

Back to College

New Orders and Move

Then, in the evening came my new orders, which specified some place near the University! Our household goods to So Rats and I undertook our first Military Move in June. Everything was packed and on the way shipped to port. Taking our leave of Pat's mother and father, and her husband and daughter, Pat's sister, Anleigh, and from some of the advice we got from other West Point folks, we went to the University campus, through Camden. So we got there, signed up for the apartment, and moved in.

Here is the apartment we lived in for that Graduate School year of 1954-1955

Back to College (1)

Category: Graduate School

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Haddonfield, N.J., Oct 1980

To our delight, two other West Point Grads, also on orders to the English Department via a Masters of Arts Degree at the University of Pennsylvania also chose to move into the same Haddonfield Apartment complex. One was a classmate, Philo Hutcheson, Artillery branch with his wife Mitch - no children. And the other was Charlie and Cindy Adams, with the beginning of their family just as we were. He was class of 1949, a year before me. And had been in Korea for a tour.

Not only would we males be able to Car Pool to the University when convenient, but our wives could car pool

too - for shopping at the closest military Commissary.

As it happened Philo and his wife were a little standoffish. They were dedicated to their finely bred dog.

Patsy and Cindy

On the other hand, Patsy very quickly became fast friends with Cindy, aided by their both being pretty new mothers. Patsy with son David, and Cindy, already with son Bucky, and with Christie about to be born.

Both Charlie and Cindy were born in Texas. He was two years older than I was, had prior military service. And served in Korea 1951-53 in the 187th Airborne Regimental Combat Team (RCT), not seeing much action. Cindy also was a little older than Charlie, had worked as a newspaper reporter in Amarillo, Texas before her marriage.

It is not too much to say that, starting with that meeting at Graduate School and living very close to each other for a year in Haddonfield, that Patsy and Cindy became, and remained all their lives the truest friends.

That was later aided and abetted by the fact that not only did we live close for a year in Haddonfield, but because both Charlie and I and our families were destined to spend 3 years together at West Point, he and I in the

English Department, with both families living on the same Post.

Afterwhich, with serindipity, both Charlie and I were ordered to serve in the 25th Infantry Division on Oahu, Hawaii at the same time after three years at West Point. We both rented houses right next to each on the north beach at Mokuleia, Oahu for that 3 year tour.

In short, Patsy and her best friend Cindy lived close by each other, for 7 continuous years, while their husbands did their military duties and were rarely serving together. Their two children Bucky and Christie Adams grew up with our David and Rebecca.

The Army makes fast friends, but often so do their wives and children, even when military assignments put them together, or apart.

Back to College (1)

Category: Graduate School

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Master's Degree Study

The 9 months of listening to lectures by UPenn scholars, reading the great English literary works, writing papers, and then a longer final paper were pleasant. Although the sharp contrast between both the baggy panted, pipe smoking scholar-teachers, the disheveled - often - undergraduates and the West Point officer-faculty and sharply turned out and attentive cadets was amusing to me, I mildly enjoyed the visits to the library, lecture halls,

and then reading and writing at home.

I studied, as much for learning the long English literary tradition, as for the techniques of the writers. To see what I might adopt for my own writings.

Slowly and repeatedly reading works by some of the Great Poets, like Wordsworth, I actually got to some of the deeper levels of meaning that had escaped me before.

Milton was a bore, Burns, Shakespeare, were lively to me.

I dug the essays of Mathew Arnold, and really got fascinated with Old English, including Beowulf. I did my final paper on Old English authors. I had a special interest in that, because my ancestors in Wales lived, revolted, fought, and died through the era of the flourishing of English writings. And of course I had the time to read the more modern T.S. Eliot and Yeats, whose styles were quite compatible with my preferred stream of consciousness, and vivid metaphorical, way of writing.

And so, I duly earned my Magistri In Artibus Liberalibus diploma, saying I had a Master of Arts Degree in May 1955.

Hi-Fi Music

At the same time I was pursuing the written classics, I also was pursuing the newest way to play the musical classics that Patsy so loved and I increasingly appreciated - Hi-Fi home systems.

I undertook to build a pair of large cabinets for what were the best of that day, stereophonically placed Bozak Speakers. With their tweeters and woofers and lots of tricky wiring to the turntable and ampifiers.

I probably fiddled with it for half a year before I was satisfied. While young David crawled around the carpeted floor wondering what his father was doing lying flat on his back, perfectly positioned between the two speakers, on the same rug listening to La Boheme.

Home Life

Back to College (1)

Category: Graduate School

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And yes we had a Parakeet whose tweeting and movements could entertain baby David.

Patsy, and with her sidekick Cindy living just a short walk from our apartment, concentrated on raising the kids. In fact older Cindy reminded me (after my dear wife Patsy

died in 2011 57 years later), that one day when I and Charlie were at the University, Cindy went into labor with Christie, and there was a rushing around trying to get everything needed into our car, and then they forgot something and rushed back, and then got her to the Army Hospital at Fort Lee in time. While young Bucky Adams, only about 5 or 6 years old, stayed home in their apartment until Charlie got home from the University to rescue him and then go to the hospital himself. Patsy had taken little David along.

It was at such times that the friendship between two Army Wives living in a strange city where they knew nobody else, was invaluable.

Stories like that became the topic of endless laughs between them over the years.

It was also the first and last time I ever took a drug. (I never smoked either, since trying it in the 10th grade)

There was a young doctor who lived in the apartment, and we got to know him a bit during that year. One evening I was complaining of having to study long hours while getting ready for an exam. He brought me a pill, and said to try this.

What it was, I never knew - might have been Speed - but immediately I got light headed, was euphoric. And I was convinced my brain was recording things I was reading

with great clarity and insight. And I did not need to sleep for 6 more hours.

Next morning I felt alright, went to the University to take the exam, and realized I knew nothing more than had I not taken the drug. It was an illusion that I had become more enlightened while on drugs.

So that was what mind altering drugs were all about. Just feel-good pills. No thanks I said to myself.

I was a little peeved that the Doctor did not tell me in advance what I would experience, nor that it was a 'recreational' drug. I was sure he popped them himself, and they were probably illegal for that use.

I never touched a 'recreational' drug the rest of my life after that one episode.

Young - 9 months - David experienced his first Christmas and the tall tree I bought at our Haddonfield home. Patsy began her life long habit of putting lots and lots of decorations, adding to them every year - many of which had come from her family's accumulation when they lived in Germany and she was a teenager.

Move Again

My Masters Degree in hand (no, we did not attend any University of Pennsylvania graduation ceremony) we moved again - to West Point itself in the summer of 1954.

Back to College (1)

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Again we had 30 days leave accumulated, so we travelled south to show off Baby David to more of the Simpson family relatives.

By this time I am back in uniform. Looked like this



Then came 3 years Instructing at West Point

To continue with my Military Years click... [NEXT West Point Teaching \(1\)](#)

Back to College (1)

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