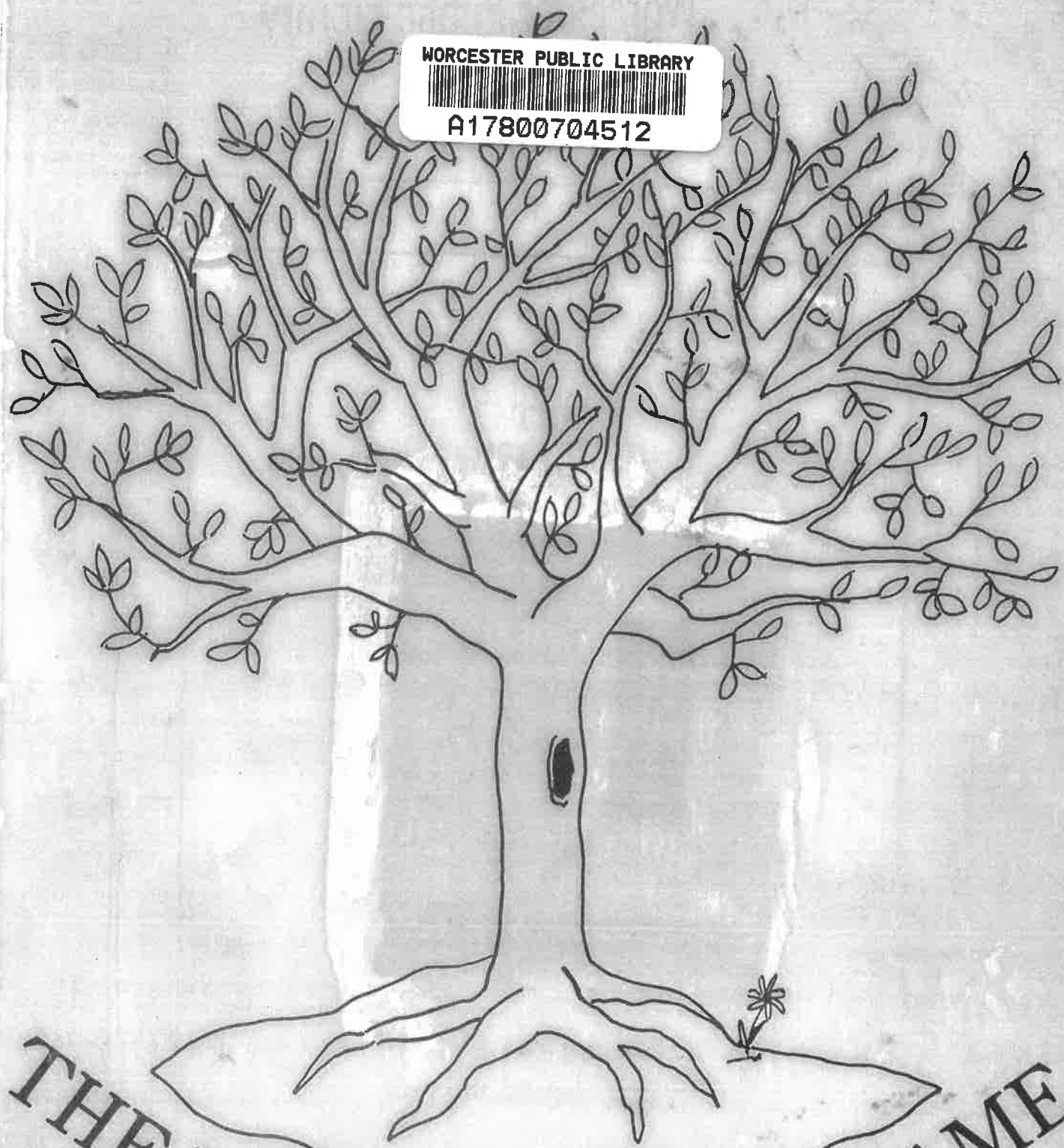


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THE ISLAND THAT BECAME
A NEIGHBORHOOD

By: Lorraine Laurie

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DEDICATION

To the immigrants who made the "Island" a neighborhood
and to the Worcesterites who continue to make it a home,
I lovingly dedicate this book.

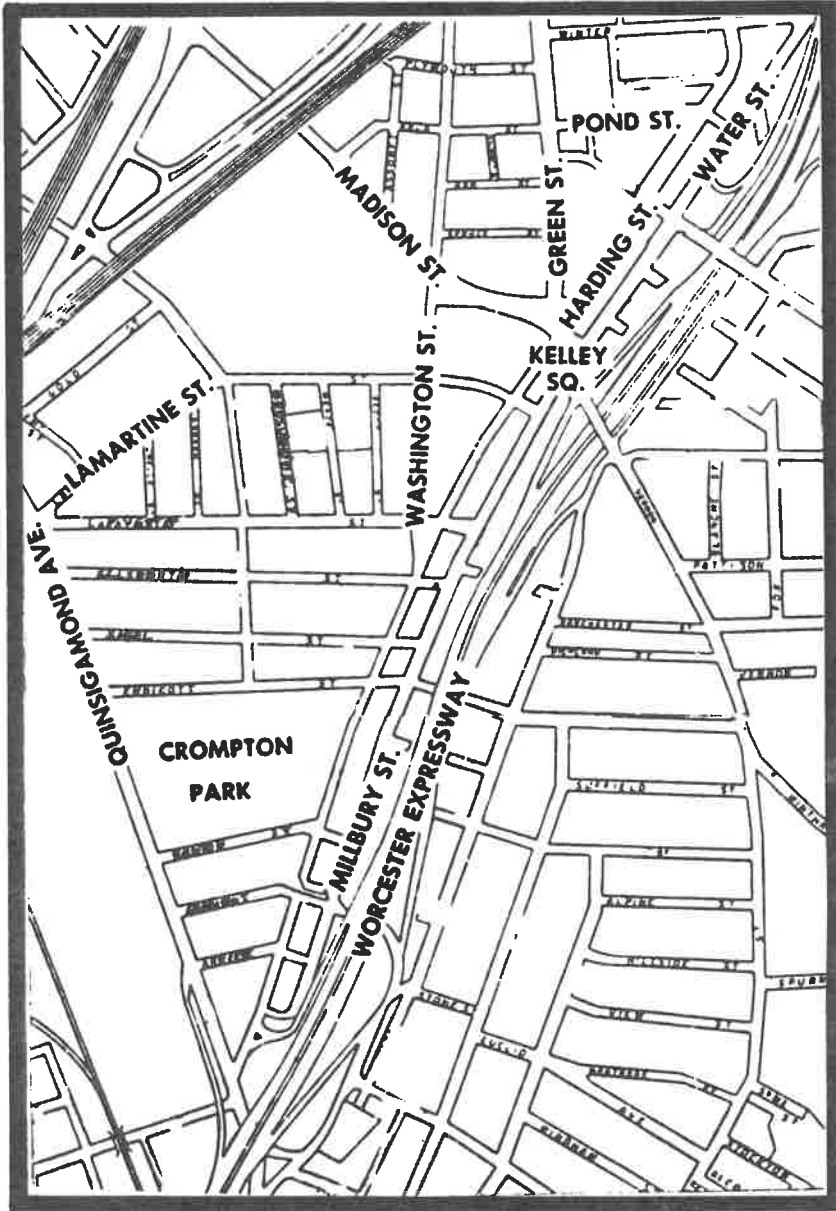
Lorraine Michele Laurie

January 3, 1985

In memory of...

Stanislaus Wondolowski

teacher, state representative, musician, Polish - American



The Green Island area.

CONTENTS

- Introduction - The "Island" in Mill Brook
- I The Canal, the Irish and the Start of a Neighborhood
- II The Building of a Church
- III The Neighborhood Expands into the "Island"
- IV George Crompton, a man "woven" into the growth of the "Island"
- V Around the Neighborhood in the 1870's
- VI Reading, 'Riting, 'Rithmetic - Our Neighborhood Schools
- VII Forging Ahead Together - Wyman and Gordon
- VIII Beginning a New Century
- IX St. Anthony of Padua and the French-Canadians
- X Lithuanians - Seeking Independence - Preserving a Heritage
- XI The Polish - Proud to be Americans
- XII A stroll through the Neighborhood in 1950
- XIII Demolition with the Expressway; Rebirth with "Green Island"
- XIV Learning from the Past; Looking toward the Future

INTRODUCTION

THE "ISLAND" IN MILL BROOK

Have you ever wondered why the area roughly between Harding Street (many include Millbury Street) and Quinsigamond Ave. is known as the "Island"? Perhaps you thought it was because the area, especially Harding Street, gets flooded every so often. Or maybe you thought it had something to do with the Kelley Square Yacht Club? A yacht club needs boats and boats need water. So where is the water?

It was there long ago when Worcester was young - even before Worcester became a city in 1848. Just north of the present day Kelley Square was a pond. Water was fed into this pond by the Mill Brook which crossed Worcester from north to south. When the brook's waters, nourished by other dams and streams, reached this pond, which was known as the Mill pond, the brook had already begun to swell. After it finally left the pond, it separated and formed two branches. One branch followed along the path of the present day Harding Street. The other crossed what was to become the old St. Anthony's property, headed towards the present Wyman-Gordon land, curved around what is known as the Gas Works and headed toward the present day Brosnihan Square. The two branches of Mill Brook joined here and the land in between became a real "island."

So as you can see, this section of Worcester, Massachusetts had acquired its name long before it became a neighborhood.

CHAPTER I

THE CANAL, THE IRISH AND THE START OF A NEIGHBORHOOD

The Town of Worcester was getting tired of being in Boston's shadow. In 1794 someone decided to do something about it. Providence merchant John Brown petitioned the Rhode Island legislature for a Providence to Worcester waterway. He knew that this would prove very profitable to merchants and would double the value of property along the way.

Boston merchants thought otherwise. They felt threatened so a group of them proposed a Boston to Worcester canal. The conflict between the two groups put the idea of a canal on hold until 1823 when both the Massachusetts Great and General Court and the Rhode Island legislature authorized charters for a canal company. The Blackstone Canal Company was "born" in 1825 with people from Rhode Island providing two-thirds of the \$750,000. in necessary funds.

Irish-born contractor Tobias Boland knew what impact the building of a canal would have on Worcester so he jumped at the chance to buy some swamp land. Boland's new property was located in the area between the present day Franklin Street and Kelley Square. On July 4, 1826, Boland welcomed the first group of his fellow Irishmen hired to work on the canal in Worcester town. Four days later ground was broken on Thomas Street. Not only would these men build a canal that would connect Worcester with Providence, they would lay the foundation for something more lasting. They would start a neighborhood.

The Blackstone Canal was finished in 1828 and on October 7 of that year, "Lady Carrington," commanded by Captain Dobson, made its way up on a tow-line pulled by two horses following the route of present day Harding Street, north through Kelley Square, continuing along Harding Street through Washington Square and finally arriving at the canal basin at Thomas Street. The canal drained the area previously purchased by Toby Boland and he was able to build six or eight tenement houses there. This section, around Green Street, was called "Scalpintown."

The neighborhood had begun.



St. John's Church - Dedicated 1846

CHAPTER IITHE BUILDING OF A CHURCH

As the Irish immigrants became settled in their new "permanent" homes in Worcester town, they realized something was lacking in their lives. Worcester was a Congregationalist society at the time and the Irish-Catholics were not readily accepted. They needed something all their own. They needed a priest and a church.

Bishop Benedict Fenwick had come to offer Mass for the first time in Worcester back in 1826 in a room in the United States Arms Tavern, the site of the present Marriott Hotel at Lincoln Square. Reverend Robert Woodley had made limited regular visits after that. However, the need for a priest grew with the increase in population of Irish canal and railroad workers.

In 1833, Mr. Robert Laverly made a formal request of Bishop Fenwick to provide the Worcester area with a priest. Father James Fitton, whose headquarters was in East Hartford, was selected as that priest. On April 6, 1834 Father Fitton said Mass for 60 worshippers from Worcester and the factories of Clappsville and Millbury at a new store on Front Street. Once a month after that Mass was heard in the open air on the rocks near the entrance to the "deep cut" of the Boston & Albany Railroad.

The people had "Their" priest now. The next step was to build him a permanent place to say Mass. Father Fitton had found some suitable land at Salem and Park Street (upper Franklin Street) but the deal fell through when it was discovered he wanted to build a church there.

With the help of three non-Catholic Worcester residents, William Lincoln, the brother of the future Governor, Levi Lincoln, and Francis P. Blake and Harvey Pierce (the last two were later baptized), Fr. Fitton purchased the parcel of land, then a cornfield, where St. John's now stands. The foundation of Christ Church, as it was known then, was laid on July 6, 1834. The cowpath running through the property was named "Temple Street" because a church was being erected there.

Tobias Boland who built the first tenements in the area became superintendent of the project. The wooden church with the dimensions of 32 by 62 feet was west of the present church. By 1836, it was completed and paid for and Fr. Fitton then moved his headquarters to Worcester.

