SYLVAN N. GOLDMAN, OKLAHOMA

BUSINESS PIONEER

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PREFACE

Despite a world wide reputation as heedless pursuers of the future, Americans exhibit a continuing fascination with their origins. To appease this historical hunger the country's presses publish a steady diet of books, articles, and essays examining and re-examining the national experience. Interpretations of this self inquiry are varied. Critics of the United States suggest that its citizens dissect the past in an effort to uncover a meaningful pattern and continuity, needed but lacking, in American culture and society. Writers and teachers frequently assume a utilitarian viewpoint, pointing to the practicability of discerning the perplexities of the present and future from the study of yesterday. A simpler answer, curiosity and nostalgia, probably offers a more accurate explanation of this preoccupation with past events. Whatever the motivation behind the United States' appetite for history, it is certain that some subjects consistently attract more attention than others. Perhaps the most popular topic is the American West. The progenitors of America's frontier heritage--Indians, cowboys, fur trappers, farmers, cavalrymen, and miners--maintain an irresistable allure, undiminished by the volume of production chronicling their deeds.

Oklahoma's story belongs to the historical category of westward movement and development. Beginning its organized political existence at a time when the frontier was fading elsewhere in the West, the Sooner State witnessed a telescoping of the usual phases of civilization building. Fewer than eighty years elapsed between the opening of Indian Territory to settlement and the establishment of a modernized society, complete with the problems of pollution and urban renewal. As a consequence Oklahoma historians have been presented with a non-recurring opportunity to investigate the state's frontier background through studying the lifespans of still-living men. No one Sooner's story can reveal the entirety of the dramatic "arrows to atoms" growth of Oklahoma, yet each personal account contributes to an understanding of a unique western state.

Sylvan Nathan Goldman's life and career are inextricably a part of Oklahoma history. Beyond the mere fact of predating statehood as a resident, Goldman provides an authentic symbol of the Forty-sixth State's frontier heritage and present modernity. This despite the fact that his life cannot be categorized as belonging to one of the usually conceived western prototypes. Goldman stands among America's twentieth century pioneers, a developer of Oklahoma's business frontier. His entrepreneurial achievements are augmented by inventions and commercial innovations, products of his independent thinking, which helped spur the commercial revolution of this century. While devoting a large share of his energies to money-making enterprises, this Sooner businessman is also respected for numerous civic and philanthropic endeavors. And finally as a representative of Oklahoma's Jewish Community, Goldman's life sheds light on an ethnic group virtually ignored in written histories of the state.

It is doubtful whether any author ever wrote in a vacuum. Inspiration, guidance, and encouragement are necessary for the completion of his work. In this case several individuals and at least one institution

contributed greatly to the finished product. Without Mr. Sylvan Nathan Golaman's generous gifts of time and patience the research for this biography could not have been completed. Other members of Goldman Enterprises were equally helpful in offering information and interest. The Oklahoma Heritage Association granted funds which allowed the author to pursue his research and writing on a full time basis.

Appreciation is gratefully extended to the author's major advisor, Dr. Joseph A. Stout, Jr., for his guidance and assistance in preparing this study. That same appreciation is also due the other committee members, Dr. Odie B. Faulk, Jr., Dr. LeRoy H. Fischer, Dr. George F. Jewsbury, and Professor Harold V. Sare, who provided the necessary critical advice in completing the study.

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CHAPTER I

AN OKLAHOMA BOYHOOD

The road from Baltimore, Maryland, to Oklahoma spanned half a continent. Yet, in the spring of 1889, a recent arrival to the coastal city, Michael Goldman, eagerly pondered the journey west. The magnet which drew him and thousands of others to the south central plains was the prospect of free lands. President Benjamin Harrison had issued a proclamation declaring that a part of Indian Territory, the Unassigned Lands, would be opened for settlement on April 22, 1889. This pronouncement, which came to Goldman through the Baltimore newspapers, rekindled the hopes of homeseekers at a time when the availability of homesteads had shrunk to the vanishing point. Realizing that the demand could not be met by the Oklahoma District of approximately 2,000,000 acres, government planners decided on a land run to determine who the lucky settlers would be. Among the fifty thousand land rushers, riding in a friendly family's wagon, was the sixteen-year-old Goldman.

The Run of 1889 provided a dramatic climax to the youth's search for a new home. His quest had originated in faraway Latvia, a tiny Baltic state which forcibly would be incorporated into the Soviet Union in 1940. There Goldman had shared the precarious life of the _shtetls_, small Jewish communities which dotted the geography of Eastern Europe. During the last two decades of the nineteenth century some 600,000 of these Jwws fled traditional poverty and a growing tide of casual discrimination and then officially encouraged for persecution.. The massacres and destruction of the pogroms eventually led to still larger waves of immigration until World War I temporarily stopped the harassed fraffic. An estimated 95 per cent of the United States' present Jewish population is descended from that forty year Eastern European influx.[1]

Most of the fleeing Jews themselves joined other immigrants in America's eastern seaboard cities. The lucky ones, like Michael Goldman, turned to relatives and co-religionists for help in coping with the New World. An uncle with a small drygoods store in Baltimore provided the young Latvian with a temproary haven. Goldman divided his time between assisting his kinsman in the business and attending school. News of the Oklahoma land opening came after he had achieved a fair working knowlddge of the English language and his new home's customs.[2] Certainly by moving west he was following one of his adopted country's oldest traditions. However, few Jewish immigrants joined Goldman in seeking out the frontier; an overwhelming number chose to remain in the cities. There were two excellent reasons for doing so. While unclaimed land remained plentiful in the West, good crop-producing areas were nearly all taken. Additionally, the vast majority of Jwwish immigrants were town ghetto dwellers, forced from the country by their neighbors' hostility and legal restirction. They possessed neither the skills nor the inclination for an agricultural existence.[3]

Only a handful of Jews appeared among the clustered thousands who stampeded across the Oklahoma boundaries, gaining lasting renown as "Eighty-Niners."[4] Goldman established no claim during the April run, and it doubtful that he would have utilized such an acquisition for farming. After a brief residence in the instant town of Oklahoma

City, he made his way to Ardmore, located in the southern part of the territory, where he purchased a 160 acre tract for $200. Still restless and unwilling to convert his claim to raising crops, the immigrant youth crossed the border into Texas. At Gainesville, just beyond the territorial line, he obtained a position with a Jewish firm, Kahn Brothers Wholesale Produce and Dry Goods Company. This business association was to prove more enduring and intimate than Goldman or his employers at first realized.

The Kahns had immigrated in the early 1880's from Alsace-Lorraine the border region between Germany and France, then a part of the German Empire. After inaugurating a thriving wholesale enterprise in Gainesville, the brothers began bringing relatives from Europe and employing them in their company. Among those who arrived in this manner were two nephews and a niece. The latter was fifteen year old Hortense Dreyfus. While her brothers absorbed the intricacies of their uncles' business affairs, she tried to fathom the folkways of the American Southwest. By the time Goldman made her acquaintance she had accepted the local custom of dating; the two were married in the spring of 1894.

The young couple moved to Davis, Oklahoma, the following year, and Goldman became the manager of a failing general store which the Kahns had purchased. Struggling to make the business a success, he paused long enough on June 7, 1895, to celebrate the birth of his first child, Alfred Goldman. A few months later the store, operating profitably under his management, was sold and the family moved to Ardmore. Once again Goldman fulfilled the role of trouble-shooter in restoring an ailing venture to life. Except for a two year interval from 1902 to 904, when the family moved to Daughterty, an engine stop on the Santa Fe Railroad near Sulphur, Oklahoma, Goldman continued to operate the dry goods store in Ardmore until 1913.[5]

November 15, 1898, The Daily Ardmoreite carried a brief announcement -- "Born: This morning to Mr. and Mrs. Mike Goldman, a son."[6] The second son subsequently was named Sylvan Nathan Goldman. With his brother Alfred this fourth member of the Goldman family grew up with Oklahoma, as a territory and as a state. Ardmore was a young, but energetic frontier town. When the first white men settled the area, the Chickasaw Indian Nation occupied much of the region as a consequence of federal treaty stipulations. The 700 Ranch, operated by a succession of owners beginning about 1880, provided the future townsite with its first buildings. The ranch served as a convenient stopover for deputy marshals, including Heck Thomas and Bill Tilghman, who were striving to curtail the exceptional lawlessness of Oklahoma Territory. Bill Dalton of the notorious Dalton Gang was killed near Ardmore in 1892, and the local newspapers claimed that the town was plagued by unruly elements until its incorporation in December, 1899.[7]

The extension of the Gulf, Colorado and Santa Fe Railroad from Gainesville north through the Chickasaw lands initiated the actual town building of Ardmore. A Texas contractor, George B. Douglas, realizing the importance of the site as a rail depot, moved his family to the 700 Ranch early in 1886. By the end of February he had readied not only a log cabin home but also a stockade and a series of sheds for commercial use. On July 28, 1887, the first train arrived at the new depot, which for years was a lone reconverted boxcar, and deposited a shipment of building materials. They would be quickly used as the rail connections rapidly attracted nearly two thousand settlers by 1890. That same year the burgeoning village received an added fillip to growth when it was chosen as the site for a United States District Court. However, the underlying economic base of Ardmore resulted because it became the seat of cotton ginning and sales in southern Oklahoma.[8]

