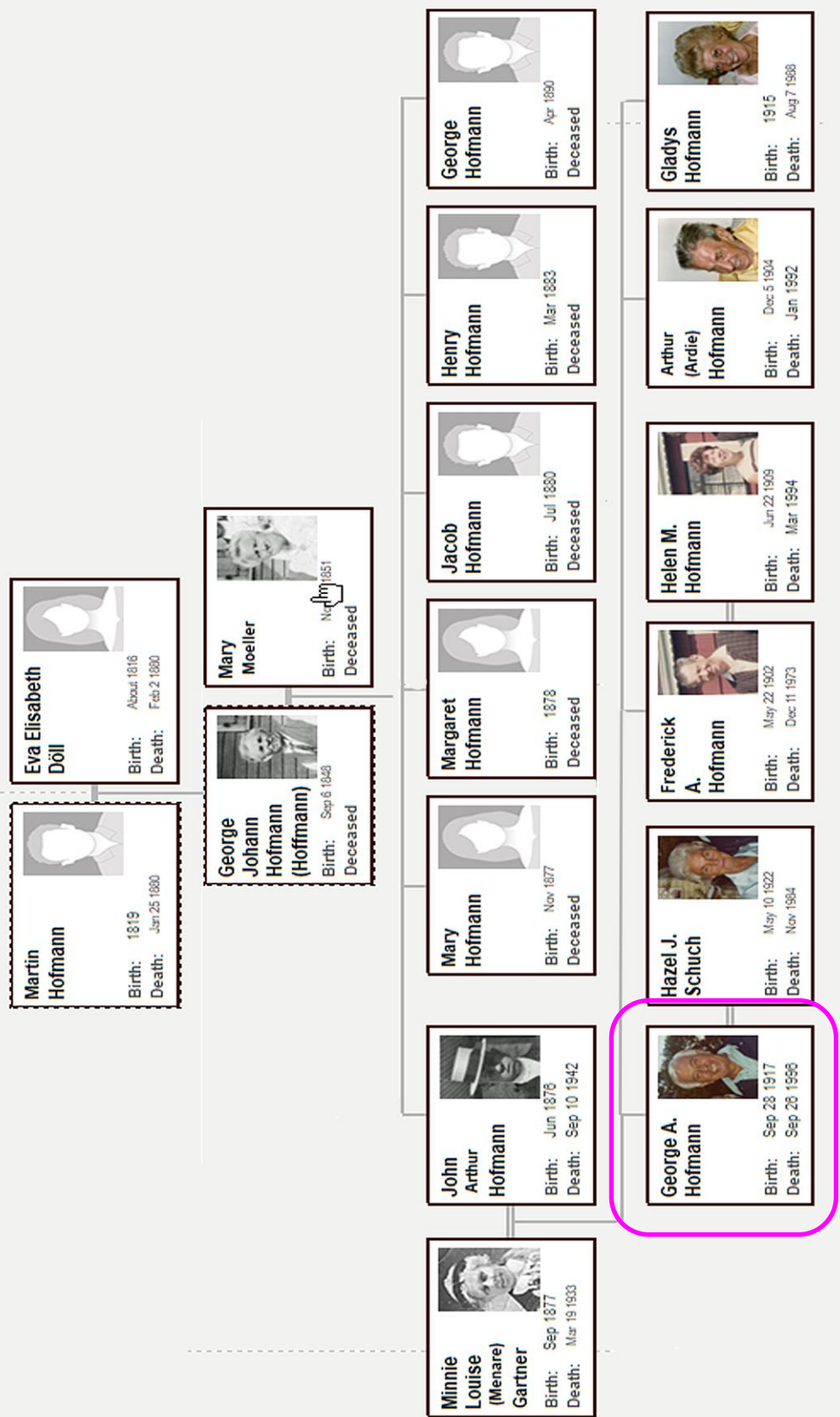
NOTICE: In issuing this transcript of the Record, the Department of Health of the City of New York does not certify to the truth of the statements made thereon, as no inquiry as to the facts has been provided by law.

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 a teenager, life went on with young George frequently visiting family properties in Thornwood, NY, here to the left.

Descendants of Martin Hofmann



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The Third Best Friend - Mike (1919 – 1944), Francis Michael Iriarte

Mike was born 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.