Father Fitton had made many friends while doing his missionary work and some even came to Worcester to see him. Every Summer, the Pastor received a visit from the Penobscot Indians from Maine. They would pitch their tepees at the foot of Temple Street and attend Mass in full Indian regalia with the Irish, French Canadian and English immigrants. During the Florida Indian War, they were joined by soldiers in training.

The first Catholic church built outside the Boston area finally filled the void in the new Worcesterites lives. They had a good friend in their pastor Fr. Fitton. They now had their own church, Christ Church, and a Catholic cemetery in the Newton Square area. Soon after completion of the Church two schools were begun. A Sunday school for little children, presided over by Eliza Whitney, was conducted on the premises.

Mt. Saint James Seminary for older boys, later to become Holy Cross College, was built on Pakachoag Hill.

By 1845, the parish had grown to over 2,000 people. It was time to build a larger church. Under the direction of the newly appointed Pastor, the Rev. Matthew Gibson, the foundation of the present brick church was laid on May 27, 1845.

By June of the next year, the church was completed and dedicated as St. John's Church. The old Christ Church had been moved to the northwest corner of the property to make way for the new church and became known as the "Catholic Institute," the education center for the parish.

The neighborhood, now with a focal point - St. John's Church, continued to grow.

CHAPTER IIITHE NEIGHBORHOOD EXPANDS INTO THE "ISLAND"

With the construction of the Canal and the expansion of the railroads, Worcester finally came into its own right as an industrial treasure house. In 1848 the town was ready to become a City. Many factories had been built along the route of Mill Brook and the Canal. On Green Street was Charles Fox's "Red Mills." Behind it was the Mill Pond which furnished water power. Down the line at 177 Madison Street was William Bradley Fox's woolen mill, later to become St. Anthony's Church and much later, the first home of Green Island Center. Nearby Fox Street takes its name from this man.

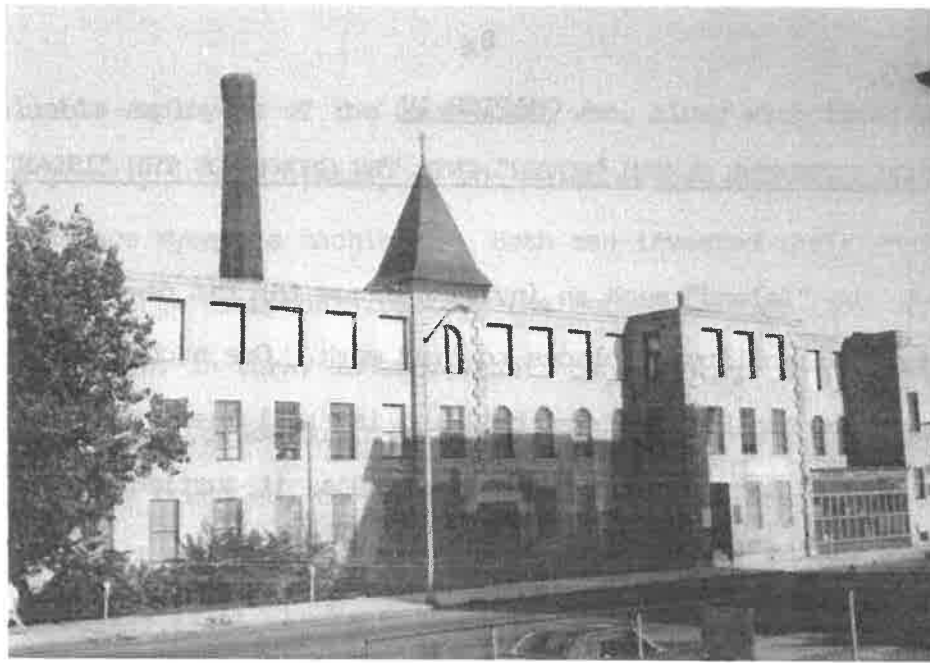
The Blackstone Canal had reached its heyday in 1832 but by 1848, had ceased operation. The railroad was much to blame for this; yet, the two together helped industrialization and brought the Irish to Worcester. As more Irish came, many because of the Great Famine, the neighborhood grew beyond "Scalpintown." There was a neighborhood of railroad workers on Dungarvan Hill, now the lower part of Union Hill.

The swamp land south of Vernon Square, presently called Kelley Square, was drained by the Canal and by the 1850's many streets were laid out. In 1845, Washington Street was named for the famous general and 1st president who had visited Worcester several times. About 1857, the "L" streets came into existence: Lodi after the bridge of Lodi; Lafayette after the Revolutionary hero from France and Lamartine for a famous Frenchman; Langdon, after a poem by Whittier and Lunelle, after Lunelle Sargent who once resided there.

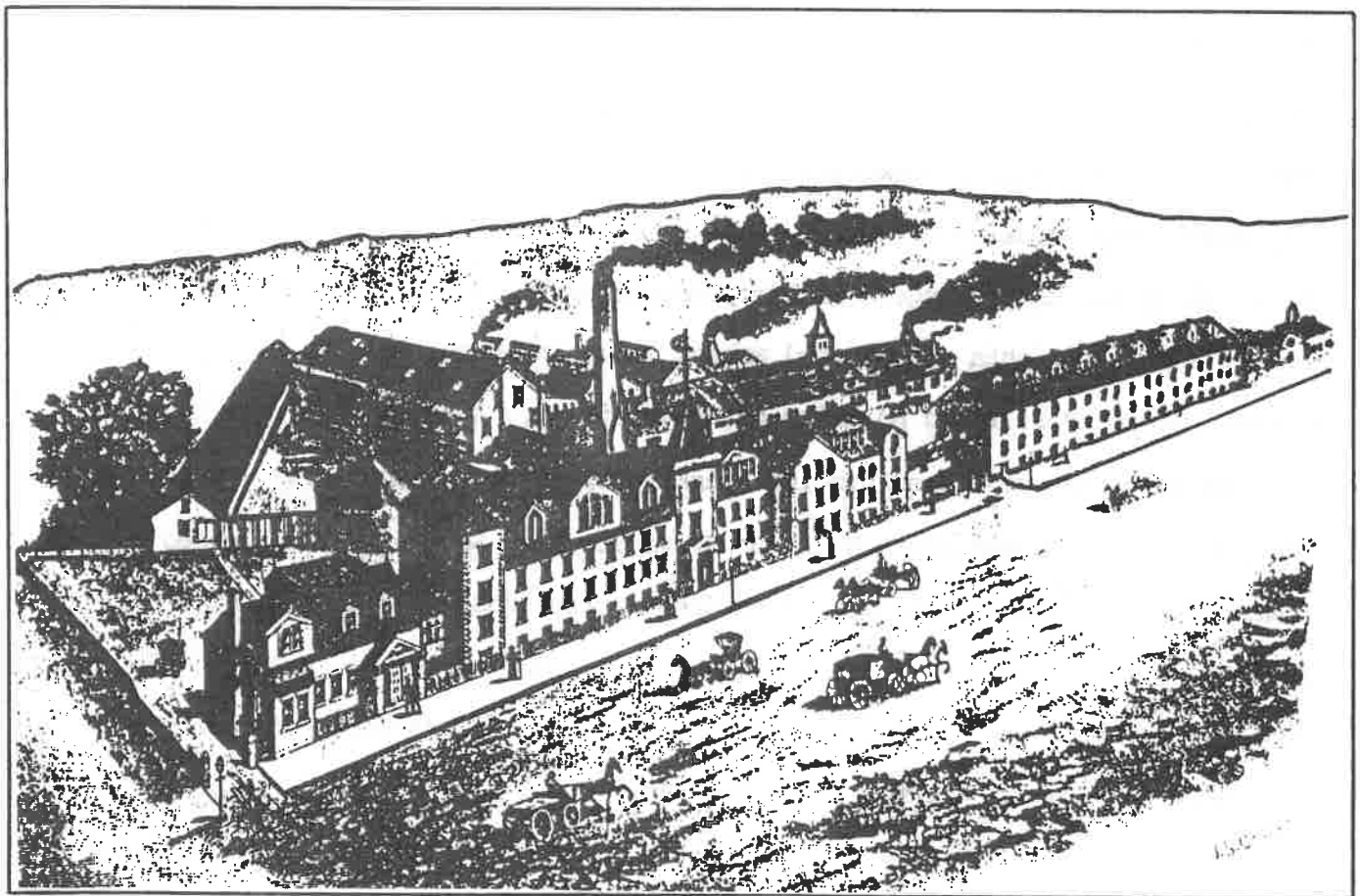
Perry Thayer, the former milkman turned real estate giant, christened them after buying about 50 acres of the old Ward estate.

Another real estate whiz, perhaps the greatest of his time, Ransom Taylor, had a street named after him here. Taylor was responsible for building the first "skyscrapers" in Worcester.

More immigrants, mainly Irish and French-Canadians, came to Worcester. More streets were laid out. The "Island" was becoming a neighborhood.



The building on Green Street today.



Crompton Loom Works in 1888

CHAPTER IVGEORGE CROMPTON, A MAN "WOVEN" INTO THE GROWTH OF THE "ISLAND"

What made the "Island" such an inviting place for the new immigrants to settle was the availability of places to find work. One such place was Green Street, across from Ash Street. The building is still there today. In those days, in the 1860's, and up until the early 1900's, it bustled with activity. It was the home of the famous Crompton Loom Works.

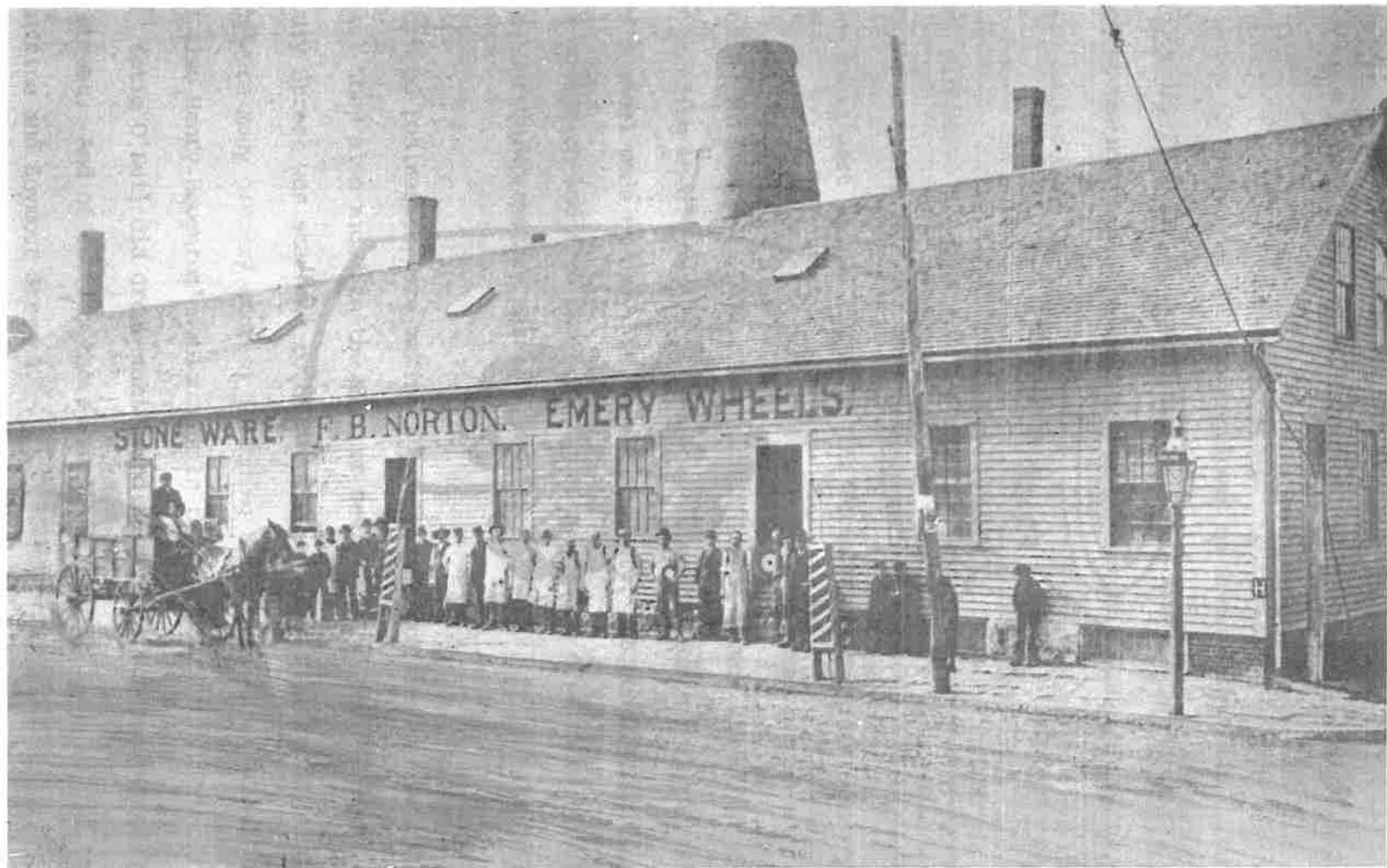
The Crompton empire was started in 1836 by William Crompton of Lancashire, England. It was during this year that he had patented the first power loom to weave fancy goods. It also marked his first trip to the United States. After returning to England for a few years to introduce his looms there, Crompton and his family decided to make the United States their permanent home. William Crompton engaged in manufacturing looms in Worcester, Mass. until 1845 when his factory was destroyed by fire. Forced to retire a few years later because of his ill health, William was succeeded in the loom business by his son, George. In 1851, George had received an extension of his father's patent rights and started making looms in Worcester with Merrill E. Furbush at the Merrifield Building on Union Street. After a huge fire there in 1854 which almost forced him into bankruptcy, George temporarily worked out of quarters at the Salisbury Mills on Grove Street. Soon after, he leased space in Charles Fox's "Red Mills" on Green Street and in 1860, without a partner, bought this mill and replaced it with a new building. As his business grew, so did the building and at one time, George Crompton employed even more men than the Washburn and Moen wire mill.