When the Goldmans arrived in Ardmore, they discovered a sizable and active Jewish community. One of the town's first retail establishments, the widely known "Iron Store" (so named from its corrugated iron construction), was opened in 1888 by two Jewish Texans, Max Munzeheimer and Samuel Daube. An employee of the store, Max Westheimer joined with Frank Wymore in building the Blue Front Store which later became Westheimer and Daube when David Daube purchased Wymore's interest. About one hundred persons belonged to the Ardmore Jewish fellowship at the time of Oklahoma statehood in 1907. Ten years before, Temple Emeth had been organized as a Reform congregation. Meeting first in private homes and public halls, the congregation later purchased the First Christian Church to use as a synagogue. Thirteen year old Sylvan Goldman was confirmed there in 1911.[9]

Growing up Jewish in Oklahoma was an anomalous experience. Most of the time young Goldman's boyhood coincided with that of any other Ardmore youth of similar age, however, he occasionally was made aware of his ethnicity. One incident, which occurred when he was in his early teens, gave Goldman an insight into the Gentile majority's attitude toward their Jewish neighbors. Walking home from school with two Protestant classmates, he was queried as to why the Jews did not worship Jesus Christ as did Christians. Goldman explained that according to the Ten Commandents, "You shall not have other gods besides me."[10] This reply failed to satisfy the other boys who then wanted to know why the Jews worshipped on Saturday rather than Sunday. This stumped Goldman, but intrigued, he asked his father across the dinner table that evening to unravel the Sabbath puzzle. The elder Goldman offered a Biblical reference by way of explanation: "In six days the Lord made the heavens and the earth, the sea and all that is in them; but on the seventh day he rested. That is why the Lord has blessed the sabbath day and made it holy." The next morning following his father's instructions, Goldman quoted the scripture and challenged his Gentile friends to count the days of the week to prove that Saturday, the seventh day was, indeed, a legitimate time to worship. That same afternoon one of the boys admitted to Goldman that during the noon hour he had outlined the religious debate for his father who exclaimed, "Oh, that's just like those tricky, smart Jews."[12]

While this youthful theological clash produced humorous overtones, the situation sometimes contained a more rancorous element. In the heat of athletic contests or schoolyard fights epithets such as "sheeny", "kike", and "Christ-killer" were occasionally applied to more traditional youthful insults. Yet for the most part, Goldman was not made overly conscious of his religious and cultural minority group status. Certainly any Jew residing in Oklahoma during the same time span was less likely to confront hard core anti-Semitism than if he were a part of the large Jewish concentrations in American cities, especially along the eastern seaboard. The factor that loomed largest in accounting for the generally amiable relationships between Jew and

Gentile west of the Mississippi was the relatively small number of Jews in that area of the country. It has also been demonstrated that towns with populations under 10,000 exhibited fewer evidences of discrimination. Apparently, the small number of Jews in Ardmore could not be regarded as a serious threat to anyone's social and economic prestige, a circumstance which has been identified as the basis of American anti-Semitism. Fortunately, the focus of ideological attacks on the Jews in the United States has rarely centered on irrational, subjective views of race and religion as was frequently the case in Europe.[13]

Another equally crucial determinant of Jewish-Gentile relations in Oklahoma and the West could be deduced from an examination of the changing character of American Jewry. Virtually all of the Jewish Population of the United States before 1880 was composed of Orthodox groups that had immigrated from German, or lands under German cultural influence such as Austria, Hungary, and eastern Poland. Beginning in the 1820's, European synagogues, especially in the German states, witnessed an attack on traditional Judaism which had survived from the Middle Ages through a rigid adherence to Biblical and Talmudic law. The new modernizing influence was labelled Reform. It suggested an alternative base for religion other than traditional law by introducing a scholarly and rational investigation into the history of the Jewish religion. Such an effort presumably would justify various reforms aimed at simplifying the body of religious belief and practice, particularly the updating of services. Groups which had adopted the Reform persuasion joined the immigrant flow to America in the 1840's and 1850's. There they established temples, a term the Reformers preferred over synagogues, and continued their struggle against shackling Orthdox tradition.

Orthodox influence has waned dramatically among the 250,000 Jews thinly spread across the United States by 1880, the eve of the great eastern Europe immigration. The German Jews who made up the bulk of American Jewry were generally prosperous; their religious practice resembling the upper-middle class Protestant churches attended by their Gentile neighbors. Most synagogues and temples had abandoned the congregational reading and singing of the Hebraic service in favor of an English rendition by a minister. Many Jews attended services where choirs and an organ enhanced the ritual, and where women without hat or shawl were no longer segregated. Other Jewish rites also revealed the touch of Reform. Religious education, once a daily class, deeply steeped in Talmudic scholarship, now was relegated in Sunday schools, similar to the Protestant churches' informal atmosphere and thin theological content. Many special holidays of the religious cycle were discarded and even Jewish weddings forswore the traditional canopy and broken glass ground under the bridegroom's heel. Resident American Jews, products of this changed religious and social experience, looked askance at their poverty-stricken Orthodox coreligionists from eastern Europe. They swallowed their uneasiness, however, and worked frantically to assimialte the immigrants before the latter could pose an embarrassment for them in front of their Gentile friends.

Unsurprisingly, the vast number of new immigrants precluded a complete success for the melting pot goal of the established Jewish community. Orthodoxy regained a certain prominence, primarily in the large eastern cities which became home for most of the recent arrivals.

The meshing of old and new immigrants also spawned a traditional reaction against Reform the Conservative movement, which today provides American Jews with a third institutional and philosophical choice. Despite all efforts to the contrary, the immigrants could not hope to re-create in America the narrowly prescribed life of the east European ghettos.[14] Those few who travelled west found it particularly difficult to escape the Americanizing influences of Reform Judaism. The sparseness of Jewish settlement beyond the Mississippi almost guaranteed that a large degree of assimilation would result.

Ardmore's Temple Emeth was doubtlessly typical of Reform groups elsewhere in the Southwest. Unable to justify the presence of a full-time rabbi for their tiny congregation's exclusive use, the temple relied on twice monthly calls by churchmen from Fort Worth, Texas. Between visits some members of the congregation took turns as readers, conducting the services in English and Hebrew. Certain of the younger women assumed the responsibility for Sunday school classes. Despite its Reform affiliation, Temple Emeth claimed the membership of several Orthodox families including the Goldmans.[15] One might well speculate on the possible differences in upbringing, especially in regard to religion, that the Goldman sons, Alfred and Sylvan, might have experienced had the family lived in New York City, Newark, New Jersey, or some other center of Jewish population. Probably the differences would have owed more to geography than theology as it has been estimated that in 1908 only 23 per cent of Jewish school children were receiving any religious instruction, and a quarter of these attended the nearly ineffectual Sunday schools.[16] The second generation of Jewish immigrant families generally adopted the cultural patterns of the surrounding community. Distinctions between young Goldman's Jewish home and temple and his Gentile friends' homes and churches seemed slight to him and his boyhood companions. The residue of Jewish customs and religious belief that he retained added a measurable dimension to his existence while failing markedly to change his life.

Goldman received his eight years of formal education entirely at Ardmore. The brevity of his tenure in the classroom in no way reflected an absence of concern for learning or any academic ineptitude. School was an enjoyable experience for Goldman, and he proved to be an exceptionally attentive student; he was described by a former schoolteacher as "a very ambitious child with a good mind."[17] Goldman was able to make use of his favorite subject, mathematics, at an early age. Besides the usual chores assigned youngsters in those days, he helped his father in the dry goods store after school. Somewhat surprisingly in view of his later successes as a businessman, Goldman developed no particular liking for the store. He later recalled that if the working experience had any effect on his later career it was to ensure that future business endeavors would be confined to other fields besides dry goods.

Goldman's entry into the business world on a full time basis came rather abruptly. In 1913 his father became ill and was forced to sell the family store. The Goldmans moved to Tulsa where Mrs. Goldman's five brothers, having left Gainesville, operated a wholesale grocery business which was prospering from the oil boom in that region of the state. At the age of fifteen Goldman began working at a branch of his uncles' enterprise at Sapulpa, a small oil field community a few miles southwest of Tulsa. Apparently, the grocery business was more attractive than dry goods for Goldman was to make it his major concern for the next forty years, barring a single important interruption. Life in Sapulpa was pleasant enough. Samuel Dreyfus, who managed the branch operation, taught his nephew the rudiments of the wholesale grocery business. His duties included visiting retail grocers and vending the fresh fruits and vegetables sold by Dreyfus Brothers, Wholesalers.[18] Not all of Goldman's time was spent at work. He found time to acquire numerous friends, one of whom described him as "a typical, happy-go-lucky American kid."[19] Within four years this "kid" would join hundreds of thousands of others across the nation in their generation's great adventure---World War I.

FOOTNOTES

[1]James Yaffe, The American Jews (New York: Random House, 1968), pp. 6-8; Abraham J. Karp, editor, The Jewish Experience in America: Selected Studies from the Publications of the Jewish Historical Society (New York, 1969), p. vii.

[2]Sylvan N. Goldman, Interview, Oklahoma City Oklahoma, February 12, 1974.

[3]Maldwyn Allen Jones, American Immigration (Chicago, 1960), pp. 2 2-2 5.

[4]"Oklahoma Jews," Encyclopedia Judaica (Jerusalem, 1971), Vol. XII, p. 1353.

[5]Sylvan N. Goldman, Interview, Oklahoma City, Oklahoma, February 2, 1974.

[6]The Daily Ardmoreite (November 15, 1898), p.3.

