

My name is Miles Wilchen; thats me on the front of the car. It was September third, I think 1938. My momma wanted a picture of all of us on the front of our new car. We came from a fairly wealthy family. My father hit it big in the telephone company; he installs them for people in their home, so they can talk to anyone anytime they want, anyway it helped us out of the depression. I was 15 at the time the picture was taken and the night before that someone stole the right headlight. Why would someone want just one headlight? If it was just to make my father mad, it is Chicago you know; people do stuff like that, it worked or maybe they sold it for some alcohol. I don't know, but it made my parents really angry. My Mother bragged and bragged about that car and how new and advanced it was. My father was just concerned about how much money he put into it. My momma was smart in the head, so she had us all sit on the car, right out there on Derivs Street. My younger brother, Kesham, didn't like to wear his hat, so my mother made him cover up the missing light with it.



The offices across the street saw us taking the picture and the owner, Mr. Gibbs, came down to admire our new car. My father knew him well; he installed all the phones in his building. Dad asked me and my other brothers to help, so I know all the floors and halls of the building by now. Thayer and Me, (my middle oldest brother) always rode the dumbwaiters up and down. They were unmaned then. Mr. Gibbs told us,

"tell your dad that his phones increased my business by three times in the past month, and I have his pay and a little extra for him to stop by and pick it up."

I told my father, and he had me (since I was the oldest) go over and pick it up. I was walking home, and a police man stopped me. He was dressed to the tee in blue and green with his night stick on his left side and his gun was still in the car. He had a helmet with a bill and the word Chicago was written on it in blue writing. His pants were perfectly pressed with the blue stripe going down the side of the one black leg. It was as if he just stepped off the line of law enforcement at the policemen factory. He asked what was in the bag.



I said "my fathers paycheck sir". The police replied "Can I have a look"?

I was incredibly frightened, it being the time of prohibition and me knowing exactly what was in the bag. I handed it to him slowly waiting for the other copper to jump out and handcuff me. All of a sudden the policeman broke my focus.

"Uh kid", he said, "were gona have to um.. take this bottle. Yea we wont arrest you this time, ok? So run home now".

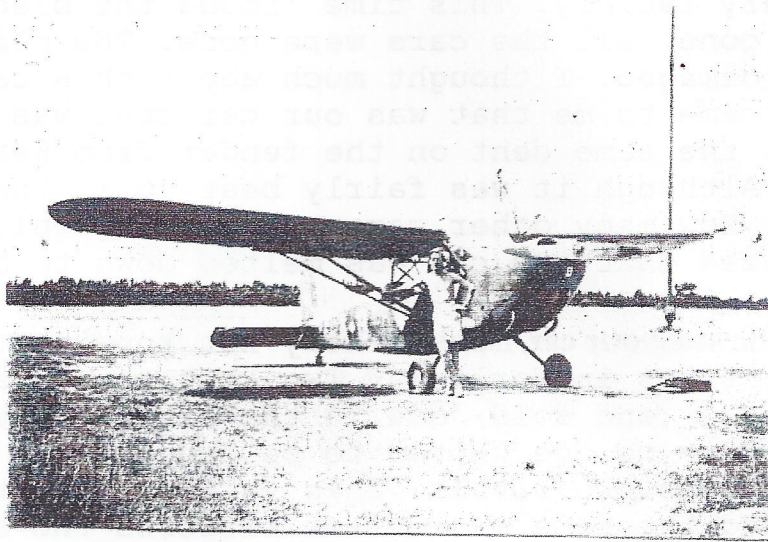
It wasn't til much later did I realize those poilcemen drank that bottle that day. When I returned home, our car was gone; I assumed father took it to work with some of my brothers. When I went up to the second floor of our tenament that we owned and rented out the first floor. My father was not at work; he and my mother were in the kitchen discussing something about our car. I dismissed it and went to my room still thinking of what happened with the policemen. As I pondered that, I remembered I still have my father's paycheck from Mr.Gibbs. I returned to the kitchen and started pushing open the big wooden door. All of a sudden as if it were a radio slogan my mother howled,

"But Frank, they stole it! Its long gone; what are we going to do?"

I stopped. I immediately put the pieces together. Our car, our brand new car. The big shiny piece of steel that my mother was so proud of and my father spent so much on. It was gone, first the head light and now the whole thing. Maybe their plan was to dismantle the whole thing and reassemble it later in their garage. Yea, that was it, but their plan failed, and they had to take the whole thing in the middle of the night like cowards. Stealing is just a copout. Momma called around to everyone she knew and asked if they have seen

our car. Frantically raving, they stole it, they stole it, have you seen it, they stole it.