Two valuable employees of the Loom Works who, along with their sons, would figure greatly in the history of the neighborhood were Albert Gordon, a mechanic and Horace Wyman, a machinist. Both men invested their energies in helping to make George Crompton's factory the second largest industry in Worcester. Both men, in turn, invested their own earnings in property in the neighborhood. Albert Gordon built houses on Vernon and Richland Streets, one of which his family occupied, to serve as possible rental units for Crompton workers. And remember the old "flatiron building" on the corner of Millbury and Harding Streets, right at the square? It was built by Gordon to help insure his son's education. Mr. Wyman, his co-worker and friend, lived on Providence Street with his family. He purchased thousands of square feet of land around Bradley Street (now Madison Street) after the Civil War. This land would later be a great asset to both their sons and to the forging company they would eventually found.

George Crompton, himself, also showed faith in the "Island" by buying land there. Besides his huge mill on Green Street, he went on to own the Star Foundry on Washington and Lamartine Streets, lots on Ellsworth, Sigel, and Lafayette Streets, and about 12.73 acres of land between Quinsigamond Ave., Endicott Street and Harding Street, which today bears the name, Crompton Park. The Crompton Family took up residence on Union Hill overlooking the "Island". Their estate, named "Mariemont", is now the present site of St. Vincent Hospital on the corner of Providence and Winthrop Streets.

Crompton left his mark on the "Island" and on Worcester as an important inventor, a good employer, a landowner, and as a patriotic citizen, having served as chairman of the committee to plan a Civil War Monument for Worcester. The large monument stands today on the far end of Worcester Common near the Galleria. With 212 patents to his credit, George Crompton of Worcester, Massachusetts also left his mark across continents for it was said that

In every part of the world can be heard the hum of the weaver's shuttle as it moves in and out among the meshes of the every varying warp threads in looms stamped with the name of Crompton.



F.B. NORTON - Water Street



CHAPTER VAROUND THE NEIGHBORHOOD IN THE 1870's

While George Crompton was busy making looms on Green Street and carpets in South Worcester, Franklin B. Norton and Frederick Hancock were manufacturing stoneware at their shop at 41 Water Street (about where the old Miller Poultry Market used to be). They had been at this location since 1864, having moved here from a shop in Washington Square. Their inventory included jugs, churns, pitchers, chamberpots, beer bottles and spittoons marked with the "F.B. Norton & Co." name. One of the Swedish potters, John Jeppson, was later to play a big part in the future of the Norton Company. Besides producing Stoneware, the potters also made emery wheels which provided a durable grinding surface. By 1876, Franklin B. Norton turned his attention more to the grinding wheel operations and now, without a partner, applied for a patent for a wheel made of clay, feldspar and emery. He continued to develop this operation and also produced a limited amount of stoneware under the "Frank B. Norton/Worcester, Mass." name.

Neighborhood businesses were making a great impact on the economic future of Worcester. They also aided in the further settlement of the "Island." In 1872, Millbury Street was starting to become a busy commercial-residential area. There were many grocery stores, including the provisioners "Coves and Keliher and also Henry Houghton's which was in the Comstock Block, now demolished. Katie O'Neil did dress-making and sold fancy goods diagonally across the street. And of course, there were Saloons - at least six of them between Lamartine and Seymour Streets.

People who worked at Crompton's and at the nearby G.A. Kimball Satinet Manufacturers boarded at #6 Millbury Street, near the Square. Mary and Peter McCarty whose relative, Cecelia Trunca, still resides on Vernon Hill, lived at the rear of #71, located then a little past Taylor Street. To future generations of their family, Millbury Street was affectionately known as "McCarty's yard."

As more immigrant workers came, more of the "Island" became populated. Now there was Bigelow Street, possibly named after Revolutionary patriot Col. Timothy Bigelow; Ellsworth Street, honoring Elmer Ellsworth one of the first fallen heroes of the Civil War, and Sigel Street, after German immigrant, Fray Sigel who helped the Union during the War between the States. Joining the Irish, French-Canadians and Jews as residents of this "Island" area were the newer immigrants from Poland and Lithuania. These last two groups would add their own personal touches to the neighborhood for many years to come.



Lamartine Street School



GOD

AND

NEIGHBOR



Millbury Street School

CHAPTER VIREADING, WRITING, ARITHMETIC—OUR NEIGHBORHOOD SCHOOLS

The Island area, abounding with opportunities, proved a good place to start a new home. Immigrants sent for their families once they had saved enough money. Some married here. And after marriage came the children and the need for schools.

St. John's Parish, along with religious services, had provided educational programs for its young people since 1837. When the "new" church was built, the old building became the "Catholic Institute", an educational center. In 1843, the cornerstone of Holy Cross College, the successor of Fr. Fitton's Mt. Saint James Seminary, was laid and the Jesuits took charge. The college began granting degrees in 1865.

It was Rev. Thomas Griffin who, in 1872, helped start a tradition in Catholic education that was to last almost one hundred years. He brought eight Sisters of Notre Dame de Namur to Worcester to start a school for girls. In preparation for the Sisters' arrival, Father Griffin had purchased Captain Lewis Bigelow's estate on Vernon Street, not too far from the Square and what is now the Ascension Property. In those days, the area was abounding with orchards, and the Sisters had to get used to living in the "country". Transportation for them was Callahan's hack and as Sister Mary of the Assumption, one of the first eight, remembers, "it was almost indispensable for the Sisters down Green Street." The Sisters took up residence in the manor house of the estate and 300 girls came to them for their grammar school lessons.

By the end of the first year, there were 550 students and the brick school house, which was to faithfully serve the Worcester area until 1970, was completed.

The girls, all Irish in those days, studied subjects such as practical arithmetic, Kearney's Scripture, ecclesiastical history, globe lessons, English and French grammar, Catechism of perseverance and of course, politeness. By the turn of the century, the Sisters of Notre Dame lived in a new convent, St. John's Convent, which housed thirty-four Sisters. The school, now offering a grammar and high school curriculum, had 1100 pupils on its role.

For the boys, there was a school on Temple Street begun in 1881. The Christian Brothers of Ireland were in charge first but left after two years. The Sisters of Notre Dame took over as the teachers. A school house, the "old building" as it was affectionately called was built on Church property between Temple and Winter Streets. It even had an auditorium! And in 1894, another tradition was begun. The Xaverian Brothers of Baltimore had been called to Worcester by Msgr. Griffin to teach the boys. In a few years, there were eight grades plus a three year high school program. In 1904, a four year high school was open and St. John's Prep was "born".

For those children whose parents choose not to send them to "church" school, there were the nearby public schools. The oldest was Ash Street School House up on the hill looking down on Green Street. It was built shortly after Worcester became a City in 1848 and still stands today, though not used as a school anymore. As Worcester was expanding from both an industrial and residential standpoint, her citizens were developing a true sense of civic pride. The building of nine new schools between 1848 and 1860 was a concrete expressions of this feeling.

The Lamartine Street Schools, Located right in the "Island," truly reflected the growth of the young neighborhood. Over a period of 54 years, three school buildings were erected. The first building, now used for school department storage, is located at the corner between Scott and Meade Streets. It was built in 1867-1868. Its pupils were the sons and daughters of some of the earliest settlers of the "Island", the Irish, the French-Canadians and the Jews. The second building, presently vacant, is directly behind building No. 1. It dates back to 1896-1897 when the "Island's" population saw the gradual influx of Polish and Lithuanian immigrants. School house No. 3 (the Code Inspection Department today) was constructed in 1911 in back of Police Precinct 2, between Meade and Grosvenor Streets. Many Island residents still remember the jolly principal, Mr. Richard H. Mooney, who, in 1917 was in charge of 937 pupils in grades Kindergarten to eight and had 30 teachers on his staff. And not so jolly are the recollections of visits to the Dental Clinic there for an exam, cleaning or a dreaded tooth pulling.

Two other public schools sprung up in the neighborhood before the turn of the century. Ward Street School was built in 1896. It was on the corner of Ward and Richland Streets, where Our Lady of Czestochowa Shrine and parking lot now stand. It was demolished when the Expressway I-290 came through the land it occupied. Further down the line was Millbury Street School, at the foot of South Ward Street. There were originally four buildings built between 1880 and 1899. As the three-deckers sprung up in the surrounding neighborhood, the school population continued to increase and by 1917, there were 846 pupils attending school here.

Today, because of declining enrollment and the proximity to the Expressway, only one building remains.

On Union Hill, overlooking the "Island" was a preparatory school called Worcester Academy. This school was begun in 1834 as the Worcester County Manual Labor High School. Its first location was on upper Main Street near Benefit Street. In 1869, Issac Davis, head of the board of trustees, bought the many-towered former Dale General Hospital on Providence Street and the Academy moved here. The building became known as Davis Hall. The left wing originally housed boys; located in the center were accommodations for the principal and his family, classrooms, a chapel and public rooms; the right wing housed girls. Yes, girls attended Worcester Academy until the late 1800's! After that, the school focused strictly on preparing boys for college up until the early 1970's, when girls were admitted again. The basement of Davis Hall contained the kitchen, dining room and bathrooms. Between the years 1882 and 1918, during the term of principal Dr. Daniel W. Abercrombie, one of the leading classical scholars in the country, the campus grew rapidly. Eight buildings, all still in use today, were erected. The "castle" on the hill, Davis Hall, remained a Worcester landmark until 1964 when it was torn down to make way for modern dorms.

"Achieving the honorable" became the motto of Worcester Academy as its graduates went on to become lawyers, doctors, and businessmen. Two young men who attended the Academy in the 1870's later started a forging business in the "Island". These men were Horace Winfield Wyman and Lyman Francis Gordon.

CHAPTER VIIFORGING AHEAD TOGETHER--WYMAN AND GORDON

It was not surprising that the two should form a partnership. Both came from families who lived on the hill and owned property in the "Island". Both boys attended the same schools in the same classes. And both had fathers who worked at George Crompton's Loom Works. It was the fathers who bonded the business relationship between the two boys. Mr. Gordon suggested the boys go into drop forging; Mr. Wyman provided the money and the land at the corner of Gold Street Court and Bradley Street. The year was 1883. The business was called the Worcester Drop Forging Works.

Many of the first orders came from George Crompton. Once in a while there was a call for pistol parts. When Americans took to the roads on bicycles, Wyman and Gordon provided special "forged" parts. As the railroad system grew and the government set safety standards, the forge shop began making "Knuckles." In order to do this, a new method called "heat treating" was developed by the very efficient, forever curious bookkeeper, George Fuller.

The shop was small, the equipment sparse--an open frame steam hammer, drop hammers and presses--but the desire to work together, to succeed together, was strong. The transportation field continued to offer opportunities. Soon, Wyman and Gordon, as the firm was called now, was making copper bonds for trolley cars. With this sudden up swing in business came the need to expand. New buildings and new equipment were added.

At the turn of the century, and again with the expert help of George Fuller, Wyman and Gordon was producing forged crankshafts for the latest invention in transportation--the automobile. The need to expand this time meant renovations to the old buildings, erecting a few more, and opening a crankshaft factory in Cleveland to be closer to the automobile business.

Then in 1905, the many years of "working together" came to an end for Gordon and Wyman. Wyman had become ill with typhoid fever and died shortly after. His death prompted the incorporation of the company which was to continue to bear his name, "The Wyman and Gordon Company."

And continue it does. The little forge shop begun in the "Island" in 1883 has grown to be one of the 500 largest industrial corporations in America.

As the company celebrates its 101 birthday, the spirit of H. Winfield Wyman and Lyman Francis Gordon still lives on - the spirit of forging ahead through "working together."