[7]Mary Evelyn Frost, "The History of Carter County" (unpublished Master's Thesis, University of Oklahoma, 1942) pp. 3, 28, 58.

[8]Ibid., pp. 30, 58, 61; Paul Nelson Frame, "A History of Ardmore, Oklahoma, from the Earliest Beginnings to 1907" (unpublished Master's Thesis, University of Oklahoma, 1949) pp. 32, 34, 139.

[9]Mrs. Walter Newstadt, Interview, Ardmore, Oklahoma, April 5, 1974. Sylvan. N. Goldman, Interview, Oklahoma City, Oklahoma, February 2, 1974; "Oklahoma Jews," Encyclopedia Judaica, Vol. XII, p, 1353; The Daily Ardmoreite, July 21, 1937, p. 6.

[10]Exod. 20:3

[11]Exod. 20:11

[12]Sylvan N. Goldman, Interview, Oklahoma City, Oklahoma, February 2, 1974.

[3]John Higham, "Social Descrimination Against Jews in America, 1830-1930,"The Jewish Experience in America, ed. Karp, pp. 351, 372, 379.

[14]A scholarly and detailed, yet highly readable, account of the effects of the Reform movement on American Judaism as in Nathan Glazer, American Judaism, 2nd ed. (Chicago, 1972), pp. 22-59. Additional information on the impact of the east European immigration on American Judaism can be found in Esther Panitz, "In Defense of the Jewish Immigrant (1891-1924)," The Jewish Experience in America, ed. Karp, pp. 23-26.

[15]Sylvan N. Goldman, Interview, Oklahoma City, Oklahoma, February 12, 1974.

[16]Glazer, American Judaism, pp. 72-73.

[17]Mrs. Fred Carr, Interview, Ardmore, Oklahoma, March 29, 1974.

[18]Sylvan N. Goldman, Interview, Oklahoma City, Oklahoma, February 12, 1974.

[19]Harold N. Reed, Interview, Oklahoma City, Oklahoma, April 20, 1974.

CHAPTER II

COOKING FOR COMPANY "D"

News of the war in Europe filled the pages of Oklahoma newspapers between 1914 and 1917. Despite the 1916 re-election of Woodrow Wilson with the slogan, "He kept us out of war," there were many who believed, and some who ardently hoped, that the United States would inevitably enter the conflict. And thanks to close cultural ties with England, Allied propaganda, and unrestricted submarine warfare virtually the whole nation, excepting some German-Americans viewed Kaiser Wilhelm and the Central Powers as the natural enemy. In Tulsa, Oklahoma the Chamber of Commerce decided to ready the community for the coming trial by raising a military unit composed of local citizenry. An organizational meeting was held in February, 1917 to discuss the exciting project. By the time congress declared war on April 6, two companies had been formed and were already accepting enlistments.

A recruiting tent was erected on the corner of Fourth and Main Streets. On April 25, 1917, Goldman and two friends travelled to Tulsa with the intention of enlisting. Harold N. Reed and Goldman elected to add their names to Company A. 1st Separate Battalion, Oklahoma Engineers, while the third member of the Sapulpa trio chose the ambulance company also accepting volunteers. Reed, 21, had no problem meeting the age standard but Goldman stretched his years by eighteen months to satisfy the minimum requirement. The two joined the growing company impatiently awaiting word from the War Department concerning mobilization and training. All of the volunteers were Oklahomans and represented a wide cross section of backgrounds including oil field workers, farmers and college students. Many of the last mentioned were attending or had just graduated from the now defunct Kendall College of Tulsa where a few had majored in civil engineering; they were to receive an unexpected variety of practical applications for their education in France.

After a hurried visit to the State Capitol, the new unit received authorization to take over the property of an old national guard company of engineers. At the same time the old national guard table of organization was adopted. According to that, the company required a complement of commissioned personnel consisting of a captain, two first lieutenants, and one second lieutenant. Immediately after the declaration of war, Van T. Moon received his commission as captain and company commander. His first lieutenants were Forest R. Hughes and Jack Singleton while Gordon T. Granger completed the list of officers, serving as second lieutenant. All four men served in their respective capacities for the duration of the war. Late in April the company under its new officers was officially mustered as federal troops and began regular drilling. Neither the engineers nor the ambulance company had barracks until August 5, when the Tulsa fairgrounds became Camp Sinclair. Two weeks later the site was deserted after orders for departure to training areas finally arrived.

Eighteen hours by rail brought the eager recruits to Camp Bowie outside of Fort Worth, Texas. Disappointment and disillusionment quickly followed. Both of these sentiments were easily understandable: chagrin at learning that the regular army harbored very definite ideas about readying raw recruits for action and disgruntlement over the lengthy delay, nearly a year, in actuality reaching the field. Even the heartiest recruit must have felt a dampening of enthusiasm the first night at Bowie. A driving rain had turned the camp into a quagmire of foot-deep mud. Following a hasty meal of corned beef, beans, and hard bread the Oklahomans retired to the relative comfort of an empty warehouse. The next day, companies of engineers from Ardmore and Oklahoma City were placed with the Tulsans to comprise the 2nd Battalion, 111th Engineers. Captain Moon's men made up "D" company while "E" and "F" became the respective designations of the Ardmore and Oklahoma City contingents. Three Texas companies formed the 1st Battalion of the regiment which was assigned to the 36th Division.[1]

The army seemed determined that these Texas and Oklahoma engineers would be as ready for combat as possible. Ignoring the usual grumbling of the new soldiers, experienced officiers led them through practical engineering problems in addition to the ordinary regimen of infantry training. Naturally, certain specialized positions had to be filled, and young Goldman was nominated for the post of mess sergeant. Despite his youth, and remembering that his actual age was unknown to those making the selection, the choice was an obvious one. Several years' experience in the wholesale business had definitely bestowed on him a considerable knowledge of judging the quality and estimating the uses of groceries on a large scale. Goldman tackled the myriad tasks of preparing food for 200 men under all types of conditions with the good humor and determination that characterized his later business activities. Before long Company "D" was praising the improved quality of mealtimes and the man responsible, "Sergeant Goldie," an inevitable sobriquet in an army enamored with acronyms and abbreviated terminology.[2]

Nearby Fort Worth offered some diversion from the discipline of Camp Bowie. Unfortunately, the increasing numbers of trainees stationed at the post, reulted in the shortcoming common to most cities and towns located close to military facilities: too many uniformed men on the streets looking for a change and finding only others like themselves. Goldman and his cooks had less time than the average to explore the enticements of the Texas city. After supervising the cleanup of the evening meal, the Mess Sergeant immediately began contemplating the next morning's breakfast, a meal consumed at too early an hour by the soldiers' reckoning and thus necessarily prepared much too soon for the kitchen staff's taste. Virtually all members of the Oklahoma company journeyed home on furloughs at least once during the months at Bowie. Goldman's visit to Tulsa included a pointed inquiry from his mother about the questionable wisdom of her son's joining the army. Lengthy remonstrations were required on the young sergeant's part to forestall a parental complaint to the army. Somewhat mollified by Goldman's argument that a cook for an engineering outfit could scarcely constitute a serious personal risk, Mrs. Goldman reluctantly waved her son back to the humdrum of camp life.[3]

The regiment endured the long winter of 1917-1918, hoping for orders that would send them to France. Spring and early summer found the engineers still constructing railroads for the post's use and becoming increasingly restive under army discipline. They doubtlessly would have approved the rueful wit of a fellow doughboy, stationed at another camp. That impatient trooper, on observing a sign posted by a travelling evangelist reading "Where Will You Spend Eternity?", scrawled beneath it, "At Camp McClellan."[4] The summer was half spent before the 111th received the command that would send them to France. On July 7 the regiment boarded a train for the East Coast. Once in motion the army wasted little time in processing the troops at Camp Mills on Long Island, New York, for the Atlantic crossing. Only eleven days elapsed from the time of departure from Bowied before the U. S. S. Antigone accepted the last piece of equipment and last soldier of the southwestern unit and steamed out of New York harbor.[5]

Finding a veteran of the First World War with fond memories of the troopships that carried him and his comrades across the Atlantic might be impossible. After some fumbling starts the Navy had solved the basic transportation blockages resulting from overcrowded harbor facilities, inexperience in handling the unprecedented amounts of men and materiel, and the constant hazard of U-boat attack. Arrivals and departures were streamlined, ships were reconverted for transport duties, and the vessels received alternating coats of black, white, and grey paint stripings, ostensibly confusing to enemy submarines by breaking up the ships' normal silhouettes. For the Navy's passengers, however, the overseas voyage was miserable. Efficiency in convoying the troops did not include concern for the human cargo's comfort. Bunks were stacked in four tiers and placed so closely that movement between the rows required a crablike, sideways scuttle to negotiate passage. Added to the crowded conditions was the discomfort of sleeping in the stifling atmosphere below decks. The dubious hospitality of these accomodations decided Goldman to seek an alternate resting place. He discovered among the melange of equipment aboard ship a large coil of thick rope, located on deck in an out-of-the-way spot, which served as a circular bunk complete with fresh air, and occasionally rain. Even this retreat failed to protect the Oklahoma mess sergeant from the almost universal shipboard disorder, seasickness. The troops from the rolling plains of the Southwest could not cope with the rolling decks of the Antigone. After an uneventful twelve days' crossing they gladly disembarked at the port of Brest on the extreme western coast of France.