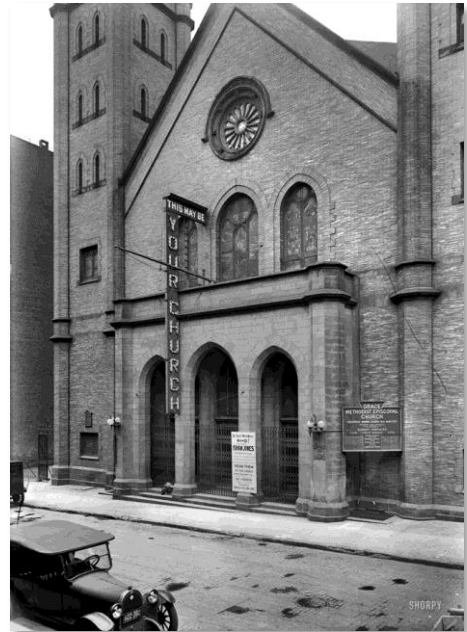
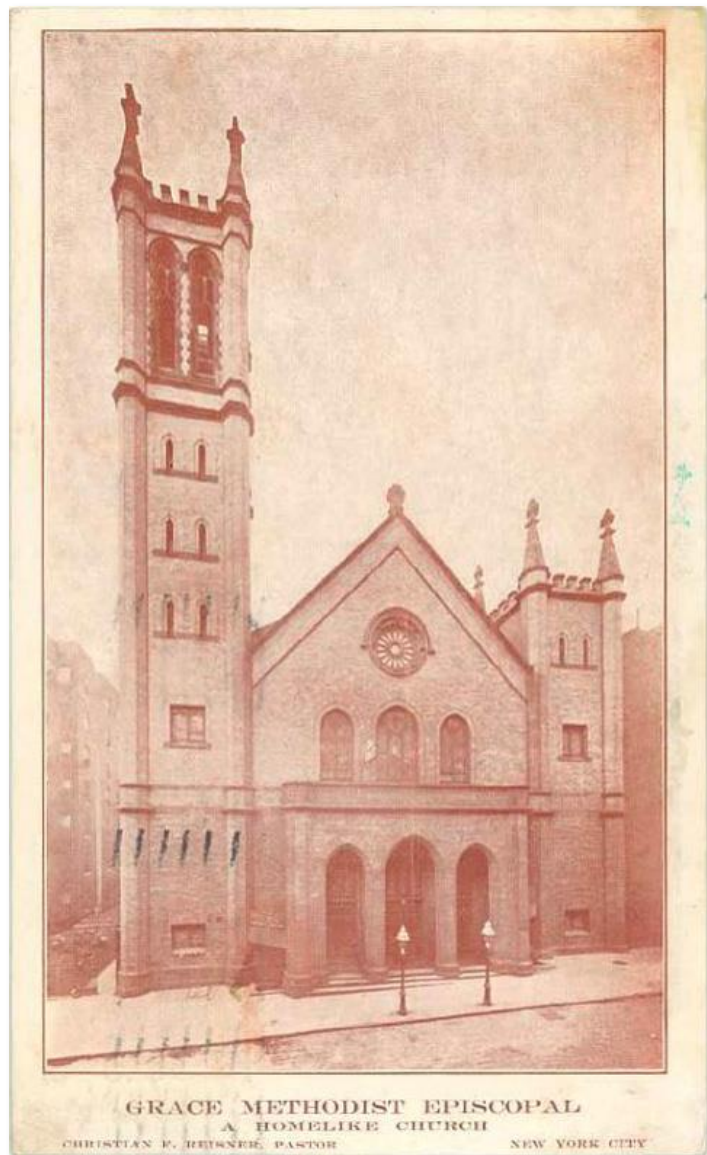
LIST OF UNITED STATES CITIZENS									
FOR THE IMMIGRATION SERVICE									
S.S.	Ellis Island	Sailing from	Arrival Date	1924	Arriving at Port of	New York	Jan 1st, 1924	1924	
No. of Pass.	No. of Pass.	No. of Pass.	No. of Pass.	No. of Pass.	No. of Pass.	No. of Pass.	No. of Pass.	No. of Pass.	No. of Pass.
1	Admission	Proctor	80	M. M. Dineen, N. Y.	January 24, 1924	Illinois, New York.			
2	Admission	Annex	29	F. M. Dineen, N. Y.	March 7, 1924	with husband			

IRIARTE	MERONDES	50	Y	YD	SAN JUAN, P.R.	JUN. 24. 1876.	121 W. 104 th ST. N.Y.
IRIARTE	BLANCA	28	Y	S	SAN JUAN, P.R.	DEC. 3. 1898.	WITH MOTHER.
IRIARTE	FRANCIS M.	7	N	S	NEW YORK, N. Y.	MAR. 16. 1919.	WITH GRANDMOTHER
415 WESTMINSTER AVE							

