

CHAPTER XVII



Things began going wrong at the factory. The first inkling of trouble was when we received a return shipment of several hundred pairs of defective shoes from Bullocks Department Stores. I was as much to blame as anyone as I had not been paying enough attention to the final inspection operations. I needed someone to head up that department whom I could trust so I brought Virginia into the plant and put her in charge of that operation. That took care of the problem except for several hundred more pairs that were returned and upset the folks in Pasadena.

About this time there was a near panic in town as word spread about that a group of zombies from Haiti had been spotted down at the Playa near the shipping docks. The schools closed and all children were sent home. My workers begged to be let out early to go home to be with their families and I did let some of the most frightened leave the plant. Next day most of the town was shut down, but the scare lost some of its momentum and things got back to normal in a few days. No, I never saw any of the purported zombies and I doubt that anyone else did. It was just a matter of a bunch of superstitious and emotional natives who believed anything told to them.

One of the machines used in our operations were called "Heel Seaters" and were used to tack the heels to the shoes in one stroke that drove all the tacks in with

one blow. The tacks were loaded into a large hopper on top of the machine and then fed down to the driving points through flexible steel tubes. It was not uncommon for some of the tacks to get stuck in a tube and the cure was to rap the tube with a hard object like a screw driver handle or small hammer.

The operator on one of the machines could not get the tacks free so took a large magnet he kept in his tool box and tried to draw the tacks down by running the magnet down the tubes which in turn magnetized the tubes so all the tacks hung up. I had to remove the tubes and fly them to the Naval Base at San Juan where I was able to use their degaussing machine to demagnetize the tubes. Needless to say I confiscated the heel seating operator's big magnet.

To add to my troubles the National Labor Relations Board gave in to the Unions and ordered that a series of minimum wage hearings be held to determine if the minimum wages by industries should be raised. At that time the minimum wage for the shoe industry was set at 27 cents an hour. I was given a summons to appear as a witness and was sworn in on June 28, 1951 after which I spent three days testifying and subjected to examinations and cross examinations. I have a transcription of the my testimony which consists of 279 pages recorded during the proceedings. The hearings went on for about three months and new rates were set for most of the industries which were to become effective the following year. The shoe industry minimum wage was adjusted upwards by 10 cents an hour.

In spite of these and a lot of other problems I managed to get the business back on track and added golf shoes for Florsheims to our line. Things were not going very well in Pasadena however and I began getting a lot of visitors from the home plant who wanted to get away from the stress. Sort of combined business and pleasure trips. As a result we had to do a lot of entertaining and escorting these folks around the Island which was not bad duty.

Joyce was now an international operation with subsidiary plants in Johannesburg, South Africa; Santiago, Chile; Cranston, England; and Mexico City as well as those in Puerto Rico and Australia along with their domestic plants in Columbus and Xenia, Ohio and Manchester, New Hampshire.

In the spring of 1952 I got word that Joyce Shoes was considering an offer from Red Cross Shoes to buy them out and our future in Puerto Rico was becoming a bit uncertain. I was sent to Mexico City to assess that operation and found it to be marginal and suggested that Joyce close the Mexico facility. The deal with Red Cross was consummated in the summer of 1952 and Red Cross was not sure what they wanted to do with the plant in Puerto Rico. Due to such uncertainty I sent the family back to California. Shortly thereafter Red Cross decided they did not want the plant in Ponce and my board of directors began pressuring me to stay on and run the plant for them. They had the funds to buy it from Joyce, but I was hankering to get back to California and my family.

In mid September I received a phone call from Parkhurst, who was now at Hughes Aircraft Company in Culver City, asking me to consider joining him at Hughes. The salary he offered was four times what I was making in Puerto Rico so it did not take me long to make up my mind. Much to the disappointment of my board of directors I made the decision to close the plant and go back home. It was one of the most distasteful things I ever did, having to layoff all my employees and dispose of the equipment. That was accomplished in record time and by the middle of October I was ready to leave.