Once again after a long journey the Oklahoma engineers arrived at a rainy destination. Stumbling down the gangplanks on to French soil under a drizzling sky, many still feeling the ill effects of the voyage, they shouldered full packs and marched into the countryside. In their discomfort some probably recalled, ironically, the post cards they had addressed in New York two weeks earlier. Thoughtfully provided by the Red Cross, the printed messages informed the addressees that "the ship on which I sailed has arrived safely overseas." These communications, sent on receipt of a cable confirming the ship's successful completion of the transport, might have described the condition of the ship, but hardly the somewhat weakened state of its passengers. Perhaps the satisfaction at having solid, unmoving ground beneath their feet would have been more complete if the muddy roads had proven less slippery.

After a few hours' march the regiment believed that its destination had been reached. Alongside the road were built several low lying structures, strongly suggestive of military barracks. The surmise that the buildings were designed for that purpose was correct, however, the doughboys were not to be the occupants. German prisoners of war were incarcerated within, and the Americans marched on to an open field where tents were rapidly erected to form a temporary bivouack. Goldman and his tent mate took elaborate precautions against the dampness. They spread their raincoats on the muddy ground and laid overcoats on top of them to form a platform for their cots. The next morning the two awakened, soaked to the skin despite having slept fully clothed. Luckily, the regiment repacked its gear after another wet night and journeyed by rail to Bar-sur-Aube in the Department de la Aube.

Company "D" was billeted in the small village of Argancon. Goldman installed his kitchen on the outskirts of the town and with one of his cooks rented a room in a nearby farmhouse. During the next month, officers and men drilled hard, familiarizing themselves with French construction techniques and other technical aspects of the duty they would soon face. Ordinarily new units were assigned to quiet sectors of the front after a few weeks' recuperation from the troop ships. This orientation process was denied the 111th when the regiment was unexpectedly selected to be Corps Engineers for the first Army Corps. On September 10 the regiment entrained for the front and some of the heaviest action of the American participation in the war.[6]

When the United States entered the conflict in 1917, the fighting on the Western Front had stagnated into a dull, deadly trench warfare. The Germans had lost their chance to seize Paris in 1914, but the French and English attempts to push them back in subsequent years cost more lives than the regained real estate warranted. President Wilson, expecting initially that the American contribution to the war effort would be confined to supplying arms and munitions, was dismayed to discover the true status of the Allied position. The German army's chances appeared alarmingly viable by the spring of 1918, when American troops began massing in numbers sufficient to make themselves felt. Thanks to the collapse of Russia in December, 1917, the Kaiser could transfer enough soldiers to constitute a 100,000 man advantage over the British and French on the Western Front. The morale of the Allied armies posed a question for which there was no ready answer. General war weariness and lengthening casualty lists had already produced a barely quelled series of mutinies among the French poilus, front-line men disgusted and angered by their own staff officers' ineptitude. While matters had not reached this low state in the British lines, no one could testify to the continued reliability of the haggard Tommies.

Adding to the qualms of knowledgeable Allied leaders was the thorny issue of unified military operations. It required a renewed German offensive in March, 1918 to spur to completion a long overdue decision, the placing of all national armies under one supreme commander. French Marshall Ferdinand Foch got the job, inheriting the sensitive question of how to utilize the American doughboy. The British had earlier suggested shipping American recruits to Great Britain for training and then sending them to the front under British officers. To General John J. Pershing, commander in chief of the American Expeditionary Force, this idea was as unthinkable as the French plan to attach small units of the AEF to existing French formations. He insisted on a separate American army with a defined sector of the front as its responsibility; Pershing had not crossed the Atlantic to command a replacement center for the Allies. His eye was focused on the Saint-Mihiel salient, one of three bulges poking into France along the line of trenches that stretched irregularly from the Belgium coast of the North Sea across parts of three countries to Switzerland. The American commander-in-chief proposed to break the salient and drive north to seize Metz, an important railroad and mining center. Foch objected to the plan, desiring to employ the AEF elsewhere with French troops, but Pershing remained adamant on the point of maintaining an individual American army. Reluctantly the Field Marshal approved the Saint-Mihiel offensive but vetoed the Metz drive, insisting that the bulk of Persing's forces be transferred to the Argonne immediately after cracking the salient.[7]

The 111th Engineers arrived at Frovard near Nancy on the east flank of the Saint-Mihiel salient the night of September 10, 1918. The regiment remained continuously at the front until the armistice was declared over two months later. As a detached unit they were sent where needed most which was normally the place of heaviest action. Goldman's responsibility of feeding the hard working engineers was made particularly difficult by the company's anomalous status. Since the unit was totally separated from the 36th Division he attempted to draw rations from the huge stockpiles of supplies located at various intervals behind the American advance. The guards in charge of the provisions refused his requests for food for lack of orders authorizing withdrawals for the regiment. The young mess sergeant quickly developed that talent for which the American military has become famous--scroungingg.

If the AEF had neglected Company "D" in the matter of provisioning, then Goldman would "requisition" the necessary items by strategem. Each night he selected a crew of volunteers, loaded them aboard horse drawn wagons and trucks, and set off for the rear in search of food. When a supply depot was sighted the foraging team went into action. Goldman engaged the attention of the guards at one point while his volunteers hastily loaded supplies at another. The tactic worked smoothly since the rear areas were lightly guarded and the stores not closely inventoried. Members of the company later recalled these expeditions gleefully and praised the excellent meals they enjoyed as a result of their sergeant's ingenuity.[8]

These nocturnal excursions were not without a distinct element of danger. Captain Moon, the company commander, wrote home to Tulsa describing the work that his engineers were accomplishing in repairing and maintaining roads and bridges as well as assisting the vital flow of traffic to the attacking doughboys. "We were not close enough to get a shot at the Hun," Moon said, "but we were close enough to get his shellfire."[9] Enemy reconnaisance flights made travel, even by night, a hazardous undertaking. The first night at the trenches had given the engineers a taste of the forthcoming weeks' harassment. Unloading equipment and animals from the train in darkness relieved only by shells exploding, the company had lost several horses by drowning in an unseen canal. The men rapidly learned to avoid showing any lights at night for fear of attracting German artillery bombardment. Sparks from a backfiring truck on one of Goldman's food procurements were sufficient to provide him with a memorably harrowing experience. Realizing the peril of staying with the vehicle as shells began bursting around them, Goldman and four others leaped from the truck and raced for a less exposed position. A short distance from the road they discovered a shallow cave and were about to enter when a voice from the interior announced that the place was already occupied by closely packed doughboys. The foraging party immediately illustrated their aptitude for improvisation by dropping to the ground and crawling between the legs of the standing soldiers. All five engineers survived the shelling which continued for several hours.

On another occasion the outcome of an attack proved more serious. Goldman and another soldier were driving a team of horses pulling their wagon when the much dreaded signal warning of a gas barrage was sounded. The two scrambled for their masks in the darkness and climbed down from their seats to affix specially built protective devices on the horses' heads. Only then did Goldman discover that his companion had not donned a mask. In answer to his excited query the soldier replied that he had been unable to locate it. A frantic search fevealed the mask on the floor of the wagon seat and the man swiftly adjusted it over his face. The unfortunate delay, however, had already caused damage to the engineer's respiratory system. Although "D" Company suffered only two casualties, and those from pneumonia, during the war, several men sustained lasting disabilities from gassings.[10]

.After Saint-Mihiel the Engineers of the 111th started a long march to the Argonne Forest, scene of the next offensive. Walking by night and sleeping during the day, the company moved over eighty miles on a course paralleling the front. The morning of September 26, when the line troops "went over the top," Company "D" followed three hundred yards behind. In a repeat performance of the Saint-Mihiel experience the engineers performed their construction chores to the accompaniment of regular shelling and bombing planes on moonlight nights. These attacks continued during a lull in the fighting before the last phase of the Argonne campaign began on October 31. Despite the intermittent annoyances produced by the German artillery, the men's chief complaint was boredom. Goldman recalled the tedium of the trenches, for this inactivity inspired a well remembered comic episode. Among the supplies shipped from home to bolster morale was tobacco, a commodity used more for chewing than smoking in battle zones for fear of glowing embers drawing fire. To ease the tension of waiting, Goldman tried some of the tobacco, although he admitted to "more spitting than chewing." Any chances that the young Oklahoman would carry the habit home were abruptly curtailed when a shell concussion knocked him to the ground and forced an inadvertent swallowing of the tobacco. Goldman recalled, "that was the end of me and chewing tobacco."[11]

The first ten days of November witnessed a renewal of the Argonne-Meuse River battle. Company "D" missed little of the action, repairing roads and bridges. A captured German field piece with ammunition excited some of the Oklahomans imaginations; they turned the gun around and began shelling in the direction of the enemy. The engineers decided to stick to their own specialties when a courier rushed back to find out who was lobbing shells at the American troops from the rear rear. On November 10, the company was ordered to pull back and march to Saint Mihiel for the long anticipated drive on Metz. The next morning at eleven o'clock confirmation of an earlier rumor that the Armistice had been signed reached the highly fatigued engineers. When they reached the forest near Apremont that night they stopped for a five day rest. The first night was a memorable one as celebrating soldiers seemed likely to expend all their excess ammunition commemorating the war's end.