Hotel Vernon - McGady's



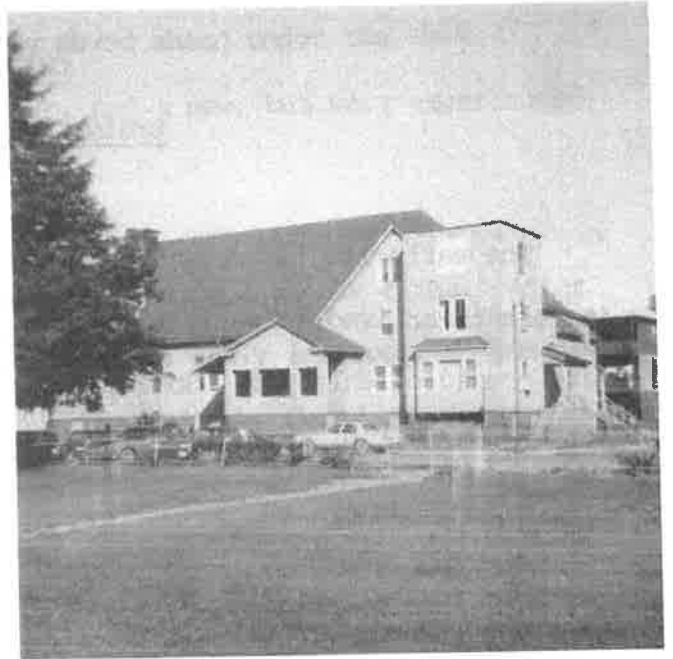
Brick three-decker - 24 Sigel Street



Worker's house - 26 Lafayette Street



Part of the Brewery on Ellsworth Street



Carpenter's Hall
Endicott & Bigelow Streets



Comstock Building - 118-122 Millbury Street

CHAPTER VIIIBEGINNING A NEW CENTURY

The early 1900's brought continued expansion to the neighborhood. More immigrants arrived. Institutions and traditions were started. Businesses were opened or enlarged. Homes were built. The "Island" now looked like a neighborhood.

There was a Police Station, Precinct #2, on Lamartine Street near the school. Next to it was Hose #7 Fire Station. And remember the land owned by George Crompton between Endicott Street, Quinsigamond Ave. and Harding Street? It was now a playground called "Crompton Park." George Crompton had died in 1886 and his widow, Mary, sold the 12.73 acres to the City for \$44,350.000

A Hospital was located up on Vernon Hill. Msgr. Griffin from St. John's Church had purchased the Bartlett Estate and in 1893, the Sisters of Providence from Holyoke started the House of Providence Hospital, later to become St. Vincent's. The Hospital even had a school of nursing. There was also a new Church, Ascension Church, located next to the brick school for girls on Vernon Street. This parish was created by the final division of St. John's, the Mother Church of the Springfield Diocese. The school next door was known as Ascension School and educated girls from both parishes.

Work opportunities, too, grew with the neighborhood. Wyman and Gordon continued to find great success in the transportation field with the invention of the airplane.

Although both founders had died, the company moved ahead under the able leadership of former bookkeeper, George Fuller, and a new, but very experienced, man, Harry Stoddard.

The close-by Crompton Loom Works was also expanding with the times. After George Crompton's death, his widow took charge of the newly incorporated business with the help of the elder Wyman and Gordon (fathers of the forge shop owners.) After her death, her son, Charles took over as President and in 1897, he saw the merging of his father's company with the rival Knowles Loom Works. Now "a loom for every woven fabric" could be produced. Although the merger eventually meant the closing of the Green Street Factory, and the bowing out of the Crompton Family, many "Island" men continued their jobs at the spacious Crompton and Knowles Loom Works on not too far away Grand Street.

Another company, originally founded in the neighborhood as F.B. Norton & Co., Stoneware manufacturers, had changed its emphasis, ownership, and location. Way back in the 1870's Frank Norton also began making emery wheels on Water Street. By 1884, he was ready to sell this part of the business. For the purchase price of \$10,000, Charles Allen, Walter Messer, John Jeppson, Milton Higgins, George Alden, Fred Daniels and Horace Young bought the Norton Emery Wheel Company and moved the operation to Greendale. Little did Mr. Norton know that he would be the "grandfather" of the world's largest producer of abrasives with 126 plants in 27 countries across the world--the famous Norton Company.

The booming steel industry offered many new chances for employment.

The Washburn and Moen company on Grove Street (North works plant) had become the largest wire factory in the world having produced the first American-made telegraph wire, the first American-made piano wire, the first American-made insulated electrical cables, and inexpensive wire for hoop skirts. Soon there was a need for a South Works division. It was located near the intersection of Millbury and Ballard Streets and had open hearth furnaces. A Central Works operation was started on Kansas Street. Here, wire was drawn to finer sizes. By the turn of the century the company became part of American Steel and Wire which in turn became a subsidiary of U.S. Steel. Many a new immigrant, carrying the lunch his wife had put up, left home before dawn to begin a twelve hour shift in the steamy-hot American Steel and Wire Mill.

For the semiskilled workers, there was the shoe factory on Harding and Winter Streets, home of S.R. Heywood & Company. Here, finer grades of shoes with Goodyear welting were made with the latest mechanized techniques. With these innovations the Heywood Company soon grew to be the City's largest shoe manufacturer.

Also in the area were the Worcester Stained Glass works on Winter Street; the Osgood Bradley Car Company, makers of railroad sleeping cars, on Franklin and Grafton Streets; the Abraham Israel Underwear Factory, the Hill Envelope Company (U.S. Envelope) and the Hamblin & Russell factory, one of the world's largest manufacturers of wire and hardware, all on Water Street.

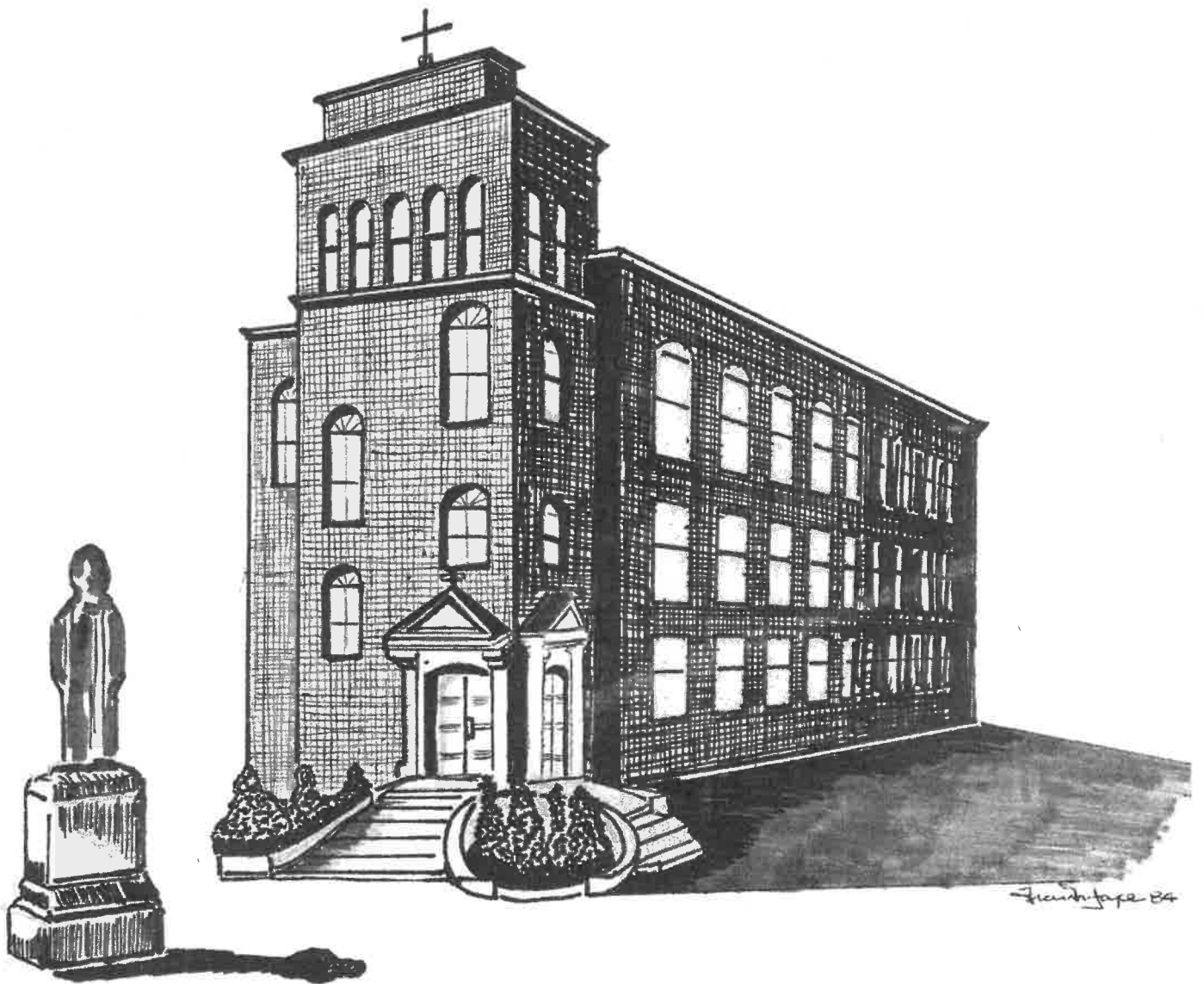
In the "Island" itself, one found the Worcester Lunch Car company with a factory at 2-8 Quinsigamond Ave. Here, "modern" dining cars were made, one example being the former "Luke's Diner," now the "Green-Island Diner" at 162 Millbury Street. Another factory was the historic Sargent Card Clothing Factory at 300 Southbridge Street.

And of course, there was the brewery at the end of Ellsworth Street. Established as Bowler Brothers, Ltd. in 1883, the brewery produced sparkling ales, Royal Worcester Larger, and the ale that made it famous, "Tadcaster."

Small stores on Millbury Street were numerous - markets, barbers, tobacconists, even a "Chinese Laundry" and "Bijou" movie theater. Names that might bring back memories are McGady, the saloon and hotel owner; Boepple, the sausage manufacturer; Polacki, the baker; Goodwin and White, the dry goods merchants; and the Carlson and Northbridge Brothers, furniture dealers. And how many recall Danny O'Leary, the cop on the beat who lived over Polacki's Bakery and married the baker's daughter, Jessica?

Proximity to the "shopping district" and to work opportunities in the larger mills and factories, made the "Island" a good place to build a home. The once swampy land had been partially drained by the Blackstone Canal in 1828. The great Mill Brook "Sewer Project" (1878 to 1881) finished the job as the brook, the Canal, and the Mill Pond disappeared underground. Numerous homes, many of them three deckers and "workers' houses" were built on Lafayette, Ellsworth and Sigel Streets. A fine example of a "workers' house" is #26 Lafayette Street. A three decker of unusual architecture it located on nearby Sigel Street, #24. It is constructed of brick and dates back to 1888. A few doors up the street is the "Stead" house. According to neighborhood legend, this may be one of the oldest houses in the area. The "Dulligan Block" at 124-128 Millbury Street represents a commercial - residential building that was erected in 1898.

The "Island" at the turn of the century had all the appearances of a bustling neighborhood. However, what made it a "true" neighborhood, one of caring and sharing, was the people themselves. It was the immigrants with their deep ethnic heritage and love of their new-found home who really shaped the "Island's" future.



CHAPTER IXST. ANTHONY OF PADUA AND THE FRENCH - CANADIANS

The French-Canadians were among the first inhabitants of the "Island." They had worshipped with the canal Irish and the Penobscot Indians at Fr. Fitton's Christ Church on Temple Street in the 1830's. They settled and stayed in Worcester because of the numerous opportunities to work in the factories. Entire families could be employed there. The Washburn & Moen Co. and Heywood Shoes were two of the largest employers.

Because their language and the Catholic faith were most important to the French-Canadians, they had a desire to found a church of their own. Notre Dame des Canadiens was the first such parish. It was followed by Holy Name of Jesus, St. Joseph's and St. Anthony's.

Rev. Joseph Brouillet of Notre Dame des Canadiens parish had purchased the old Fox Mills, Wool Weavers, located at Vernon Square (later Kelley Square), in 1895. The next year, the Sisters of St. Anne started the Holy Family Parochial School there. On July 18, 1904, Bishop Thomas Beaven blessed the building as a church and dedicated it to St. Anthony of Padua. It became a parish in 1908.

In the beginning, the chapel was located on the third floor, with the classrooms on the first floor. The parish hall occupied the second floor. As Mrs. Joseph Rheaume remembers, this arrangement proved to be inconvenient especially when there was a funeral. In 1928, the 400 seat chapel was transferred to the first floor to accommodate elderly parishioners. The rectory building, formally a private residence located at the corner of Madison and Harding Streets, was moved to 167 Madison Street and enlarged, Mr. Rheaume, a former St. Vincent de Paul Society member, recalls. The convent, too, was moved.

Approximately 600 French speaking Catholics were members of St. Anthony's in the early years. The parish encompassed the area between Providence Street and the railroad tracks on Southbridge Street, and between the Green Street bridge and the Millbury town line. Many parishioners lived very nearby on Lunelle, Ellsworth, Lamartine, Lafayette, Washington and Gold Streets.

Mrs. Rheaume explains that the statue of St. Anthony of Padua was placed in front of the church in 1929, the occasion of the 25th anniversary of its dedication to St. Anthony.

Because of the changing neighborhood—the influx of immigrants from other countries, the spreading of industry, demolitions because of I-290, the parish population dwindled. To make ends meet, the people ran two carnivals each summer on the Kelley Square lot. Many an Island resident remembers riding on the Merry-Go-Round or winning a teddy bear there. The youth group of the church also did much to keep the parish alive along with doing community service work such as clearing some country land to serve as a camping ground.