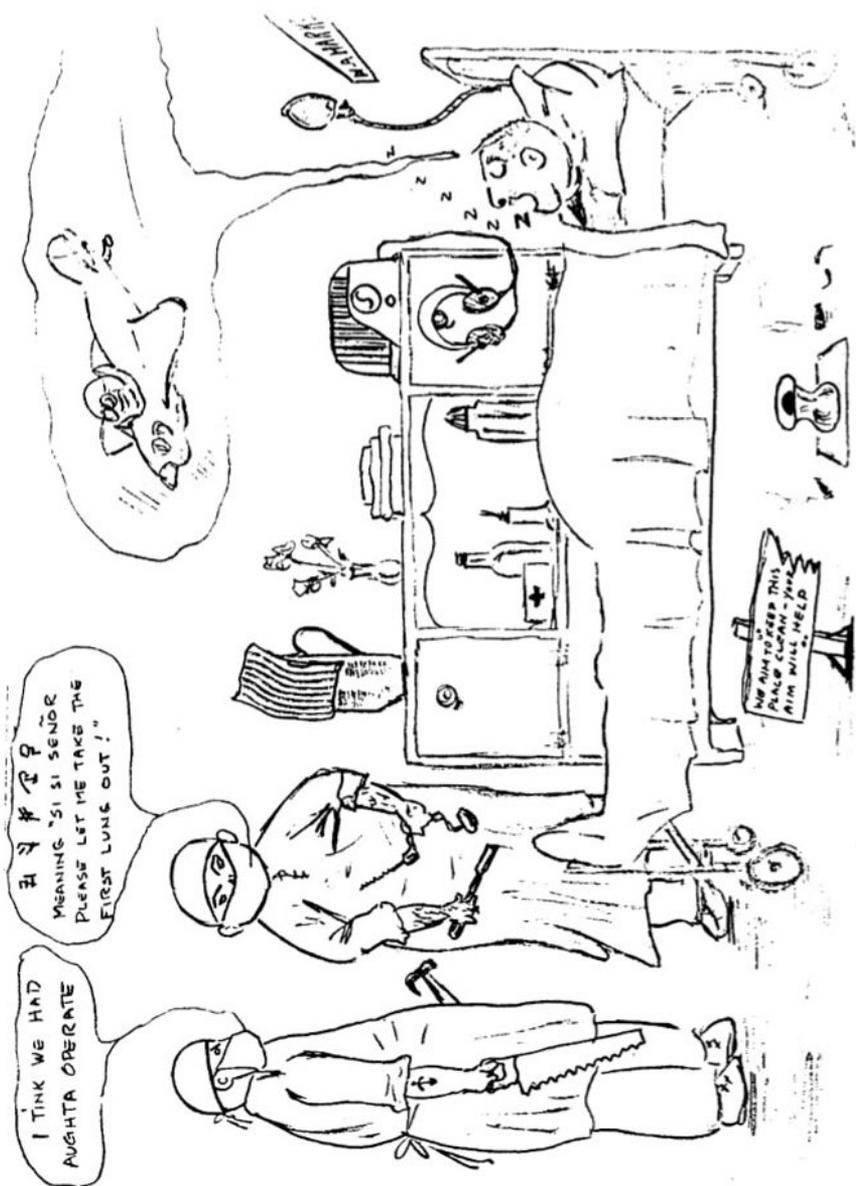
I turned the trip home into a two week jaunt spending time in Cuba, Haiti, Santa Domingo and Trinidad. I had of course shipped all our belongings back to the states via Pope and Talbot Freight Lines. Virginia had been staying with her folks in Alhambra

and the kids with my folks just a few blocks away. They alternated back and forth, much to the enjoyment of the grandparents. We had leased our house in Temple City to the Latter Day Saints as a home for their minister and Pop had taken care of banking the lease payments and looking after the place. It was in excellent condition when we returned to it except it was devoid of any furniture or appliances, all of which were on a ship somewhere between Puerto Rico and California so we set up housekeeping in an empty home. We did have gas and electricity but no phone or refrigeration. We slept on borrowed mattresses on the floor and used an ice chest for foods that had to be kept refrigerated and ate out a lot.

