"MEMORIES"

By: Louis Lifschutz

January 24th, 1893 is the day I was born on Delancey and Orchard Streets, the lower East Side in Manhattan.

That was the time when the Williamsburg Bridge was being constructed. The houses on Delancey Street were demolished in order to widen the street.

When I was six years old, my father enrolled me at P.S. 23 on Mulberry Street in the heart of the Italian Quarter close to Chinatown. The school was a long distance from home, although there was a school opposite from where I lived. There I remained until I graduated.

My mother moved every two years for the simple reason that a new flat had a new painting and one month's free rent. We always lived on the top floor as there was more light. The lower floors were mostly dark. During the hot weather some of the tenants slept on the fire excapes or on the roof.

As a youngster, I saw many plays at The Yiddish Theatres on The Bowery and on Second Avenue. Such brilliant stars as Jacob Adler, Boris Thomashifsky, David Kessler, Leon Blank and others too numerous to mention. These actors were superb both in drama and musical shows.

One of the most famous operettas was "Shulamoth" where that famous song "Raisins & Almonds" originated. To this date, it is sung over and over again.

Later Mollie Picon became the star of The Yiddish Theatre on Second Avenue then named The Boulevard of The East Side.

When I was 19, I married my first love Rose and we were together for 64 years. Now, I am the proud father of two sons, Fred and Ed and a wonderful daughter, Charlotte. I am also a proud grandfather of 8 and a prouder great-grandfather of 7. Although I am approaching my 90th year, I feel young in spirit and am grateful for my good health and the happy environment at The Bierman Home.

MAZEL TOV TELEGRAMS

CONGRATULATIONS Mary Becker on your Grandaughter's marriage.

CONGRATULATIONS Sarah Fistal on your Daughter-in-law's College Graduation.

CONGRATULATIONS Ida Goldstein on your Grandson's marriage.

CONGRATULATIONS Miriam Marcus on your Grandson's High School Graduation.

CONGRATULATIONS Sophie Meyers on your Grandson's High School Graduation and being the recipient of a full College Scholarship.

CONGRATULATIONS Sondra Orgler on your Daughter's High School Graduation.

CONGRATULATIONS Freda Sirota on your Grandson's acceptance to Law School.

CONGRATULATIONS Alfred Wasserman on the birth of your Great Grandson.

CONGRATULATIONS Rabbi & Mrs. Perry Rank on the birth of their Son.

RESIDENT'S BIRTHDAYS

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DOWN MEMORY LANE

BY: Louis Lifschutz

After passing the civil service exams, oral and physical, I was sworn in on April 1st, 1914 at the General Post Office in Brooklyn, N. Y. as a substitute clerk at 30¢ an hour. At that time there were not many Jewish postal clerks, but there was much anti-semetism. Three months later, I was made a regular clerk and my salary was $800.00 a year. It was then when the head supervisor approached me and remarked "Lifschutz were you made a "regular" I nodded yes. With a snear expression on his face, he remarked "You lucky Jew". Now, it is different, more Jews entered the Post Office and later a Jew was appointed Postmaster of the Brooklyn Post Office and now we have a strong Postal Workers Union.

The postal clerks are the backbone of the postal service. They have to memorize the odd and even numbers of all the streets in the cities where they work, particularly in the incoming mail section cities like Brooklyn, New York, Chicago, Philadelphia, St. Louis, Los Angeles, Miami, etc. For instance at the Brooklyn Post Office, there are about 45 sub stations like Boro Hall, Greenpoint, Williamsburg, Bushwick, Ridgewood, Bedford Stuyvesant, Flatbush, Sheepshead Bay, Boro Park, Bensonhurst and Coney Island. The clerk must memorize the odd and even numbers of every street separating the mail for these sub stations averaging 25 to 30 letters a minute.

Every 6 months, the clerk must be examined to prove his or her ability. If after several trials the clerk fails in the exams, he or she will be separated from the Postal Service. Every street in the city belongs to a certain sub station but there are long streets that are classified to several sub stations. For instance, take a street like Bedford Avenue. It starts in the Greenpoint area station followed by stations Williamsburg, Bedford Stuyvesant, Flatbush, Canarsie, Brownsville, Sheepshead Bay, or take a street like Ocean Parkway. It comprises sub stations like Kensington, Midwood, Brighton Beach, Borough Park, Bensonhurst and Coney Island.

On the outgoing mail section, the clerk is assigned to a state like New York, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, Ohio, Illinois, California, etc. and must know every city and town in the state where he or she is assigned and how the mail is dispatched by railroad, truck or air. Also, he or she must be examined to prove their knowledge and efficiency.

When the incoming mail arrives at the sub stations, the clerk has to sort the mail for the letter carrier. Each carrier has a route and the clerk has to memorize the streets and numbers odd and even. Some stations have 40 to 50 or more carriers and the clerk must know all the streets the carriers serve in their particular stations.

I was assigned to various tasks like the incoming mail, registered mail, special delivery also working on the Parcel Post. Parcel Post was first introduced in 1913.

In the early days, we worked a 48 hour week including Christmas Day. During the 10 day Christmas rush, we worked 12 hours a day or night or more. I worked steady night shifts as I did not like to alternate every month from day to night shift and from night to day hours. I also worked on what was called "nixies" mail; letters with insufficient addresses had to be returned to sender, and if there was no address of the sender, the letters were sent to the dead letter office throughout the United States.

It takes almost two years to become an experienced clerk. It is a trade by itself with no competition. There are many other details concerning work in the Postal Service too numerous to mention.

Several years before I retired, I was promoted to Postal Supervisor in charge of examinations for all clerks.

I retired in Feb., 1957 after 43 years service, but I wanted to work for private industry so that I could qualify for social security. I worked in the Wall Street area for brokers.

I am 91 years young and enjoying my golden years at The Charles Bierman Home where I make myself useful and enjoy the activities.