If the fighting had ceased, the engineers' work was literally just beginning. Relieved of duty as Corps Engineers, the regiment started their last long march. On November 29, Company "D" completed a 180 mile hike to the village of Charrey in the Yonne district. For the next six months the Oklahomans labored at a quarry, extracting materials to rebuild the French roads damaged in the war effort.[12] To maintain morale the company allotted a small number of passes every two weeks. Goldman received one which enabled him to visit Nice. The entire city with the exception of one hotel had been reserved for AEF personnel. A famous resort center in peacetime, Nice reflected the post war euphoria with music, dancing, and wine. The brief respite from the drudgery at Charrey failed to dissipate the growing eagerness of Goldman and his companions to return home.

After a series of depressing false rumors the 111th Regiment received orders to entrain for Le Mans where they would prepare for the voyage stateside. On May 20, the engineers boarded the U. S. S. *Great Northern* at Brest and steamed into Hoboken, New Jersey harbor ten days later. The City of Tulsa was prepared for the return. Thousands cheered the engineers as they marched under a specially constructed Arch of Triumph erected on Main Street with funds raised by the American legion. Following this enthusiastic welcome the company travelled on to Camp Bowie and was mustered out of service on June 20, 1919. The unit had compiled a brief but impressive record; three times the men were cited in dispatches, once by General Pershing.[13]

Today, the surviving members of Company "D" meet annually to recall the hectic events of the era that was the first World War. Nostalgia reigns supreme at the gatherings as events terrible in the happening assume a lighter tone with the mellowing years. Goldman rarely misses the reunions and the chance to renew the rare comradeship of men at war. In unison with the other survivors be expresses no regret at the experience, summing up his feelings by stating, "I thing it [the war] was the best thing that ever happened to me since I came back alive." If the youth that enlisted on a whim had learned a lesson from the carnage of the Western Front it was that life was inestimably worth living.[14]

FOOTNOTES

[1]Harold N. Reed, Interview, Oklahoma City, Oklahoma, April 20, 1974; William T. Lampe, comp., _Tulsa County in the World War_ (Tulsa, 1919), pp. 29-30.

[2]Orr C. Riley, Interview, Tulsa, Oklahoma, April 17, 1974.

[3]Sylvan N. Goldman, Interview, Oklahoma City, Oklahoma, February 12, 1974.

[4]Pierce G. Fredericks, _The Great Adventure: America in the First World War_ (New York, 1960), p. 49.

[5]Lampe, comp., _Tulsa County in the World War_, p. 31.

[6]Tulsa Daily World (January 6, 1919), p. 6; Sylvan N. Goldman Oklahoma City, Oklahoma, February 12, 1974.

[7]Fredericks, _The Great Adventure_, pp. 115, 138-139.

[8]Harold N. Reed, Interview, Oklahoma City, Oklahoma, April 20, 1974; Orr C. Riley, Interview, Tulsa, Oklahoma, April 17, 1974.

[9]From a letter to Mrs. C. E. Lehman, December 5, 1918, reprinted in the Tulsa Daily World (January 6, 1919), p. 6.

[10]Sylvan N. Goldman, Interview, Oklahoma City, Oklahoma, February 12, 1974; Lampe, comp., _Tulsa County in the World War_, pp. 32-33.

[11]Sylvan N. Goldman, Interview, Oklahoma City, Oklahoma, February 12, 1974.

[12]The Daily Oklahoman (March, 1919), p. 1.

[13]Lampe, comp., _Tulsa County in the World War_, pp. 35-37.

[14]Sylvan N. Goldman, Interview, Oklahoma City, Oklahoma, February 12, 1974.

CHAPTER III

HOW TO GROW PROSPEROUS DURING A PROSPERITY DECADE

The returning veterans of World War I donned their civilian clothes at the beginning of a fabulous era, the Twenties. Historically decades have designated only arbitrary and artificial divisions of time into ten year segments, however, the 1920's have continued to evoke an image unmistakably separate in atmosphere and style from the preceding and following years. Hollywood films and television have indelibly etched the stereotype of a jazz age of wonderful nonsense, replete with bathtub gin, Prohibition gangsters, flagpole sitters, goldfish swallowers, and flappers dancing the Charleston in speakeasies. More serious observers of the decade have probed beneath this trivial froth of hedonism to expose profounder currents of human activity. Their estimates of the 1920's have included discussions of postwar disillusionment, international isolationism, intellectual revolt, and underlying economic disparities. Others have maintained that the decade was primarily a transitional period, marked by conflict between the lingering values of the frontier juxtaposed against the modernity of the city. Probably the people living through this much examined era remained largely unaware that they represented anything besides hardworking citizens doing their best to earn a living in a decent manner, the preoccupation of most Americans of any decade.

Certainly the major concern of soldiers mustered out of the service centered on rapidly reassuming a civilian identity, which meant for most finding a job. The former mess sergeant of Company "D" had little choice in the matter. Possessor of a foreshortened education and scant capital, Sylvan Goldman, twenty-two years old, needed employment immediately. His brother, Alfred, was ready with a suggestion tion. He had enlisted in the army shortly after the younger Goldman and had been assigned to a Texas training camp. Alfred's military career progressed no further; army doctors discovered that he suffered from mastoiditis which affected his sense of hearing. Learning of an opportunity in the wholesale grocery business in San Antonio, he opted to stay in Texas after he was discharged. When the war ended and Sylvan returned, he approached him about the possibility of establishing a wholesale business in Oklahoma's neighboring state.

The two brothers turned to their uncle, Henry Dreyfus, for his opinion and possible financial backing. Dreyfus was readily convinced by their arguments. His nephews, although young men, could draw on a more than adequate background of experience in the wholesale grocery field. They would have an additional advantage accruing from the proposed location for their maiden business venture. Borrowing a page from the successful Dreyfus brothers handbook, Alfred had chosen a developing oil boom region, approximately eighty miles west of Fort Worth, as the site for establishing the enterprise. The prospect for profit appeared likely to Dreyfus since there existed no local competition and he agreed to loan his kinsmen the necessary funds.

Initially the Goldmans' plans proved sound in their execution. The sleep rural communities of Eastland and Stephens Counties were experiencing an intoxicating oil boom in the latter part of 1919, when the brothers arrived in Texas. The brothers leased a large building to serve as a warehouse from a bankrupted poultry and egg dealer in Cisco. It boasted a large cooling room where they could store the fruits and vegetables shipped by rail from the Dallas-Fort Worth area. The Goldmans purchased mixed boxcars of produce from the established wholesale bouses of the cities, not having sufficient capital at first to buy in larger quantities directly from agricultural production. centers. They sold to a variety of customers in Cisco including a hotel near the town's railway station, owned and managed by Conrad Hilton; it was the future tycoon's first endeavor in the field which he came to dominate.

Expansion into the surrounding hamlets was hampered greatly by the exceptionally poor roads. The dirt thoroughfares made transportation uncertain and during rainy weather virtually impossible. Luckily a paved road was completed in 1920, connecting Cisco and Eastland. This provided the young entrepreneurs with better access to their market, the tiny groceries which had sprung up in the previously insignificant Texas communities to meet the needs of an increased population resulting from the oil strikes. As the only wholesalers available to these isolated stores, the Goldmans speedily fulfilled their uncle's faith in the project. By January, 1921 Sylvan was handling the original territory while Alfred had moved thirty miles north to manage a branch at Breckenridge.

The nature of their undertaking left the brothers little time for relaxation and enjoyment of profits. Much of the latter was plowed back into the business which required a rather large operating expense.

at all times. Most of the business was transacted in small lots to a widely scattered and difficult to reach clientele. Credit had to be extended to the shoestring operations on at least a weekly basis. The grocery proprietors demanded this service partially from necessity and partially from the knowledge that the difficult transport conditions allowed the wholesalers no alternative to leaving the perishable produce at the stores. As long as the oil wells continued to pump, however, men working on the rigs would remain there wanting to buy groceries and the Goldmans would collect on their investment. Unfortunately the smoothly running organization was dealt a staggering setback, and eventually a final dissolution, when a faltering economy resulted in oil production outbacks.[1]

World War I had witnessed the emergence of the United States as the strongest economic power in the world. Although the physical output of manufactures and national income dropped slightly during the first half of 1919 compared to the war years, the nation's economy surged ahead into a new business boom which lasted several months. The high level of exports, made possible by American loans abroad and continued heavy spending by the federal government, accounted for the short period of prosperity. The business community began to slow down by the middle of 1920 and within a few months the country was gripped by a severe depression. Resulting from inflation, unwise speculation, a decline in government spending, a steep drop in exports, and ruinous losses in farm income, the economic setback featured thousands of business failures and approximately 4,750,000 unemployed.[2]

That the economy rebounded in 1922, and continued on an almost uninterrupted high plane until 1929, provided no comfort to the

Goldmans who were numbered among the business casualties of 1921. As oil field workers were laid off, the booming towns of Cisco, Breckenridge, Ranger, Eastland, and other smaller villages lost their swollen populations nearly as rapidly as they had gained them. With the shrinking pool of customers drying out to the point of disappearance, the shoestring grocers closed their doors. Too frequently they abandoned the hastily and cheaply constructed buildings before the wholesalers were able to collect bills for past credit extension. By the time the Goldmsns liquidated their holdings, paid off their loans, and left Texas they retained no more than their original investment, and could count their profits only in terms of rueful experience.[3]

Unwilling to return to Oklahoma without a more substantial showing for their efforts, the brothers looked elsewhere for opportunity. Along with thousands of others they turned west to California. That coastal state's population growth rate outstripped all other states during the 1920's and it, along with east coast rival Florida, epitomized the real estate boom so typical of the Decade. In California's leading metropolis, Los Angeles, Alfred easily found a position with a wholesale house while Sylvan worked in a similar establishment that also handled groceries. Both jobs involved calling on retail merchants a circumstance that inspired the brothers to think about opening their own grocery store. Neither possessed any experience in the field but they believed their chances might be good if enough money could be saved.