Two weeks after my return to Temple City Virginia's Dad, Bill Bosch suffered a stroke and became comatose. He was in that condition for about a week and then early one morning before any of us were up, Pop knocked on our bedroom window. He had driven over to inform us that Virginia's dad had died that night. Since we had no phone it was the only way he could contact us. The phone company did get us connected up a few days later.

In the meantime I had already started working at the Hughes plant in Culver City and began what was to be some 25 years of a daily commute that took two hours each way. That was four hours out of my day, Monday through Friday, battling for position on the freeways. My position at Hughes was head of the Methods and Controls Department. It was quite a transition from shoemaking to electronics manufacturing and I found the situation both challenging and intensely interesting.

Our belongings finally arrived in a number of those large ship deck freight containers which the trucking company that delivered them dropped them in our driveway and back yard. After we got everything put away in the house I took the largest container and modified it into a playhouse for the children. It was 6 ft.



A BARLOW NURSE

THIS IS NURSE MITTY
WHO'S REALLY QUITE WITTY
AND COMES TO MY BEDSIDE
EACH DAY -

DRESSED IN A WHITE COAT
SHE SMELLS LIKE A GOAT
I WONDER IF SHE REALLY
EATS HAY -

HER MASK IS IN PLACE
AND COVERS HER FACE
WHAT SHE LOOKS LIKE
I DO NOT KNOW -

BUT I'LL BET YOU A DIME
THAT WHEN IT IS TIME
WE'LL FIND OUT SHE
LOOKS LIKE A CROW !



DEAD T.B. GERM



wide and 8 ft. long with a curved metal roof and wood floor. I could stand up inside of it and it served as a playhouse for several years after which I further modified it into a more conventional looking building.

Harriet wanted to become a Brownie Scout and so Virginia started a Brownie Troop. Richy was not interested in that sort of thing but Jimmy was, so we got him enrolled in a Cub Scout Troop. As a result we both became quite active in Scouting and took on more and more. I became a Cub Scout Master and Virginia began working her way up the ranks as a Girl Scout Leader, a Mariner Scout Leader and finally ending up as President of the Sierra Madre Girl Scout Council with responsibility for 6,600 Girl Scouts. We were both community activists and she eventually headed up the San Gabriel Valley United Way drive for which she received numerous awards and recognitions.

Shortly after Christmas of 1952 I had a bad coughing spell and coughed up blood. We immediately went to a doctor who ordered X-rays taken which resulted in a diagnosis of TB. I could not believe I had it again, but the X-rays showed it to be a new infection, something I had probably acquired during my time in Puerto Rico where the disease was prevalent. Arrangements were made to have me admitted to the Barlow Sanitarium near Dodger Stadium in Los Angeles. After a year at Barlows I was pronounced to be OK and the TB arrested so I went back home and back to work at Hughes. This had placed a tremendous burden on Virginia who, in affect became a single parent overnight. She contacted all our creditors, explained the situation and arranged for payment plans that she could handle on our limited resources. My fellow employees at Hughes took up a collection and gave us \$1,000 which was a lot at that time and helped see us through a trying period in our life.

Temple City had started the annual Camellia Festival a couple of years before our return from Puerto Rico and in her first parade Harriet rode on the Girl

Scout float as the teacher in the Little Red School House. Jimmy also rode on a Circus float and was dressed as a Lion Tamer. From then on we were involved in every one of the festivals, building floats in our yard and helping decorate several other floats. The Camellia Festival was a production of the Temple City Chamber of Commerce to which we belonged. In 1976 I was named General Chairman of the festival which was to be my last major contribution to the community.

In 1959 an attempt was made to incorporate Temple City and I was a member of the Incorporation Committee that worked to get the support of the residents. That first attempt failed and we tried again the following year. At that time I decided to run for the City Council that would be voted into office along with a favorable vote on incorporation. This time the effort paid off and the people voted to incorporate. The initial election returns indicated I had won a seat on the Council, but when the absentee ballots were counted I lost by a meager 4 votes. The new City Council then appointed me to the Planning Commission on which I served two years as chairman. After serving four years on the Planning Commission I again ran for a seat on the Council and this time easily made it. I sat on the Council for eight years and served two terms as Mayor of Temple City. On my second election to the Council I received the most votes of everyone running for the office at that time.