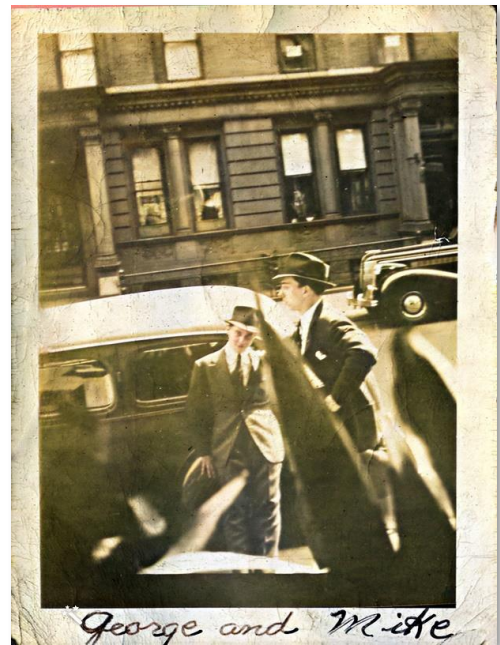
10	Irish	Swedish	28	F. S. Morrison, N. Y.	July 10, 1902	Morristown, N. J.
11	Lavigne	Alfred	22	M. S. Morrison, N. Y.	Nov. 11, 1903	Sockville, N. Y.
12	Robinson	Walter	40	M. S.	May 11, 1904	70 E. 104 St, N. Y.
13	Reynolds	Samuel	20	M. S.	May 11, 1904	1801 Broadway Ave, Brighton, Mass.
14	Reynolds	Harriet	20	F. M. Dineen, N. Y.	July 4, 1904	414 East 104 St, N. Y.
15	Reynolds	John	16	M. S.	July 4, 1904	14 East 104 St, N. Y.
16	Reynolds	John	16	M. S.	July 4, 1904	14 East 104 St, N. Y.
17	Reynolds	John	16	M. S.	July 4, 1904	14 East 104 St, N. Y.
18	Reynolds	John	16	M. S.	July 4, 1904	14 East 104 St, N. Y.
19	Reynolds	John	16	M. S.	July 4, 1904	14 East 104 St, N. Y.
20	Reynolds	John	16	M. S.	July 4, 1904	14 East 104 St, N. Y.
21	Reynolds	John	16	M. S.	July 4, 1904	14 East 104 St, N. Y.
22	Reynolds	John	16	M. S.	July 4, 1904	14 East 104 St, N. Y.
23	Reynolds	John	16	M. S.	July 4, 1904	14 East 104 St, N. Y.
24	Reynolds	John	16	M. S.	July 4, 1904	14 East 104 St, N. Y.
25	Reynolds	John	16	M. S.	July 4, 1904	14 East 104 St, N. Y.
26	Reynolds	John	16	M. S.	July 4, 1904	14 East 104 St, N. Y.
27	Reynolds	John	16	M. S.	July 4, 1904	14 East 104 St, N. Y.
28	Reynolds	John	16	M. S.	July 4, 1904	14 East 104 St, N. Y.
29	Reynolds	John	16	M. S.	July 4, 1904	14 East 104 St, N. Y.
30	Reynolds	John	16	M. S.	July 4, 1904	14 East 104 St, N. Y.

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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 eventually introduced her to his close friend, my father, George. The Grace Methodist Church and frequent visits to the Westchester County countryside were the catalysts for Gibby, George and Mike's unbreakable friendship.