This optimism was soundly based despite the young men's relative inexperience. Grocery stores in California and elsewhere in the country differed greatly from the present day model. Generally each grocery encompassed three somewhat separate businesses. Fresh fruits and vegetables were handled by one department, most often as a semi-independent concession. The Goldmans would have been comfortable managing such an operation with their considerable background in the wholesale aspects of produce, however, they were constrained by the knowledge that the Japanese-Americans constituted a near monopoly in this specialty. Meat markets had only recently been joined under the same roof with other foodstuffs and they were operated as separate entities, even in the case of chain stores. The third portion of these early day food markets were the grocery sales which comprised any items not embodied in the prodedures of the meat and produce agencies. So prevalent was this mode of operation, that shopping center developers would provide the permanent fixtures for grocery stores to eliminate the problem of dividing costs among three concessions whose ownership might change frequently.[4]

The Goldmans were still planning their entry into the Los Angeles grocery business when they received an unexpected telephone call from Oklahoma. Their uncle, Henry Dreyfus was traveling to California for an important conference with his nephews. On behalf of the Dreyfus Brothers wholesale concern he advanced a proposition with an intriguing origin and portentous future. The five Dreyfus partners were prospering in Tulsa, partly due to the close working association they had developed with a local grocery chain. Rival wholesalers had spread rumors to other retail store owners that Dreyfus Brothers actually owned part of the chain. As a consequence, the wholesalers argued, if the retailers continued to order produce from the Dreyfus firm they would really be buying from their competitors. Added to the drop in business resulting from this tactic, Dreyfus Brothers was faced with a further loss of trade when the chain, of which they were ostensibly part owners, announced its intention to acquire a warehouse and purchase produce in boxcar loads.

Caught in a dilemma not of their making, Dreyfus explained, his brothers had agreed that he journey to the west coast with a proposition for their nephews. With mounting enthusiasm, the Goldmans listened to the plans for opening a grocery chain in Tulsa to be backed by Dreyfus Brothers and managed by themselves. They would receive a 25 per cent share of the profits plus regular salaries. Before beginning such a venture, however, the Goldmans would need to acquire more retail experience. Dreyfus proposed financing a year's study for the two brothers. Their classes would be held in Los Angeles grocery stores and their teachers would be the men who operated them. The next day after his arrival Dreyfus, accompanied by his nephews, visited the owners of there food store chains. Some persuasion was necessary before the initially skeptical businessmen accepted the idea of allowing the Goldmans to work in various branches of the retail trade--without salary--in order to learn the grocery industry; they feared the Oklahomans' real intention was to pose a competition to their businesses by opening a retail enterprise in Los Angeles.

After putting their uncle on an eastbound train, the Goldmans started their year of study. The curriculum embraced a wide range of subjects. Spending four months with each chain, the brothers worked in all the departments incorporated in each individual store. They served as clerks, filling customers' orders and performing the arithmetic of credit business. Few groceries had developed self-service at this time but the Goldmans observed the different procedures involved with the innovation. They met with supervisors, meat managers, produce men and executives. They even helped with the myriad details of opening a new store. At the end of twelve months the brothers felt confident that they were sufficiently enlightened in every aspect of the retail grocery business save one, the utilization of their acquired skills and knowledge in their own endeavor.[5]

On April 3, 1926 the Goldmans opened their first grocery store at 1403 E. Fifteenth Street in downtown Tulsa. When the doors were unlocked a year later twenty others unbarred theirs and joined in celebrating the first anniversary of the Sun Grocery Company. The orange and black storefronts of the chain ad become well-known everywhere in Tulsa as the Goldmans spread the rising sun symbol to all parts of the town. The extraordinarily rapid expansion had been spurred by the realization that Dreyfus Brothers would lose customers in direct ratio to the frequency with which their own chain replaced competitive stores. By returning most of the profits to the company, the family had obtained 100,000 square feet of floor space with an estimated worth of $900,000 in less than a year.

Sylvan Goldman headed the company in the capacity of president while his brother served as vice president. The two brothers' amazingly accelerated expansion rate brought them to almost immediate local prominence. They were applying the business techniques learned in the California chain store curriculum with the zeal of truly devoted scholars. Virtually every phase of their organization reflected a firm grasp of current retail management principles plus a willingness to experiment with promising avant-garde concepts. The brothers' abilities complemented one anothers's very neatly. Sylvan was the more aggresive and outgoing of the two and was balanced by the reserved and quiet Alfred. Both possessed a keen sense of humor and charm undiminished by a highly disciplined work ethic.

As vice president of the company the older brother assumed the responsibilities of general supervisor of the stores. He also acted as the firm's purchasing agent for all fruit and vegetable consignments. Perhaps the most pivotal role that Alfred fulfilled involved the choosing of new store sites. None of the Sun Grocery Company units were built on side streets; instead, Alfred invariably picked high traffic areas as locations. Construction was invariably brick in the belief that other building materials failed to present as neat an appearance while providing a safeguard against fire. Two thirds of the stores were actually erected by the chain; the remainder were placed in existing structures.[6]

In addition to the normal executive functions necessary in any business organization, the younger Goldman ordered all grocery supplies and developed the advertizing program. The nature of the retail food industry gave the latter a special significance. Much of the success of the Sun Company chain and Goldman's later business ventures can be directly attributed to his acute comprehension of customer desires. The food industry has always been particularly susceptible to advertizing gambits. Upon reflection, the reason was obvious to many in the business yet few were able to capitalize on the knowledge as Goldman consistently did.

Providing nourishment for the country's mealtimes placed the nation's food merchants in the first position among American industries in terms of product value during the 1920's. According to the statistics of dollar volume of production, the food processors, wholesalers, and retailers comprised a $12.7 billion industry in 1919; a figure $3.5 billion in excess of the second ranked textiles and textile products value. Ten years later the food industry's dollar volume still resided in the number one position, however, the total for 1929 was slightly less than in 1919. If the feeding of Americans was the ranking business during the decade it was also one in which there was tremendous competition for the reliably available, albeit slightly dwindling purchasing dollar.[7]

"The wonderful thing about food from our point of view," one food-industry man expounded, "is that everybody uses it--and uses it only once."[8] As a result food vendors have had a substantial advantage in selling their product which most other retailers have not enjoyed. Not only has the product obsolesced automatically (the purchased items were either consumed or perished) but there was generally rhythm in the buying pattern of most customers, replenishing their food stocks at calculable intervals. Until the post-World War I period there were remarkably few changes in food distribution. During the following decade five important developments took place which revolutionized the retailing aspect of the food industry. These included the phenomenal growth of chain-store operations, an increasing acceptance of self-service in groceries and later in other food items, an enlargement of individual retail outlet sizes, a widening of merchandizing offerings of a nonfood variety, and an ever greater reliance on more and more sophistocated advertising techniques.[9]

That the youthful president of Sun Grocery Company was cognizant of the latest trends in his field can be positively asserted. With the exception of incorporating nonfood lines in his chain stores, an innovation introduced but not widely accepted in the 1920's, Goldman's business practices were in the vanguard of the modernizing movement in the retail grocery business. He did not simply follow where others had blazed the trail but consistently followed his own advice offered to another later generation: "The two main foundations a young man should have is lots of horse sense and a liking for the job he is doing."[10]

The cost-reduction advantage of a chain-store operation was, of course, the primary reason for the Dreyfus brothers' choice of that type of enterprise. Goldman, however, utilized a well-established concept to its fullest possible extent. The chain-store idea predated the history of the United States. Evidence exists that indicated there was a chain of stores active in China two thousand years ago. Japan boasted a chain of drug stores founded in 1643, and the Fugger family of Germany carried on mercantile operations of a chain store character in the early 17th century. Hudson's Bay Company, chartered in 1670, built a chain of fur trading posts across most of Canada. For the earliest progenitor of the modern chain prototype most scholars acknowledge the pre-eminent claim of the Great Atlantic & Pacific Tea Company of New York, opened in 1859 by George F. Gilman and George Huntington Hartford. At the end of the First World War A & P owned 4,200 stores when its executives launched an expansion program which added nearly 10,000 units by the end of 1925.

After that date A & P grew very slowly until it peaked in 1930 with 15,700 stores. Thirty years later the chain had shrunk to its

1919 level, operated approximately 4,500 stores.[11] The reason behind this reduction also reflected the nature and success of the more modest Goldman chain in Tulsa. The trend, beginning very slowly in the period from 1920 to 1925, was toward larger grocery stores which handled a combination of fresh meats and a wide offering of fresh produce in addition to a straight grocery line. The Sun Grocery Company's stores averaged close to 4,800 square feet of floor space twice the size of most Oklahoma groceries of that era. In addition their brick construction, although not unknown, was notable for the time. Similarly, combining the produce, meat and grocery concessions under a single roof did not constitute a revolutionary idea, but the concept of directing them through a centralized management and ownership as the Goldmans operated was extremely rare even in Calfornia chains which were noted for their up-to-date methods.