After St. Anthony's school closed around the late 1950's, the upstairs became the first home of the Green Island Child Development Program, which developed into the Green Island Center. The convent, for a while, became the study center for the African Sisters of Our Lady of Good Counsel. The last Mass at the Church itself was said on December 28, 1975 and the building was sold and demolished the very next spring. However, the statue of St. Anthony de Padua, now at Notre Dame Mausoleum, still remains in the minds of many people as the Kelley Square landmark which represented a hard-working, independent people—the Franco-American residents of the "Island."

M. D. W. R. R. R.



Our Lady of Czestochowa



St. Casimir's



Ascension Church

CHAPTER XLITHUANIANS --SEEKING INDEPENDENCE--PRESERVING A HERITAGE

They came from across the ocean to seek refuge from famine and Czarist oppression. They desired a new life, yet wanted a chance to preserve an old Baltic heritage and an old language - the oldest living language spoken world-wide. They were the Lithuanians.

The first Lithuanian arrived in Worcester in 1869. By 1890, there were more than 400 in the city. Although they were farmers in the "Old country," Lithuanians earned their livelihood in Worcester by working in the mills and taking in boarders. Some opened businesses--markets, bakeries, shoe stores and dry goods stores. They settled on lower Providence Street, on Union and Vernon Hills, in Quinsigamond Village, and in the "Island." Millbury Street became their shopping center--but more about that later.

Like the French-Canadians, the Lithuanians wanted their own church. With the help of the leader of the St. Casimir's Benefit Society (founded in 1891) and a good friend, Fr. Joseph Jakstis (Jakczyts), a petition with 400 names was presented to Bishop Beaven. The first Mass for Lithuanian people was said on October 21, 1894, in the basement of Sacred Heart Church on Cambridge Street. Later, Masses were said at Notre Dame. Joining with the Polish people, who also lacked a church, they soon bought a plot of land on Waverly and Ledge Streets (site of the present school and convent) and erected a wooden church. Some records say this first church was called "Immaculate Mary Church," others, "The Nativity," and still others, "St. Casimir's." Fr. Jakstis became the first pastor and since he spoke both Lithuanian and Polish, he could minister to both peoples.

The Poles worshipped at 9 a.m. and the Lithuanians had services at 10:30 a.m. Soon the Polish people wanted thier own church and they bought Land on Richland Street.

Since the Lithuanian population had grown, plans were made for a new Lithuanian church. The cornerstone of the present church, now called St. Casimir's after the patron saint of Lithuania, was laid on May 31, 1903. It was completed under the leadership of Rev. John J. Jakaitis in 1916. Fr. Jakaitis saw the building of the school (1924) where the Sisters of St. Casimir taught Lithuanian to the children of the immigrants. He also helped found such groups as the Knights of Lithuania (Council 26), the Women's Alliance, and the Charitable Society (Maironis Park).

As the Lithuanian population continued to increase, the need for another church became evident. A new parish and church were started on Sterling Street in 1925 to serve the people of Vernon Hill and South Worcester. This parish was called "Our Lady of Vilna" and Rt. Rev. Msgr. Constantine A. Vasys was named pastor. An altar, constructed entirely of marble, was dedicated there on March 7, 1937.

On the corner of Endicott and Bigelow Streets stood the Protestant "All Saint's Lithuanian National Catholic Church." The cornerstone of the building dates back to 1891 and 1899. Some "Island" residents recall that it first served as a Swedish Baptist Chruch. The Rev. Stanley B. Michiewicz was in charge of the Lithuanian Church until 1913, when it ceased to hold services. The Daughters of Lithuanian were based on the Endicott Street side. Grace Minns, long time resident, remembers attending kindergarten in the basement here while her brother was in the first grade upstairs.

She points out that this was before the "new" building at Lamartine Street School (now Code Inspection) was erected. Many dances were held in the hall, called by "Island" residents, the "Bolshevik Hall." Today, the building serves as the Carpenters Local No. 107.

To educate Lithuanians to become citizens, 65 members from St. Casimir's formed an association. This was known as the Lithuanian Naturalization and Social Club. The headquarters on 12 Vernon Street was closed in 1959 to make way for the Expressway I-290. The American and Lithuanian flags now fly proudly at the "new club" on 67 Vernon Street.

As was mentioned before, Millbury Street became an ethnic shopping area. Lithuanians were able to shop for old world delicacies as well as daily necessities there. Because of this, they could still celebrate holidays such as "Kucia" or the Christmas Eve supper in the traditional way. Many Lithuanians became shopkeepers or businessmen. There was a Lithuanian Co-operative Shoe Store at #15 Millbury Street. Caesar Wackell had a saloon at #94, the present site of Charles Restaurant. Joseph Dirsa, undertaker, conducted business at 13 Ellsworth Street. A Mr. Cinsky had a funeral parlor at Harding and Ellsworth Street. There was a "Cinsky" garage on nearby Lafayette Street (the now demolished Lafayette Cleaners).

There were many markets and restaurant owned by Lithuanians. Joseph Glavickas sold meats at #233, now the Pernet Family Health Clinic. The B & K Capitol Market (now just Capitol Market) was first owned by a Mr. Bakanaustas and a Mr. Kudarauskas.

They were succeeded by Juozas Matulevicius, a lawyer in Lithuania, who owned the store for 33 years. The store, now located at 76 Millbury Street, is owned by a Polish couple, the Nowaks, and still carries Andrulis farmer's cheese and Lithuanian breads from Brockton. Speaking of bread, there was a Duda National Bakery on Ashmont Ave, remembered for its "steam" bread. Charles Miskavich, Aldona Cepulonis' father, owned "Kauna Bread" at 165 Millbury Street in the late 1930's. According to Aldona, each loaf of pure rye bread weighed 12 lbs. and was delivered daily by railway express from Water Viliet, N.Y. It was sold by the pound at 6 cents or 72 cents for the whole loaf. Aldona's mother, Beatrice, was active in Lithuanian circles, having been a founder of St. Casimir's Parish.

For those with a sweet tooth, there was Dedydas' confectionery ice cream store on the corner of Millbury and Lafayette Streets (now Charles Restaurant property). Aldona remembers it by its triangle doorway. When Dedydas died, Stanley Wackell, the first Lithuanian city councillor and son of Caesar Wackell, and his wife, Antonia, operated it until 1936. Notice the brick building at 4 Lafayette Street. It is called the "Wackell Building." There is also the Wackell Insurance Agency now at 14 Millbury Street.

The Lithuanians came to America to start a new life and continued to arrive through the 1950's. Because they were industrious and valued religion and education, their new life was very good-- good for themselves and good for the country. They left their own personal mark on the fields of education, business, law, government, the military and Social Services. The "Island" in Worcester, Massachusetts proudly bears that Lithuanian mark.

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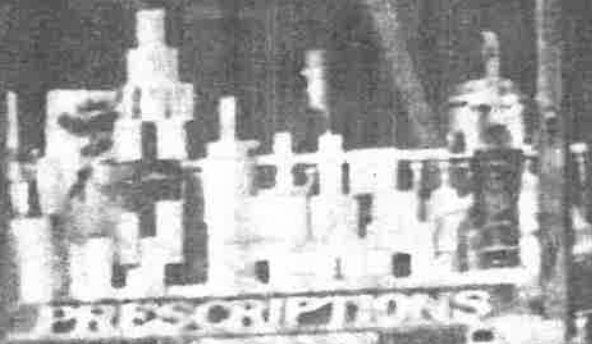
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The Commonwealth of Massachusetts
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
DIVISION OF



UNIVERSITY



EXTENSION



This is evidence that James Ciukcza
has attended regularly an Beginner Course in

English for American Citizenship

conducted at Samartine St. School under authority of Secs. 9 and 10,
Chap. 69, General Laws. Attendance 100 hours, from Nov. 15 to Mar. 25

Date March 28, 1935

Mary L. Huxton
State Supervisor of Adult Alien Education

Walter S. Young
Superintendent of Schools

Thomas J. Power
In Charge of Adult Alien Education

CHAPTER XITHE POLISH--PROUD TO BE AMERICANS

Joining the Lithuanians as "new" residents of the neighborhood were immigrants from Poland. The first Poles in America arrived at Jamestown, Va. in 1608. By 1860, there were 30,000 Polish people in the United States.. They came because of overpopulation, lack of available land to cultivate, insufficient industrial development, and political pressures in their native land. Worcester saw its very first Poles around this time; many more would arrive in the 1880's. Most came directly from New York and Ellis Island, having been helped by the St. Joseph's Charity Organization for Polish Immigrants. Others came up from the Connecticut Valley. Often passage from Europe would be paid for by factory agents looking for new workers. Many a Polish grandmother can recall riding in steerage class, huddled together, and clutching some valuable possession brought from the "old country."

Before the turn of the century, Worcester's city clerk's office had on record residents with last names such as Czechowicz, Kaminski, Stolanski, Lewuck and Bojanowski. Franciszek Bojanowski was the first Polish resident of Worcester to become an American citizen having sworn his oath of allegiance on October 25, 1894. He was very instrumental in helping other Poles to attain citizenship according to his daughter, Victoria Regina Siarkiewicz.

The Polish immigrants had found a new home. It was soon time to build a church here. They joined with the Lithuanians in buying some land and erecting a church on Waverly Street. By 1901, they desired a church of their own so they purchased land on Richland Street.

On May 23 of the next year, they met at the Hotel Vernon to discuss founding a parish and building a church. The first Mass. was said in the new church, called St. Mary's, on August 15, 1906. Rev. John Z. Moneta served as first pastor.

At the turn of the century there were about 150 Polish families in Worcester. To make their lives easier and to help them become American Citizens, many social and political clubs were formed. The Polish Naturalization Independent Club (PNI) first met in 1906 in the new hall of St. Mary's Church. The Polish National Alliance of the United States of North American (PNA) provided insurance and political education programs. Another group, the Polish Falcons, was a fraternal organization which met at "Father Matthew's Hall" on Green Street, now the White Eagle Polish Club.

As more families came to Worcester to escape Russian oppression in Poland, the need for a school became apparent. St. Mary's School opened on September 5, 1915. A new addition was built in 1920 and the high school began in 1936. The Sisters of the Holy Family of Nazareth served and still serve as teachers for the parish school. Here, children could learn the English as well as the Polish language, along with the history and customs of both America and Poland. Pastor Rt. Rev. Msgr. Boleslaus A. Bojanowski saw to the continued growth of the parish, officially called Our Lady of Czestochowa since 1950, and the school for 43 years.

Contributing to the betterment of daily life for the Polish immigrants and leaving their mark as well-known Worcester businessmen, were many of the Polish immigrants themselves.

There was Joseph P. Buyniski, the first Registered Pharmacist of Polish origin in Massachusetts. Buyniski had gained some experience in this field while still in Europe and continued his interest while serving in the U.S. Army Hospital Medical Corps. After his discharge, he formally studied pharmacy and passed his Massachusetts State Board Exam in 1911. He opened his first store at 87 Millbury Street, about where Oscar's Cleaners now stands, in 1912. By 1916, the store moved to its present location at the corner of Millbury and Lafayette Streets and added a U.S. Postal Sub-Station. During the late 1920's, the store became known as the "Vernon Drug Company." According to his wife, affectionately called "Mrs. B," Joseph Buyniski "had great faith and courage and felt that by hard work and his willingness to be of assistance to the people in this (Island) neighborhood, it was possible to succeed." This tradition is now being carried on by his children and grandchildren and on February 19, 1982, Vernon Drug observed its 70th Anniversary with the honor of being the oldest family owned drug store in Worcester. And as son Ted says, each customer will continue to be treated as a "guest."

Located on the other corner of Millbury and Lafayette Streets was the Charles Restaurant. In the summer of 1983, the restaurant celebrated its 60th birthday. It was the oldest family run restaurant under the same ownership in Worcester. Charles Paul Sharameta founded it in 1923 as a 14-stool lunch counter called "Charles Lunch." Being a Polish immigrant himself, Sharameta knew how much the new immigrants missed the "old world" delicacies. He also realized how important a good, hot, plentiful meal was to the workers of the steel mill and factories nearby. This he provided--beef stew for 10 cents; roast pork for 20 cents and a full ham and egg meal-- all you could eat for 20 cents.

By 1934, "Charles Lunch" offered booth service and choice liquors including the nickel beer. Millbury Street was booming with various ethnic shops. Traffic was two-ways and the trolley tracks ran down the middle of the street, remembers Charles' son-in-law, Stanley. The 1950's brought a change in the street and the lunch business as the ethnic influences began to decline. The Charles Restaurant now became a noted seafood and steak house. It was not unusual to find local politicians dining there--Mayor Jimmy O'Brien, Matt Joseph Stacey, Harold Donohue. The establishment continued to grow and prosper and while, under the management of son, Joe, included the CS Tap Room, the Shutter Room, the Main Dining room with the tile floor and art-deco lights, the Lantern Room, a new banquet room and Charlie's Lounge. And as one looked at the memorial photograph of Charles Paul Sharameta on the bar in the lounge, one recalls the Polish immigrant who worked long hours, over hot stoves, to build a tradition in fine dining in his new home, "All-American" Worcester.