Many years later war broke out overseas and I being twenty years old in the year of 1941 was sent to fight. Soon after me, my brothers, Thailer 17, and Jareen 19. We were drafted at the same time but moved from place to place. Jareen became a pilot around Germany and that area. Thailer was stationed in France but was wounded within the first year of fighting. He was shot in the shoulder, and the bullet shattered a bone. Thailer had surgery done on the ship ride home and is as good as new. He did not have to really fight, and he is getting paid good bucks for his honorable discharge as a wounded soldier. Jareen was an accomplished pilot, one of the best in his division; he always wanted to fly.



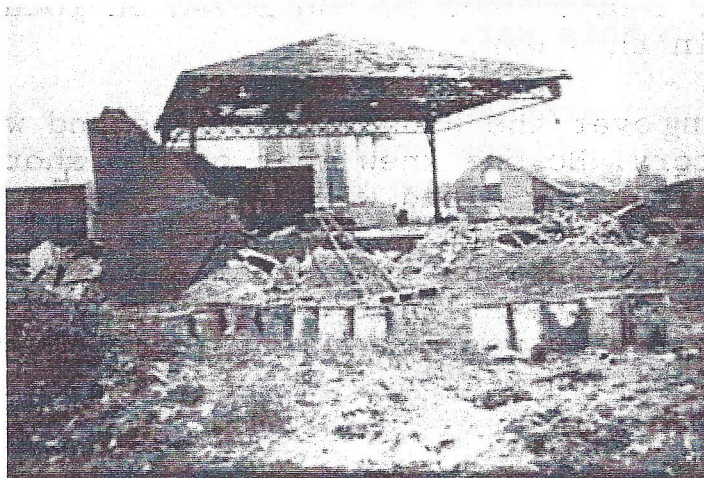
When I was entering the war fields, over enemy lines I passed what looked like a weaponry factory and there were thousands of American automobiles outside. I passed by a black car that strangely reoccurred memories. I dismissed it and moved on focusing on what might become of me in this war.

One day he was flying over the Hungarian Empire and was shot down by a mysterious trajectory. No one knew what or who shot him down. Jareen Wilchen died that day along with many others at the age of twenty. After bleak fortune with my brothers in war, I was getting worried about what would happen to me soon. Even more news arrived to my ears while I was over the Atlantic. This time more pleasant than the other. My other brother was now 17; his name was Westly. He was entered in as an ammunition keeper.

He didn't care to be in the fighting part of the war; the boy was very artistic. Westly painted and drew many pictures while he was there. He also took many photographs from a camera. He took pictures of planes and his surroundings in the war. A visiting journalist liked his photographs so much, he purchased them from my brother and published them with his article. Westly stayed in the service for more than five years, assisting in medical emergencies and record keeping. He became a hero after he saved his troops from an enemy kamikaze attack by shooting down the plane before it hit. The United States government gave him a war hero medal for his quick thinking and saving their men.

Westly and I went home together safe at the end of the war, passing by the same weaponry factory. This time 'round the black single headlight car was gone, all the cars were gone. The plant looked abandoned and war damaged. I thought much about this car most of the way home. Then it came to me that was our car that was stolen when I was little. It had the same dent on the fender from Kesham sitting on it for the photo. Although it was fairly beat up in that lot. No that had to be our car! How many other cars are missing only it's left headlight. I realized that our car was melted down to make missiles.

Somehow someone stole our car, most likely not knowing that it would be sold to make missiles in World War Two. But the cars were shipped and stolen, purchased, and sold, due to the extreme need for metal. They were sold because no one wanted to be caught with stolen goods from their allies' possible rivals. This particular batch of cars and many more that lived the same excitement suffered the same fate. These illegal cobled together missiles were fired from the cannons at the pilots in the Hungarian Empire area. One of these pilots turned out to be my brother Jareen. In a way our car was the mysterious trajectory that killed him that day. I was exhausted after coming to this conclusion.



Westly really liked the area of France and wanted to move back as soon as possible. I, on the other hand, needed to get out of the nightmare of reoccurring memories of death and gunfire. In 1947 Westly moved to France and was married to a French woman by the name of Arondele Cout'e. They had two children both boys. Momma always said, "boys just run in our family;" she meant that in many different ways. He named them Hassan and Miles after me. After the war France was changed and had to rebuild. Most of the elegant, casual city was wood and burned quickly under the unmerciful bombing. Westly stayed and helped rebuild, surprisingly he was accepted and befriended as he was an American.

I Later found out that our old friend, Mr.Gibbs had died. His son told me that Gibbs had pilfered our car to recommission his liqure still and kept it all these years. It never did get overseas and he never restarted his still after finding out that the police confiscated the bottle he gave my father after all.

Images not titled to allow your own summary.