It was the merchandising talent of Goldman, however, that accounted for the unusual success enjoyed by the Sun chain. The power of advertising has never been properly assessed so far as its influence on people's buying habits is concerned. Whether customers were stimulated to buy products they might not otherwise have purchased is problematical. In any event, the 1920's witnessed a tremendous reliance being placed on advertising. Goldman undoubtedly believed in its potency, especially the newspaper variety that remained most prevalent medium of commercial communication throughout the decade. He began with the choice of a company name--Sun. A single-syllable word easily remembered, it evoked pleasant connotations and allowed the use of the striking orange and black storefront motif. For purposes of newspaper advertisements and handbills Goldman used a barely rising sun symbol with a base inscription which informed the reader that Sun Grocery Company was the "Most Economical Under The Sun."[12]

Economy was the key word in the majority of Goldman's advertising copy. He employed this theme in variegated and imaginative ways to convince the public that the Sun Company's policies were solely aimed at providing the lowest possible prices for food items. Advertising columns stressed the advantage of volume buying over individual stores' capacity to sell as cheaply to the consumer. This message was relayed subtly and somewhat obliquely in a passage from Goldman's first anniversary interview: "Quality is the first thing I consider in our purchases. Our enormous buying power takes care of the prices."[13] The economy argument was wielded to educate the public to accept an innovation that the Sun Company borrowed from other chain operations--self-service. Actually, the first step taken by the Goldman chain toward this concept, which was to wreak a basic change in many retail businesses, was a contest. The company offered $150 in prizes to the winning slogans stating why the Sun Stores' policy of "no delivery" meant money saved to grocery buyers in the now traditional 25 words or less.[14] Many shoppers had adopted the habit of telephoning their food needs to grocers and leaving the responsibility of gathering the items and carting them home to store personnel. Others visited the stores and expected their parcels to be delivered later in the day. Goldman's contest served the dual purpose of relieving his chain from a time-consuming, worrisome task and providing excellent publicity emphasizing the pains taken by the Sun Company to save its customers money.

During the chain's second year of operation, Goldman experimented with self-service inside the stores. There was a strong resentment on the part of some customers who felt that gathering their own groceries was demeaning. A more significant problem involved a technological gap; many food items were stocked in bulk and were simply too unwieldy for housewives to handle comfortably. Prepackaged food in smaller quantities and some sort of conveyance system would have to be devised before the self-service concept could eventually triumph over the older style.

The Sun Company's expansion program outstripped its first year's accomplishments during the second twelve months of operation. Looking beyond the boundaries of metropolitan Tulsa, Goldman made the decision to widen the territory serviced by the orange and black stores to a number of smaller communities. By the spring of 1928 Sun stores had opened in a string of towns extending in a southerly progression from Tulsa to Henryetta, fifty-five miles distant, and including Kiefer, Mounds and Beggs. A second line reached as far southwest as Chandler and featured units in Sapulpa, Bristow, and Stroud. The chain boasted half a hundred stores after a brief two years in business.[15]

The Goldman brothers had justified their uncles' faith in their ability to apply the lessons gleaned from the year's working experience in California. They had consistently utilized the latest techniques in building the Sun chain. One reason for their phenomenal success had little or no connection with modernizing ideas. It stemmed from the enlightened personnel policy laid out by the company's chief executive, a factor whose efficacy become a hallmark of all the later Goldman enterprises. The chain employed over 150 persons in 1928 when it had reached its maximum growth level. In that day of full service groceries, Goldman realized the imperative need to man his stores with employees who exhibited courtesy to the customer and loyalty to the company. Although salaried, the clerks and store managers shared in the profits of their particular store through a rising scale of bonuses. Unlike many businessmen, Goldman readily grasped the basic psychology of employer-employee relationships. Too few executives understood that company loyalty had to be cultivated from the top, that an actual demonstration of interest and concern would engender a positive response more quickly than an expectance or of inactivity on management's part.

Goldman's progressive theories were also manifested in the Sun Company's promotion policy. Virtually all the firm's executive and management positions were filled by men who had been recruited from the ranks of existing personnel. A. K. Weiss held the position of secretary-treasurer; Charles Nachtmann, market supervisor; Scott A. Millis, grocery supervisor, and M. P. Green, office manager. Nachtman was the only one of these with substantial experience in the grocery business and was also the only man over forty. His background as a onetime independent store operator and meat market manager for other stores was regarded by Goldman as indispensable to the organization since the meat concession was the area of concern within the chain's combined units in which the two senior Sun executives had the least knowledge. Nachtman was given complete control over his specialty, this leaving the Goldmans free to deal with their spheres of expertise.

The most interesting and revealing story relating to the company's personnel policy was that of Scott Millis. He began as a grocery clerk in the first Sun store about two months after it opened. When the sixth unit of the chain opened, Millis was chosen to manage the new addition. Four months later Goldman appointed him grocery supervisor, a position which included a chair on the company's executive board . His work placed Millis in the position of middleman between the main office and the individual store managers. Obviously, Goldman kept a close watch on his employees, looking for those with the potential to assume greater responsibilities. Perhaps the major strength in this practice was that the young president maintained a consistent open mindedness; he refused to categorize any employee as occupying a lifetime position if an untapped ability could be brought to fruition. Goldman's flexibility extended to unusual lengths in the case of Millis. To fill his new grocery supervisor's former position as manager of the Number Six Store, he willingly broke one his own original company rules by selecting the person he believed best qualified, a woman. Alice Millis, wife of Goldman's newest executive, proved an able and businesslike manager during a period in which women's liberation more commonly conjured images of flappers daringly experimenting with short skirts, cigarettes, bootleg gin, and pseudo-Freudian free love.[16]

The highly successful young leaders of the Sun Grocery Company must have felt a certain satisfaction with life in December, 1928. In two years' time they had fashioned a chain of fifty-five stores, all of which were profiting mightily in an era of 29 cents-a-pound pork chops, 10 pounds-for 26 cents potatoes, and 42 cents-a-pound bacon.[17] The Goldmans were decidedly unprepared for the appearance. one morning of a man announcing his intention of buying them out--stores, warehouse, name, everything. Refusing initially to reveal his financial backing, the man finally convinced the two brothers that the proposal was serious. The Goldmans' uncles were consulted and they expressed an interest in selling if the purchase could be enlarged to include their wholesale business. When confronted with this counterproposal, the buyer listened equably and almost immediately accepted the new condition. After some brief bargaining sessions the deal was made in January, 1929.

According to the terms of the purchase contract, the buyer, now revealed as Skaggs-Safeway Stores, Incorporated, agreed to pay approximately $1,500,000 for the Sun Grocery Company. In a companion sale the Dreyfus Brothers, Wholesalers firm was acquired by the Western States Grocery Company. One of the nation's largest grocery chains, the Safeway Company had not previously entered the Oklahoma retail market. The company representative in the negotiation insisted that the Goldmans remain with the Tulsa chain organization until the takeover was accomplished. For the next six months the former president and vice president of Sun Stores acted as Safeway's Oklahoma manager and assistant manager respectively. The name of the stores was changed to Safeway but the orange and black painted fronts were retained.

If the Goldmans experienced any regrets over the sale their share of the purchase price and the conditions under which it was paid, served to alleviate them. The brothers acquiesced to an arrangement whereby they would receive issues of Safeway preferred stock in exchange for their interests in the Sun Company. The New York Stock Exchange listed Safeway Stores at $140 a share at the time the sale was negotiated in January. Delivery of the Goldmans' issue would not be executed until the second week in March. If the market price of

Safeway stock declined in the interval more shares would be added to the brothers' issues to make up the loss incurred since January. However, in the event that the stock exchange quoted a higher price for the Safeway listing in March, the Goldmans would realize a bonus from the increased value of their shares. Thanks to the wildly bullish market of early 1929 the two Tulsans received their Safeway stock in March at $160 a share, a quotation that boosted their earnings from the Sun Stores sale to a heady $300,000.[18]

Goldman suddenly felt quite wealthy. That spring of 1929 had transformed he and his brother from hardworking grocery executives to monied stockholders. Unsurprisingly, advice on the correct care and handling of their building fortune was not slow in coming. The stock broker who answered the young men's daily inquiries as to the health of their Safeway shares offered the benefit of his considerable experience. He cautioned them not to leave all their financial eggs in a single basket; diversification of their investments would prove a sage course. The wisdom of this counsel seemed exceptionally logical and was easily facilitated by the sale of part of their Safeway holdings and reinvestment in several "blue-chip stocks."

Two or three weeks spent in observing the continual upward trend of the stock exchange dispelled any doubts the brothers entertained concerning another suggestion their broker made. If the Goldmans wanted to take full advantage of the current bull market, he urged, they should utilize the device of trading on margin. Under this arrangement the stock buyer relieved himself from the limiting burden of ownership, putting up the full purchase price for his securities orders. Instead the broker accepted a cash percentage of the actual price of stocks from a buyer who hoped to pay the balance of the purchase at a designated future date with the earnings of the stock's rise on the exchange. The Goldmans could pay $10 down on each $100 stock order and let the rising market take care of the remaining purchase price some months later. Naturally, if the market price of their shares fell during the scheduled time period they would have to pay the balance in another way.[19] Congratulating themselves on their prudence in the face of the overwhelming temptation represented by the 1929 market, the brothers settled on a 50 per cent margin limit for their securities buying activities.

With this financial compromise completed, the two decided that they had earned a respite from business. A trip to the Pacific coast woild be relaxing and might offer an interesting opportunity for investment. The jaunt became a family affair with their uncle, Henry Dreyfus, and their parents accompanying them. After a leisurely trip across western United States the two car caravan arrived in Los Angeles. Following visits with relatives and friends, the brothers and their uncle decided to drive southward on a sightseeing tour. They travelled as far as Tia Juana, the Mexican border city, before retracing their path to Los Angeles. At a dinner party the three were introduced to the owners of a small retail drug chain named, oddly enough, Sun Stores. This coincidence was explored conversationally and the tenor of the talk quickly assumed a businesslike air. The evening ended with a titillating proposition from the Californians.