Often seen dining at "The Charles" was Henry J. Ciborowski of the Ciborowski Insurance Agency of Worcester, 135 Millbury Street. His late father, Jacob, founded the business after coming from Poland in 1911. According to his wife, Attorney Stella A. Ciborowski, Jacob began selling insurance from the front room of their home at #59 Millbury Street, where the present Municipal Parking lot is located. It was in the days when the "Polska Cukiernia" (ice cream and candy shop) was located at #134. An old insurance policy from 1932 reads "Worcester Insurance Agency, J.S. Ciborowski, Prop.-- General Insurance --59 Millbury Street." Later, the family and the business moved to #95 and then to #135 Millbury Street, the present location.

During the 1940's Jacob Ciborowski operated a Parking lot at the corner of Foyle and Ward Streets. It was said to be "one of the first pay parking lots in the city."

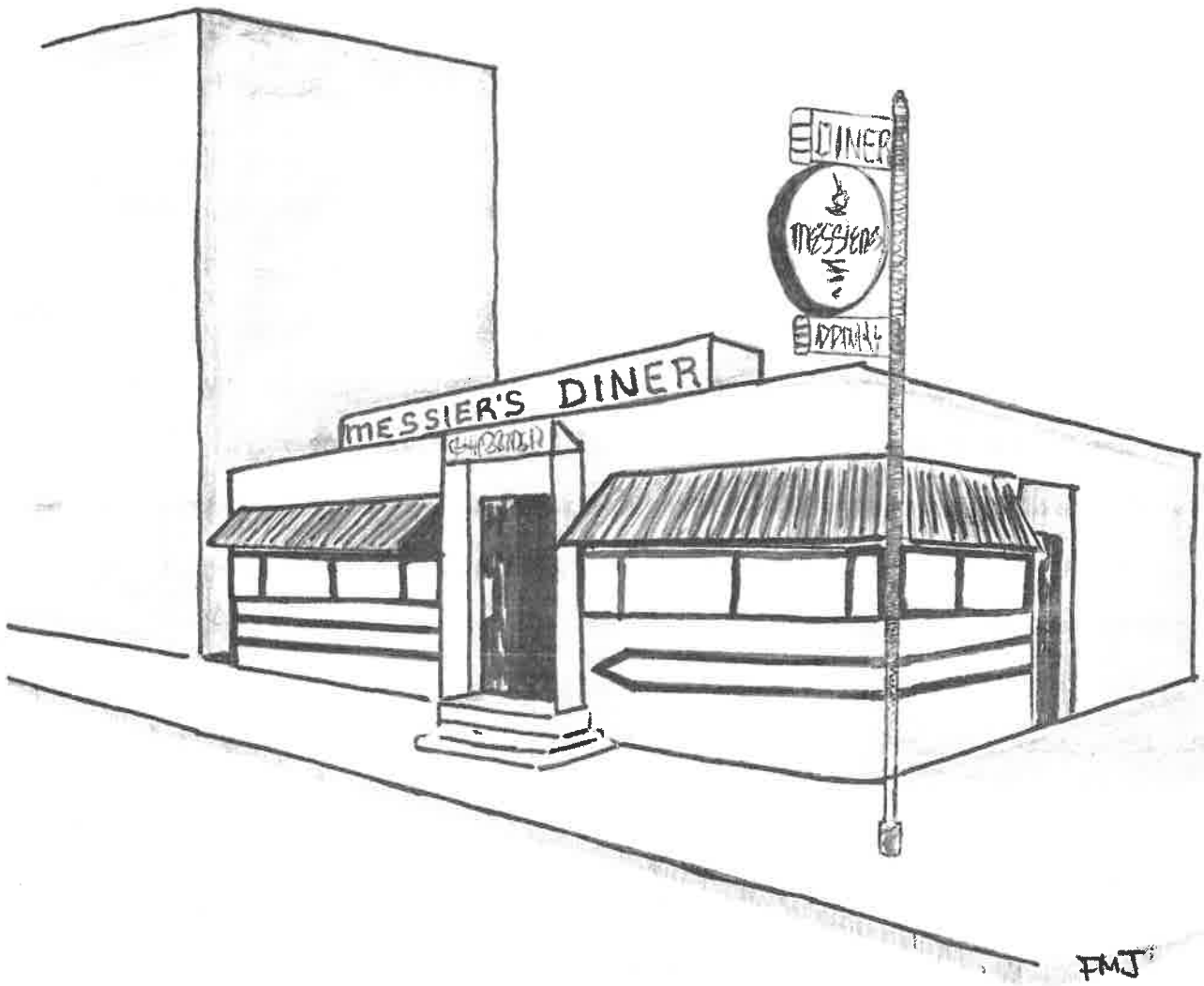
Across the street from Ciborowski's first location was Samuel B. Sadick, the hardware and leather dealer. Every native "Islander" remembers the orange storefront at 64-72 Millbury Street with the large windows loaded with enamel pots and pans, buckets, Kerosene lamps, washboards and plumbing supplies. Mr. Sadick founded the store shortly after he arrived here in 1913. Because he was fluent in Russian, having served in the Russian Army for four years, Polish, German, Jewish, and Lithuanian, he was able to provide the needed items for his fellow immigrants whether it be for the home, for the farm, or for their own neighborhood shops. The large store contained just about everything and Sam knew exactly where he put things. Often a customer would ask for a specific nail and in no time, Sam would climb the rolling stepladder, get the nail, and be down to complete the sale before the customer even had a chance to take out his change purse. There was no bargaining at Sadick's. One always paid the price that was asked. In later years, one could also buy plumbing supplies in the store next door run by Sam's son, Moses. Samuel Sadick finally retired in November, 1975 at the age of 99. Millbury Street had proven a good home for this Polish-Jewish immigrant and his Sadick Hardware and Paint Co.

Many other Polish immigrants also made important contributions to the business community.

They included Abraham H. Noar, founder of the Noar Oil Co. which began on Water Street; Andrew Gebski, president of the former Millbury Furniture Store, 190 Millbury Street, and of Andrew's at Webster Square; O.J. Konczanin, owner of a printing and music shop which grew into Economy Furniture, formerly of #76 Millbury Street; Lucian Karolkiewicz, the undertaker; Henry Freeman, the baker; Peter Rojcewicz, the Ward Street grocery store proprietor; Leopold Kozakiewicz, "one of the foremost portrait sculptors in the United States" and Marian Malecki, a 1949 immigrant, owner of the former Uncle Tom's Cafe at 124 Millbury Street.

And the children of the Polish immigrant continue the tradition as they stand tall as leaders in many fields. Their names include law--Rojcewicz, Samborski, Czechowicz, Ciborowski, Jablonski, Wondolowski; judiciary--Jablonski; insurance--Ciborowski; restaurateur--Sharameta; pharmacy--Buyniski and Zendzian; dentistry--Jankowski; real estate and Parks Commissioner--Stopyra; funeral directing--Karolkiewicz and Jozefowski; steam bread baking and cruschiki making--Pyzynski; medicine--Wondolowski; State government and education--Wondolowski.

As were their parents, they are proud to be Polish, they are proud to be Americans.



CHAPTER XIIA STROLL THROUGH THE NEIGHBORHOOD IN 1950

Millbury Street and the surrounding area offered the Island residents a great opportunity to enjoy two of their favorite activities, shopping and going to the movies. If one took a tour of the neighborhood in 1950, it would look something like this.

Right at the Square, one is greeted by two neighborhood landmarks. The first is the Square itself. After Lincoln Square, Kelley Square is probably the best known traffic maze in Worcester. In the early days, it was called Vernon Square. Its present name honors Sgt. Cornelius F. Kelley who died of wounds received in battle at Verdun, France on October 13, 1918. A monument Stone remembering him is placed on the corner of Harding and Madison Streets, near St. Anthony's Church property. The second landmark is the "Hotel Vernon" or Mc Gady's" -- 16 Kelley Square. The hotel for men was built in 1900-1901 by Michael E. McGady, the Millbury Street tavern owner. His sons, Francis "Bossy" and Beaven, added their own touches in 1935 by converting the gentlemen's poolroom into the "Kelley Square Yacht Club." One could "sail" upon the "Good Ship Madame Rhubarb," the flagship of the club, and leave the Depression behind. The "Madame Rhubarb" dining-meeting room is "said to be an exact replica of the innards of the Mayflower" and the ship's wheel is "from the fire-scarred Hoboken Ferry," states one informed "sailor." An "Amen Corner," a place to chat, is located in a room between the front bar and the Yacht club and has heard many a "hot conversation" between a seasoned politician and a budding newcomer.

The walls of the main barroom are decorated with a mural painted in 1934 and 1935. The artists were Joe Miron, husband of Pauline McGady, "Bossy" McGady, Walter Johnston, the pastel portrait painter, and Alfred "Al Capp" Kaplin. Often, visitors have commented on the resemblance of the mural's ship's cabin boy to the young John F. Kennedy, Rosie Kennedy's son.

Across the street from this "poor man's Worcester Club" - is a variety of businesses. There's "Ark Furniture" on the first floor of the "Flatiron" building and next door, Val J. Wadowski and his wife, Mae, fit Lithuanian and Polish customers with eye glasses. The "Kelley Square Barber Shop" is where Francis J. McGrath gets his haircut. Plan E - the Council-Manager form of government had taken effect in Worcester on January 2, 1950. McGrath would go down in Worcester history as "The City Manager." The well-dressed man shops at "Archie" Golembeski's and at the "Varsity Shop. For the housewife, "White's Five Cents to a Dollar Store" has that needed spool of thread or darning needle.

One crosses Lamartine Street and enters "Maurice's Men's Store," a sort of "Army-Navy Store" started down the street by Maurice Ravelson way back in 1923. Little does anyone realize that the small corner store will later become "Maurice the Pants Man" and expand the expand. Nearby, "Supreme Market" provides the best in meats and a good selection of grocery items. Sid, the owner, and Bill the grocery manager, see to that. By crossing Millbury Street, one can make purchases at "Carroll's Bakery" and the "U-Need-A Fruit Store," which customers just call "Bessie's" after the owner "Bessie" George Moud. The "Ward Pharmacy" is located a few doors down at #29.

On one corner of Carpenter Street (which runs from Millbury Street to Ward Street) is "Arent's Tavern." Owned by Walter Turecki, the neighborhood tavern becomes a meeting place for members of the Worcester Homing Pigeon Club. Upstairs is the "nice" Doctor Nicol.

On the other corner is "Buehler Brothers Meat Market." Above the market is the meeting place for the "American Legion Col. John F. J. Herbert Post #231." Also in the block is "Wentworth's Bakery," "Rialto Dry Goods" run by Helen Bulak, the "Polish Naturalization Club" and the biggest tenant, the "Rialto Theater."

The "Rialto," a landmark dating from 1917, is the last of the theaters in the immediate area. There used to be the "Vernon Theater" at Kelley Square, now the Edward's Paint Building; the "Gem" near the Wire Mill; "The Bijou" later called "New Bijou" at #26 Millbury Street where White's 5 & 10 now stands. Predominately a neighborhood theater, the "Rialto" holds 1200 people. The audience on weekdays, is primarily adults, on Saturdays and Sundays, the most popular days, children. What most people remember about the "Rialto" are the "dish nights" and the Christmas parties. If you were a lady and went to the theater on a certain night, you could see "ole blue eyes" and receive a dish, all for 35 cents admission. There were blue ceramic overware, orange carnival glass, a poinsetta pattern, a cream-colored 22 karat gold rimmed oven set, a patriotic star pattern and even white enamel red-rimmed cookware. Begun in 1928, the Christmas parties "were a Depression bright spot." They were and continue to be sponsored by neighborhood merchants and leaders such as Joe and Fred Fedeli, owners of the "Rialto," Bronislaw Wolochowicz of "Ben's Cafe," Jimmy O'Brien "The Mayor of Millbury Street" and Anthony "Spitz" Stolulonis the "number one organizer of the neighborhood."

According to many "Island" ladies, " if you wanted a ticket to the party, you went to see "Spitzie."

Next door to the "Rialto" Building is perhaps the most famous Millbury Street landmark--"Messier's Diner." It was started in 1915 by Joseph H. Messier as an 11 stool diner located at #164 Millbury Street. Messier, a Canadian immigrant, was no stranger to Millbury Street having previously run a barber shop there. His good reputation as a food man grew and grew and by 1930, it was time to expand. Expansion meant moving up the street to #49. It also meant buying a Worcester Lunch Cart diner. The Worcester Lunch Cart Company factory was located only a few streets away at 2-8 Quinsigamond Ave. Their diner design--barrel roofs, wood-trimmed interiors and baked porcelain enamel exteriors - made them a classic. Because the new diner was small, cooking had to be done in a cottage in the back. The aroma of food cooking spread along Millbury Street and people flocked in for the 25 cents meals. Joe Messier continued to work hard cooking up such specialties as cabbage soup, roast pork and beef stew. However, in 1936, he had a heart attack and he had to retire. "Spung" as he was affectionately called by his customers, turned the business over to his son, Joe Messier, Jr., otherwise known as "Spung, Jr." or Midi." Business was good, averaging about \$600-\$800 a week. In six months, it was better, doing about \$1800 a week. People flocked in the for the 50 cents meals.