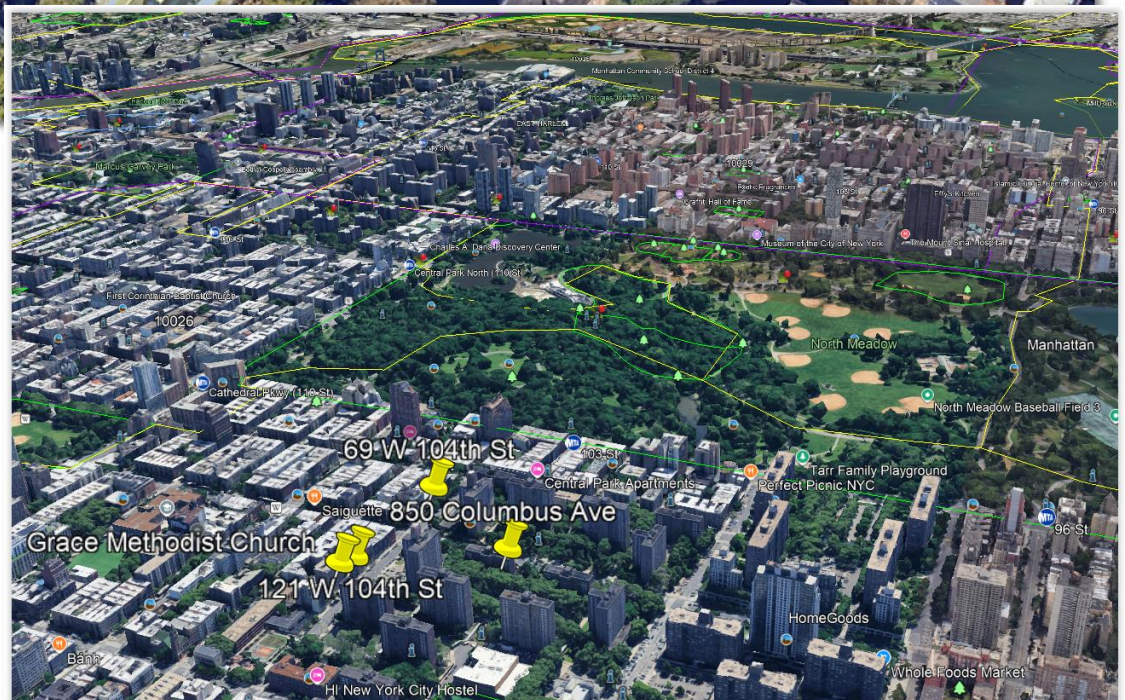
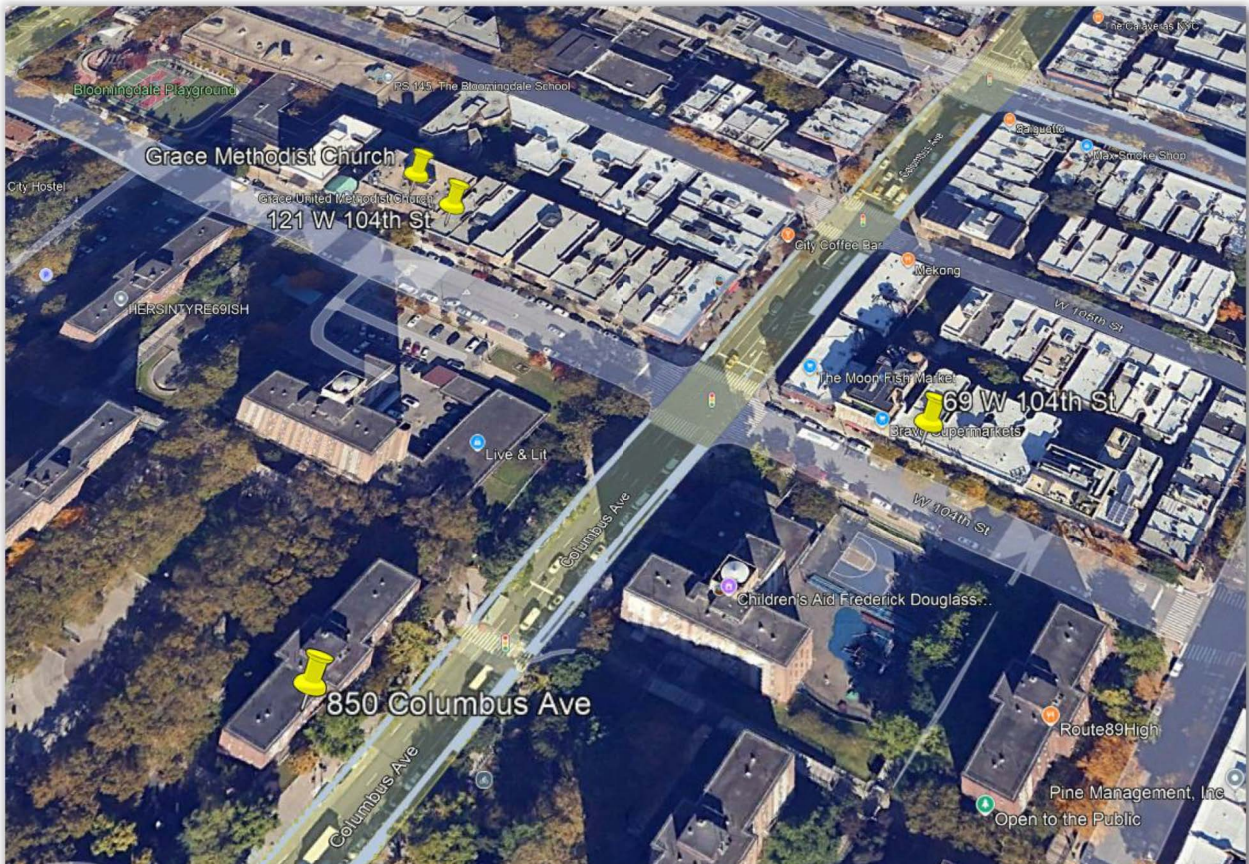
May 1922



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's, Hazel's 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 the 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.