When I first went to work at Hughes Aircraft the company was making airborne radar units for the early jet fighters. Over the years the products expanded into the large radars for the use of ground based military units and navy destroyers and aircraft carriers. I made many trips to Washington, DC to give presentations at the Pentagon and the Naval Academy. My department had developed an audio-visual system for use on the production lines and for training of military users of the many Hughes systems. This business took me to England, Sweden, Chile and Mexico to make presentations

and asses the possibility of having the product produced in those countries.

My experiences while working for Hughes Aircraft were among the most interesting of my lifetime, particularly as the company became involved in the space business with the construction and launching of the very successful Surveyor which landed on the moon and sent back the first photos of the lunar landscape. This was followed by a series of communication satellites and deep space probes for which the company was famous.

In 1976 after a little more than 25 years of commuting I decided to retire and did so in June of that year. Back in 1956 I had suffered and survived a severe heart attack which had me in intensive care for three weeks followed by three months in St. Lukes Hospital in Pasadena and then three more months of taking it easy at home before returning to work. In 1965 we became involved in the Student Foreign Exchange Program and were privileged to have a Swedish boy named Goran Tollback live with us while he attended his senior year at Temple City High School.

During the year that Goran spent with us we were his foster parents and he was a regular member of the family on an equal basis with the other kids in our house. He was a really nice boy and the kids all got along great together. He was with us during the famous Watts riots in South Los Angeles which we all watched on TV as it was happening. It was not the best picture of American life and took a bit of explaining to him as to how such a thing could take place in America. It was a sad day for all of us when we had to say good-bye to him. He and the other students in his group were to tour the United States on their way back to New York prior to leaving for their home lands.

Three weeks after he left us I had to make a trip to New York for the Hughes Company and took Virginia with me. Unbelievable as it sounds, we were walking down 42nd Street on an afternoon break and heard a familiar voice call out, "Hey Mom and Dad." It was Go-

ran who was on a sightseeing trip of the city. We only had a couple of minutes to talk with him and made the most of it.

Temple City had established a Sister City relationship with the little town of Magdalena in Mexico and when a group of us went down there for a visit we took Goran and the other foreign exchange students, who were staying with local families, along with us. Believe me that was an experience they will never forget. It was a traumatic change from life in Southern California.

Two weeks before Christmas of 1967 I was able to spend two days with Goran and his parents at their home in Sweden while on business for Hughes. Goran's father was a physicist at the nuclear plant in the Baltic Sea and he arranged for me to visit the facility where I was treated like visiting royalty. Goran later told me that my visit resulted in his father seeing parts of the operation which he had never witnessed before. Goran's folks just could not do enough for me and his father told me that everyone put their shoes in the hall outside the bedroom door at night so that is what I did only to find out the next morning that they had been shined to a high polish.

A year after Goran left we applied for and got another student from Turkey. His name was Adil Aslam and he was the exact opposite of Goran who was a nice mannered and quiet sort of kid. Adil on the other hand was a wild Turk with flashing black eyes and a keen ability to get into all sorts of trouble, but he was basically a good kid who just needed close supervision. Both boys turned out to be successes in their chosen fields. Goran became professor of English at Lund University in Stockholm and Adil became an accomplished architect in Istanbul, Turkey.

Our next foreign guest was 27 year old Mohammed Khatah who was a High School principal in Lahore Pakistan and stayed with us for six months while taking special courses at USC. He never went back to Pakistan where he was supposed to take over as Superintendent

of Schools. Instead he went to Columbia University for a graduate course and ended up as head of the Chemistry Department. Having these young people from other countries and cultures living with us was a rewarding and educational experience for all of us.



Goran Tollback, our foster son from Sweden.



Our Turkish foster son Adil taken in Istanbul after his return to Turkey.