In 1941, a time of sadness pervaded Messier's and Millbury Street. Joseph H. Messier was dead. One neighbor and friend, Henry Ciborowski, recalls how a picture of Mr. Messier was displayed "in memorium" in the diner.

As customers glanced at the picture, they remembered the good times--the delicious food--the friendly manner--and the good name, Joe Messier. Joe Messier, Jr. was proud to carry on the tradition and assisted by his wife, daughter and sons he continued to make Messier's the place to eat. The present diner was purchased in 1946 from the Jerry O'Mahony Company in New Jersey. It was delivered in two sections--the dining area and the Kitchen--by truck. According to Joe, "It had a police escort all the way from New Jersey and it arrived 13 months late" The wait was well worth it. "Messier's" became a 24 hr. restaurant and in 1947, a tradition was started. Lobsters were introduced. A stuffed lobster originally sold for \$1.50. In 1950, one finds business booming.

On the other side of Millbury Street, there is Wally's TV owned by Walter Moise, Joseph Kairis' restaurant, and "Quality Fish Market". "Commercial Fruit Store" owned by Thoma "Macho" Anas sells the freshest in fruits and vegetables, and also specializes in fruit baskets. And beautiful baskets they are! Moving down the street is a "Childrens Shop," the hardware store--"W.E. Aubuchon Co., Inc.," "Star Shoe Store" with a "Chiclet" gum machine outside, the noted "Sadick's Hardware and Paint Co." and Moses Sadick's plumbing supply store, "Economy Furniture" and William Hersh's dry goods store. At #82 is "McGovern's Package Store of Worcester, Inc." This business was founded in 1937 by John McGovern, who along with his brothers, Walter and Terry owned the "Ivy Cafe" way down the line. The establishment was purchased from Timothy J. Cooney who owned it from 1933 until 1937. According to Cooney, who served as a City Councillor from Ward 5 from 1932-1937, in those days, the stores were called "liquor stores" instead of "package stores."

Heading toward Lafayette Street is "Quality Fruit Store" where "Brodeurs Market" used to be, "Chestney's Canteen" which serves liquor and Sandwiches, Francis Magro's shoe repair and of course, at #94, the fine dining establishment, "Charles Restaurant."

Across Millbury Street one finds "Smith's Cafe," Hyman Jaffe's hardware store, and on the corner of Foyle Street, Theodore Karbowski's, later Ed Spahl's, bakery. If one takes a short detour up Foyle Street, one can purchase hot French bread sticks from "United Baking Co." and "Family" steam breads from Clifford Rojcewicz. Also on Foyle Street is land owned by the Polish Naturalization Club. Someday soon, new club quarters will be built there. Back on Millbury Street and continuing down the street, one finds the following businesses, "Freeman's Bakery," founded by Henry Freeman in 1916, a small market owned by a Mr. Cohen that has a pickle barrel outside, a fish market, Oscar Asadoorian's shoe repair and dry cleaning establishment (Oscar had started doing shoe repair on Millbury street in 1936), "Kiddie Kastle" owned by Samuel Chafetz, leader of the Millbury Street Merchants Association, Stopyra's Meat Market, the "Worcester Polish Credit Union," Jacob Ciborowski's Insurance Agency, and Stanley Jablonski's law office. If one chooses to cross Taylor Street, one can purchase a dress at Harry "Goodwin's" dry goods store. The store has been a fixture on Millbury Street since 1910. There's also Theodore Harry's shoe repair, Chester Wong's laundry, and two markets, the "Great Atlantic and Pacific Tea Company" and the "Park Supermarkets." At the A & P, one can buy fresh ground "Eight O'Clock" or Red Circle" coffees. Serving as manager of "Park Supermarket" during World War II was alderman, James D. "Jimmy" O'Brien.

By back-tracking a little bit and by crossing the street, one can get a prescription filled, mail a letter, buy a Polish newspaper, and have a mug of root beer all at one place—"Vernon Drug Company"—100 Millbury Street.

Nearby are two fruit stores "Pano's" and the "Millbury Street Fruit Store," Wolf White runs a dry goods store at #116. The "B & K Capitol Market" is next door. Upstairs is the office of Dr. Thaddeus C. Wrobleski, dentist.

When the shopper crosses Ellsworth Street, he or she finds "Uncle Tom's Cafe," "Pawlina's Cafe" and "Serafin's Tavern." In between these establishments are two fruit stores, a barbershop, a restaurant, and at #134, "John H. O'Brien's" confectionery store. Brother Jimmy, who was born on 10 Lamartine Street, ran this store with the help of Miss Lucille Foisy whom he married in 1947. Everyone in the "Island" calls Jimmy "The Mayor of Millbury Street." He has served as an alderman for 12 years and under Plan E, he's a councillor. "He used to be a driver for the late Mayor John C. Mahoney. That's how people got to know him," states one "Island" resident. Right at the corner is Millbury Street Paint & Hardware.

After the tired shopper crosses Sigel Street, it's time for a snack at "Luke's Diner." Here you can get a steaming bowl of cabbage soup. According to Charles Rice, a cook, "A diner can't survive around here if it doesn't have cabbage soup. You have to sell cabbage soup." On one side of the diner is located Benjamin Struckus' grocery; on the other side is a barber shop and a cleaners.

The odd numbered side of the street offers Louis Cramer's dry goods store, "The Evening Gazette" delivery station, "Roxy Cleaners," "Klein's" dry goods where you can buy beautiful kitchen curtains, "Zink's Tavern" and "Nellie's Dairy Bar" owned by ever-busy Nellie J. Rasimas. At the rear of #157 and #159 is "Boston Hall."

Mary Zecker remembers it well because she had her bridal shower here. According to Mary, many dances were also held at this location. After you cross Endicott Street you can stop for coffee at "Martin's Lunch." Martin will later move to a new place at the corner of Harding and Sigel Streets. Kader's Grill will move into the old location and feature "old world delicacies cooked in the old world way." Down the street at #205 is Bernard Struckus' father's "Big Nickel Supermarket." For a certain amount of register tapes plus some cash, one could get a doll with a satin dress and pearl earrings. Beatrice Miskavich had one of these dolls and it graced her bedroom.

On the even numbered side of the street is Gebski's "Millbury Furniture Company." There's also "Caine Paint & Wallpaper Co." founded in 1920 by Herman S. Caine, "Wentworth's Bakery" and further down the line, "Ed Smith's Restaurant," "Yanover's Package Store," and "Charles E. Mattson & Co." --furniture dealers.

Nearby Crompton Park provides a "little bit of the country in the City" for the people of the "Island." Besides offering a wading pool and a great hill for sliding, the area serves as a practice field for budding athletes. For 5 cents, residents could take a shower in the old fieldhouse. This was a big treat since many homes didn't have running hot water then. To the South of the park is the "John J. Nissen Baking Company," 75 Quinsigamond Ave. Part of this plant was formerly "Mother's Bread" bakery where Claire Boyer recalls you could get a bag of donuts for 50 cents. West of the park is another "Island" landmark, the "old gashouse." There are big storage tanks on Quinsigamond Ave. and coke is burned to make gas there. Many "Island" residents remember their immigrant mothers walking them around the park hoping that the fumes from the "gashouse" would cure their children's sniffles or any other ailments they might have.

With the gashouse, came the "Gashouse Gang." Their clubhouse was on the corner of Lafayette and Langdon Streets. Members who met in the 1930's included "Bunny" Balcewicz, Joe Czechowicz, the football player, Chet Kusz, Eddie Goodwin and Walter "Doggie" Gedman. There were other groups around such as the Keystones, Kodiacs, Sigel A.C., Vernons, Golden Comanches, and the very active Blake A.C. According to Al Jurinsky, an organizer, Blake A.C. sponsored cooking, sewing, and tap dancing classes for children in their upstairs headquarters at the corner of Harding and Harrison Street.

Scattered throughout the neighborhood, one found various markets and businesses. On Lafayette Street, there's "Pandar's" and "Linga's and Hryniewicz's" markets. Chris Demma has a market on the corner of Ellsworth and Bigelow Streets. "Sunrise Beverage Company" is located on the corner of Langdon and Lafayette Streets, "Whiting Milk Company" is at #85 Lafayette Street. "Winkie" Magnuson points to the rings on the outside wall where the horses were tied up. "Worcester Brewing Co.," formerly the "Brockert Brewery" occupies space on 81 Lafayette Street and 60-68 Ellsworth Street. M. Joseph Stacey serves in the capacity of owner. Over on Lamartine Street, near Scott Street, is the "Nadolny Bakery." Here, one could buy very "delicious donuts" according to many native "Islanders." "Parker Manufacturing Company" is located on Washington Street. Organized in 1901, the company manufactures small hand tools. Nearby is the "Wyman Gordon Company." Harry Stoddard serves as president and moving up the ladder is his son, Robert W. Stoddard, a future president. There is also a government commissioned "Wyman-Gordon" plant in North Grafton. The transportation field and "Wyman-Gordon" continue to "forge" ahead together.

"Reno's Market" is on the corner of Washington and Lamartine Street. The "Reno Guards," a band who practiced in the back, highlighted many a parade. "Peter Brothers Coal Company" is diagonally down the street at 161 Washington.

Returning to Kelley Square, one is reminded of the other squares in the neighborhood. The two most noted, are "Grabowski Square" and "Brosnihan Square." "Grabowski Square" is located at the intersection of Lafayette, Harding and Washington Streets. It honors PVT. Joseph W. Grabowski who died of wounds received in the Battle St. Mihiel, France on October 15, 1918. The Polish people of Worcester erected a monument here on November 11, 1924. At the far end of the "Island", is "Brosnihan Square." PVT John F. Brosnihan was killed in Battle at Meuse Argonne, France on October 14, 1918. A monument erected "by the people of this section for their boys in World War 1917-1919" was placed here on October 12, 1919.

Going back to Kelley Square, one can see Green and Water Streets. On Green Street is "Table Talk." Begun in 1925 as a bread bakery, the pie company moved to its present site in 1942. The first bakery here was in a converted trucking garage. The modern bakery was built in 1944. Under the direction of Theodore A. Tonna, president, and Angelus N. Cotsidas, treasurer, the pie company is well on its way to becoming the "World's Biggest Pie Shop." The "flaky crust" apple pies seem to hit the spot with everyone. Up the street is the ever busy "Green Street Market" owned by Charles and Isadore Golub. Across Green Street is the "Paten Company" where Eva Rice works. They make inflatable life rafts here and Eva enthusiastically recalls how Arthur Godfrey inflated one of the rafts on his T.V. show. Do you recognize the building? It's part of the old Crompton Loom Works complex.

Two streets over is Water Street, the Jewish Commercial District. Here one can buy bagels and bulkies at "Widoff's," "Lederman's", and "Cohen's." There is a delicatessen called "Weintraub's." The "Broadway" sells ice cream as well as potato pancakes. Jacob Goldfarb's "Worcester Pickle Co.," turns out dill and other varieties of pickles, at #41 Water Street. There are many small fruit, poultry and Kosher butcher shops. Perhaps the busiest store on Water Street is "Whitman's Model Creamery." Here, one could find "tub butter," cream and cottage cheeses, and grocery items; Moses Whitman, a Russian immigrant founded the store in 1910. According to Mary Zecker, who was born on Lafayette Street near the PNA, "Mr. Whitman was good to the Polish and Luithuanian people" so many of them shopped there. Back at Kelley Square, one find "Edwards Paint & Wallpaper Corp.," run by the Medlinsky Brothers and next door is Isadore and Shirley Zive's "Blossom Flower Shop." At #29 Kelley Square there's the "Ideal Pharmacy." So as a tour of the neighborhood comes to an end, one can see that the "Island" in 1950 has a little bit of everything. Old world traditions mix with American innovations. The "Island" is a true "melting Pot." And as the saying goes "all roads lead to ..."
Millbury Street!

Chapter XIIIDEMOLITION WITH THE EXPRESSWAY; REBIRTH WITH "GREEN ISLAND"

Progress--otherwise known as "Expressway 1-290"--would soon bring about a drastic change in Millbury Street and the "Island." It would mean taking down houses, destroying landmarks, forcing businesses to relocate, and shutting off streets.

Millbury Street was fighting for its life in the late 1950's and early 1960's. Merchants, headed by Samuel Chafetz of "Kiddie Kastle," tried to get the Expressway plans changed. Some proposed moving the highway west of Millbury Street; others favored "Plan C" which would be go through the "Old " St. Vincent Hospital property. Despite the lobbying and help from good friends such as the State Representative of Ward 5, Stanislaus G. Wondolowski, State Senator William D. Fleming, Mayor Jimmy O'Brien, and City Councillor George A. Wells, the Expressway plowed through the east section of the neighborhood.

Down came part of Millbury Street School, the entire Ward Street School, the bakeries on Foyle Street, the Lithuanian Nationalization Club on lower Vernon Street, the Polish Naturalization Independent Club on Foyle Street, various small businesses along the way, the Stage area of the "Rialto Theater" and about 25% of the housing stock. With the houses went the people. The Millbury Street Municipal Parking Lot called for the demolition of more houses and stores including Freeman's Bakery, Inc., 73 Millbury Street, which was forced to relocate to Main Street near Chandler Street.

No longer did "all roads lead to ..." Millbury Street. To get there now, you had to "walk over" the Expressway by way of the Vernon Street bridge or "go under" the Expressway by means of the tunnels on Endicott or Seymour Streets. There were no more "shortcuts" through carpenter, Foyle, Taylor, Richland, Worth and Wade Streets. In fact, carpenter and Foyle Streets were totally wiped out!

Our Lady of Czestochowa Church, the Polish Church, was now on the other side of the Expressway wall. The parish property underwent many changes because of I-290 construction. A new shrine dedicated to Our Lady of Czestochowa was erected across from the Church where Ward Street School once stood. A flag pole was placed on each side of the shrine. At the base of each pole was a World War II Memorial Honor Roll sponsored by the Polish American veterans of World War II, Inc., 42 Green Street. Their headquarters was once the home of Dr. Michael J. Halloran, a very prominent Worcester physician and member of the city's Irish Community.

The rectory of the church was moved and enlarged so that its front door now faced Ward Street. Both the church and rectory were sided and a spacious parking lot was constructed around the church. Part of the parking lot used to be lower Richland Street.

One of the church's neighbors was Henry Karolkiewicz. His funeral parlor at 7 Richland Street was right in the path of the Expressway. Yet, the building would not be demolished. It would be moved! Up the street, around the corner on Ward Street and up to a vacant lot at 21 Dorchester Street. It was placed on a new foundation and used as a private residence.

Henry would construct a new brick funeral parlor on the empty lot, often used as a "shortcut," at the corner of Ward and Dorchester Streets. The church and funeral parlor continued to be neighbors inspite of "progress."

The Lithuanian Club (LNC) made arrangements to erect spacious new quarters at 67 Vernon Street. The Polish Club (PNI) decided to build again, this time not too far from Brosnihan Square. However, the neighborhood would never be the same. As Charles Sharameta, the restaurateur, declared, the Worcester Expressway "Cut the heart out of Millbury Street."

These were grim days for the "Island." They were also dark days for our country. America had lost her leader, John Fitzgerald Kennedy, probably the most charismatic president in history. Lyndon B. Johnson would succeed him in the Executive Office. And the government would declare "War on Poverty."

It was 1964 and the Office of Economic Opportunity was created. Focus was put on "maximum feasible participation of the poor." Our City Manager Francis McGrath convened a meeting, held at the Chancery, to plan how Worcester would combat poverty. Here, the Right Rev. Timothy J. Harrington who would later become 3rd Bishop of Worcester, unveiled his plan for "ten strategically-placed neighborhood Centers." Right Rev. Harrington, as Diocesan Director of Catholic Charities, long had a dream of "neighborhood-based services" so it was not surprising that he volunteered Catholic Charities as the "coordinating agency." The proposal for the 10 centers was accepted by the committee, but they opted to have a quasi-public agency in the community constituency, now known as the Worcester Community Action Council, as the sponsoring agency," states Msgr. Leo J. Battista.

Catholic Charities had the option of becoming the "delegate agency" of one of the centers. Father Edmond Tinsley and Father Leo Battista, then both Assistants at Catholic Charities, wrote a grant and went to Washington. In the early summer of 1965, a \$122,433 federal grant was received.

Selecting a site and name for the first center was easy. Since their office was at 26 Vernon Street, Catholic Charities chose an "Island" district site. Right Rev. Harrington, aided by Father Tinsley, called the new center "Green Island." "It was really Fr. Tinsley," recalls Bishop Harrington with a broad smile. Fr. Tinsley had grown up on Vernon Hill and was very familiar with the area. Census Tract #25, the "Island" as people of Worcester called it, would be the "heart" of the service area. The Center's first home was the second floor of St. Anthony's Church at Kelley Square. Kelley Square looked toward Green Street, another part of the proposed service area, and "Green" was added to "Island"

On July 3, 1965, the operation began with a Child Development Summer program directed by Sister Mary Daniel Malloy R.S.M., a fully accredited teacher. Plans were made to expand it to a full year program as more and more people became interested and on September 16, 1965 "Green island Neighborhood Opportunity Center" was born. Matthew L. Pisapia was the first director. Soon the Neighborhood Center provided services to teenagers, married couples and homemakers--all people, all ages. Social and outreach services were housed at the St. Vincent de Paul building on Ward Street.

A Neighborhood Resident Council was soon formed to get area people involved in the programs and leadership of the Neighborhood Center.

Besides doing this, the residents would gain the power to recommend or reject projects slated for the neighborhood. At first, some residents were afraid to get involved. To admit to being poor was hard for them. Also, a group of older residents, parishioners of St. Anthony's Church, could not get used to children and teenagers using the building for other than religious purposes. As trust grew, fears were diminished and more programs were offered to more people. Among the first volunteers were Hedy Wood, Nancy Lucier, Mary Walley, and Blanche Barney. Everyone enjoyed the Summer bazaar in 1966—the day Senator Edward "Ted" Kennedy came to visit.

In 1968 the Child Development Program had become part of Headstart. For a time, the Center called a convent at 20 Vernon Street its home. When the building was needed for a convent again, services were moved back to the St. Vincent de Paul building. A new decade meant a new home, 27-29 Millbury Street. It also meant a new director for the Center. Doris Marcelonis succeeded Matthew Pisapia, who continued to be involved as consultant and liaison with Catholic Charities. Being a neighborhood resident herself and having worked up the ranks at the Center, Doris had a deep knowledge of what Green Island, the Center and the people, was all about. "Establishing trust," treating people with "dignity" and "helping people to help themselves" became the basis of all programs. And the programs were many—Arts and Crafts, Boy Scouts, a Mother's Club, and Elderly Program, pediatric, mental health, and geriatric clinics and outreach programs. Betty Oleski, Bill Carlson, Robert Dand, Shirley Fredette, Gloria Markowski and Mary Tanona were outreach workers. Despite being "on call 24 hours a day," Gloria still found time to edit the "Green Island Newsletter."

Friendly House began providing elderly meals to the Center. St. Vincent's Hospital Pediatric Staff succeeded Pernet Family Health Services as providers for the children's clinic. The staff of Catholic Charities offered alcoholism services. Neighborhood Legal Services had an office at the Center. Deinstitutionalization of mental health patients began in Massachusetts and the first satellite community--based mental health program was started at Green Island, staffed by the Department of Mental Health.

The Resident Council was actively fighting to restore the residential character of the neighborhood, partially destroyed by the Expressway. Under the leadership of President Paul Rafferty, members of the Resident Council worked hard on a proposal for an elderly high rise housing project at Kelley Square, the St. Anthony's Church property. Despite strong resident support, the proposal was rejected because of site problems. A few year later, the Church property was sold and St. Anthony's was demolished. Another neighborhood landmark was gone.

In 1974, the Resident Council changed its name to the Green Island Neighborhood Resident Group. It was responsible for starting the Island/Crompton Park Chapter of Fair Share, Worcester's first chapter. While Joseph Rheaume was NRG president, the Resident Group assisted by Millbury Street merchants, worked to get the path of the proposed Sewer-Flood Control project changed. The original plans would have wiped out Millbury and Green Streets--two streets heavily settled with houses built over stores.

The people of Green Island were finally having an impact on what happened in their neighborhood. They were making progress. Their Center would make progress too, by moving diagonally across the street to 68 Millbury Street. In new headquarters, Green Island Center and the residents of the "Island," now known as "Green Island" would face a new challenge--the Sewer-Flood Control Project.



**GREEN ISLAND
NEIGHBORHOOD CENTER**

●●●●●●●●●●●●●●●● **Crompton Park** ●●●●●●●●●●●●●●●●

CHAPTER XIVLEARNING FROM THE PAST; LOOKING TOWARD THE FUTURE

"They killed us once with the Expressway. We can't let them kill us again," stated Lorraine Laurie, a member of the Green Island Residents Group, at a Fair Share Meeting on October 21, 1981. The Green Island neighborhood would again face major disruption, this time because of the EPA mandated Sewer-Flood Control project. Twenty-three apartment units in seven houses, Mechanics Bank, Damato's Restaurant, Lafayette Cleaners and four garages on Harding Street would be demolished.

Residents, especially Jeannie Carlson, activist, were determined to "Save the Island." The first thrust of this campaign was to ask Mechanics Bank to stay in the neighborhood. This was done by extensive petitioning, about 400 names were collected, and by conferences with the branch manager, Ray White, who acted as liaison. On October 29, the bank made the commitment to remain in Green Island no matter what route the sewer project should take. With that settled, area residents and Millbury Street merchants led by Bob Largess of the "McGovern's Package Store" submitted a petition to have Millbury Street repaved and then be made 2-ways during the duration of the EPA project. New sidewalks were requested and put in. The next step was to "Put the Green back into the Island." A meeting was held at Green Island Center in November, 1982 with representatives of the Chamber of Commerce, the WRA, OPCD, WHA, WCCI, and the Housing Information Center. Help was offered to replenish and preserve the valuable housing stock.

While all this was going on, dream were being made by Parks Commissioner Tom Taylor, Landscape Architect Jef Fasser and a group of residents headed by Dennis Dunlevy, known as the "Crompton Park Planning Group." The focus was put on making the park more accessible and enjoyable for the people of the neighborhood. Renovating the burnt-out Shower house into a community house was given top priority so that the people of Green Island could always have a place to meet, to enjoy elderly meals, and to obtain needed services. The Green Island Neighborhood Center would make the commitment to move into the building upon completion. Additional plans for Crompton Park called for improved lighting, more parking, new play equipment, and a facelift for "Cousy Court," the basketball court.

The year 1983 was an eventful one for Green Island. The Center participated in the first of many USDA "cheese and butter" distributions. Mayor Sara Robertson joined Green Island Merchants for breakfast in order to discuss her "ethnic village" idea and other plans for revitalization. Channel 5's "Good Day" staff accompanied her for the meeting and Millbury Street "Starred" on Boston TV! Green Island Center and Resident Group took the opportunity to thank their "This is Worcester" company sponsor, the Wyman-Gordon Company, by honoring them on the occasion of their 100th birthday. A successful City Council Candidates Night was held in October as well as a meeting of the City Council Housing Committee. The full City Council approved the request to prioritize the Green Island and South Worcester neighborhoods in the creation of any new public housing for the elderly or families.

And finally, the Green Island Residents Group became the Green Island Residents Group, Inc., increased its membership to over 100, obtained a local Campaign for Human Development grant to develop leadership, hired a part time neighborhood organizer/community liaison, started a food co-op, received a Greater Worcester Community Foundation, Inc.--Charles Stewart Mott Foundation neighborhood small grant and put Green Island on radio, on TV, in the papers, and back on the map of Worcester!

As we look to the future with the recent move to Crompton Park, the Green Island Residents Group, Inc. and the Green Island Neighborhood Center, joined by area residents, merchants, city officials, housing and economic specialists, are busy working hard to bring back life to the old neighborhood.

The opening of the "new" Mechanics Bank at 116 Millbury Street will be an important first step. Also, news of the proposed state funded Worcester Housing Authority 43 unit elderly apartment complex planned for the old Wackell and Charles Restaurant buildings will help bring people back to Millbury Street.

Yet, in spite of all our activity, we still take time to pause and study what has gone before us. Hard work, determination, ethnic pride, and love of God and neighborhood--that's what made the "Island" a neighborhood. It is the secret of the past. It will be the key to the future.

IN MEMORY OF
ALL OUR
GREEN ISLAND NEIGHBORS
WHO GAVE THEIR LIFE
IN SERVICE
TO OUR COUNTRY

WWI

John F. Brosnihan
Joseph W. Grabowski
Cornelius F. Kelley
Edward F. Power

WWII

Stanley Biernat
Paul D. Boyer
Joseph Cherry
Anthony J. Chojnacki
Adolph Dumbrauskas
Edward Dymek
George A. Gervais
Leo A. Glatki
John Johnson
Harold Kaplan
Thomas F. Keating
George A. Kigas
Walter J. Kigas
Frank L. Kihowsky
William F. King
Bernard Kramek
Chester J. Luszczynski
Frank Matyka
Albert Mazeika
Joseph McCarthy
William Paskonis
Edward J. Paulavedus
Edward Poirier
Michael M. Siemaszko
Michael T. Sobol
Walter Sobol
Charles Wrobel
Walter Zawalich

KOREA

Walter Armstrong
Fred J. Bott, Jr.
Robert Carlson
Joseph Laukaitis

VIETNAM

Joseph Edmunds
Ralph V. Renauld, Jr.
Thomas J. Stopyra

VIETNAM-MIA

Russell P. Bott

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that makes
Worcester "All-American".