It seemed that the Sun drug chain was prospering, however, there existed one flaw in its operation that concerned the owners. Not having sufficient volume to buy directly from the drug manufacturers in large quantities, the chain was forced to deal with profit-reducing middlemen. Familiar with the huge success that the Oklahomans had enjoyed, and learning of their search for a new field of investment, the drugstore merchants eagerly submitted the thought that the two parties join forces to meet their desired ends. If the Oklahoma grocers would use some of their capital to start a drugstore or two, then they could all pool their purchasing resources and supply their stores at wholesale prices. The venture sounded plausible to Dreyfus and his nephews agreed. The drugstore business, they believed, would be simple in comparison to the intricacies of the retail food line. After all, once stocked, the drugstore virtually ran itself without the worries of spoilage, produce procurement, and meat marketing that demanded so much time in the grocery business.

With the idea of expanding their potential market, the three visitors from Tulsa took their new friends' advice and headed north to Oregon and Washington. None of the trio had traveled in that region of the country before so they continued to combine tourist activities with scouting the territory for possible drugstore sites. At regular intervals the Goldmans bought newspapers, hurriedly turned to the financial pages, and briefly relished the stock quotations which continued to adhere to the gratifyingly steep upward incline of the past several months. Labor Day found the Oklahomans in Vancouver, enjoying the Canadian resort area. Beginning their return trip south, they stopped in Seattle, Washington to actively pursue their somewhat haphazard search for a possible store site. One was discovered by the simple expedient of driving about the city and relying on the refined instinct for good retail store locations derived from their grocery experience.

Near the city's public market, where the seasoned produce men must have naturally gravitated, they spotted an excellent possibility. A large FOR RENT sign graced the otherwise empty show window of an equally barren store located advantageously between two busy thoroughfares.

Further inquiry led to a lawyer who handled the property for its absentee owner living on the eastern seaboard. An hour's questioning convinced the Oklahomans that the store would serve admirably as the site of their first drugstore. Accordingly, a ten year lease was settled with the proviso that the lessees need pay only half the normal rate for the first two months until they actually opened the store. The attorney invited the others for lunch while his secretary prepared the formal contract. Among the topics discussed by the men during the meal was, inevitably, the weather. The Oklahomans made much of the beautiful, mild climate of Washington in August and compared it to the hot, dusty days of home at the end of summer. Their host acknowledged the salubrious state of the season and noted that it would continue until November when Seattle's "dry rain" would begin. Puzzled his guests questioned the attorney about this apparent contradiction in terminology. It was not a great mystery, he explained, "dry rain" was simply the local residents' half-humorous phrase to describe the moisture-laden mist that dominated the Seattle atmosphere from late autumn to early January.

The Goldmans and their uncle exchanged bemused glances and calmly informed the lawyer that they could not sign the lease. They quickly explained that Alfred Goldman and Henry Dreyfus suffered from arthritis a condition severely aggravated by prolonged exposure to damp weather. Rather abruptly the Tulsans' plans of forging a chain of drugstores in league with their Los Angeles friends was halted. The latter had already expressed an intention of extending their operations to San Francisco and their would-be partners had agreed to position themselves north of that city. Explanations and good-bys completed, the family caravan, two cars strong, left Los Angeles early in September. The Goldman brothers were relieved at the peculiar manner in which they had escaped involvement in what would have been a very expensive investment in Seattle and consoled themselves by reading reports of the still rising stock market. Within weeks of their return to Oklahoma the two would regard that institution with less equanimity.[20]

On Thursday, October 24, 1929 the first of several financial jolts startled the nation. The stock exchange rallied that day from a frightening low but the recovery was ephemeral. Five days later the New York stock market experienced the most devastating twenty-four hours in the history of markets. Succeeding days and weeks failed to bring a cessation to the decline of the market and eventually the national economy. Those who remained optimistic during the waning days of an autumn discovered that the decade of the 1920's ended before the close of 1929; the New Era of boundless faith in the ultimate progress of the United States had disappeared by Christmas.

In Tulsa the Goldmans were among those who tried to weather the shock by hanging onto their investments. They finally sold their portfolio in the summer after the Crash, having already borrowed money to meet margin demands during the winter. Between them the brothers retained about $25,000 of the original $300,000 they had received from the sale of Sun Stores.[21] The prosperity decade of the 1920's had witnessed the building of two successful businesses and subsequent losses. The Goldmans had proved that they could grow prosperous in good times, now they would try to make a living during bad times.

FOOTNOTES

[1]Sylvan N. Goldman, Interview, Oklahoma City, Oklahoma, February 12, 1974.

[2]George Soule, Prosperity Decade, from War to Depression, 1917-1929 (New York, 1947), pp. 95-96

[3]Sylvan N. Goldman, Interview, Oklahoma City, Oklahoma, February 12, 1974

[4]Ibid.; Frank J. Charvat, Supermarketing (New York 1961), pp. 15-16.

[5]Sylvan N. Goldman, Interview, Oklahoma City, Oklahoma, February 12, 1974.

[6]The Tulsa Tribune, (April 3, 1927), pp. 1-2E; Sylvan N. Goldman, Interview, Oklahoma City, Oklahoma, February 26, 1974.

[7]Arthur S. Link, American Epoch, A History of the United States since the 1890's, 2nd ed. rev. (New York, 1965), p. 256.

[8]Quoted in Ralph Cassady, Jr., Competition and Price Making in Food Retailing: The Anatomy of Supermarket Operations (New York, 1962), pp. 3-4.

[9]Ibid., pp 9-10; Charvat, Supermarketing, pp. 65-66.

[10]"Sylvan N. Goldman," The Oklahoma Publisher, Vol. XXX, No. 3 (May, 1959), p. 12.

[11]Godfrey M. Lebhor, Chain Stores in America, 1859-1950 (New York: Chain Store Publishing Corporation, 1952), pp. 20-27.

[12]Sylvan N. Goldman, Interview, Oklahoma City, Oklahoma, February 26, 1974.

[13]The Tulsa Tribune, (April 3, 1927), p. 2-E.

[14]Ibid., p. 12-E.

[15]Sylvan N. Goldman, Interview, Oklahoma City, Oklahoma, February 26, 1974.

[16]The Tulsa Tribune, (April 3, 1927), pp. 2-4, 10, 12-E.

[17] Ibidl (December 14, 1928), p. 24.

[18] Ibid. (March 3, 1929), p. 4; Sylvan N. Goldman, Interview, Oklahoma City, Oklahoma, Febryary 26, 1974.

[19] For a fuller discussion of margin buying and broker loans as they applied to the 1929 stock market activities see John Kenneth Galbraith, The Great Crash, 1929 (Boston, 1961), pp. 23-27.

[20] Sylvan N. Goldman, Interview, Oklahoma City, Oklahoma, February 26, 1974.

[21] Ibid.

CHAPTER IV

HOW TO MAKE A LIVING DURING A DEPRESSION

Eminent businessmen are frequently asked to reveal the secret of their success. Goldman has been called upon many times to answer that apparently simple question. His favorite short reply rests on his office desk; inscribed on a small plaque, it reads, "I am a great believer in luck--the harder I work, the more luck I seem to have." This might easily be shrugged away as the sententious moralizing of a man who has forgotten his younger struggle for prominence. Such an interpretation would be a mistake. Goldman and his brother, Alfred, had amassed considerable wealth at relatively young ages through a combination of luck and hard work. The stock market crash that reduced their affluence to a fraction of its original level had dealt the same blow as well to older, more experienced men. Not especially comforted with the thought that they had salvaged something from the disaster, that the stocks had continued to drop after their withdrawal, the two young Oklahomans contemplated ways and means of recouping their losses. The incredible recovery they achieved in the midst of America's worst depression can only be attributed to the Goldmans' determination to capitalize on moments of good luck and try to force bad luck to reverse itself.

That the United States was actually in a depression by the end of the winter of 1929-1930, no one seriously doubted. So many businesses closed that a popular joke, revealing the gallows humor with which Americans attempted to comfort themselves, suggested that the only people making money were those who owned high rise buildings; they rented rooms to those who were jumping out of windows after ruination in the collapsing stock market.[1] As the depression wore on, contradicting the opinions of many that it would be of short duration, such jocosity became less and less frequent. For the overwhelming majority of citizens the American dream abruptly dissolved into a nightmare. The security and happiness that they expected as a reward for thrift and hard work disappeared when the seemingly endless vista of continous prosperity faded into the reality of lost savings, unemployment, foreclosed mortgages, and forcible evictions. Poverty, a condition thought to exist only in isolated pockets of the nation, was now evident everywhere in alarming proportions. And, as the depression showed no signs of lessening, but rather darkened further an already gray horizon, the people surrendered to a numbing dispair. Only very gradually would the nation regain the confidence lost in the early years of the depression.

Sylvan and Alfred Goldman met the adversity of the times by moving to another area of the state. Thousands, and later hundreds of thousands, of Americans eventually did the same, although few converted their geographical relocation as profitably. Actually the brothers had little choice in leaving Tulsa if they desired to return to the grocery business. Part of the purchase agreement that they had signed with Safeway in 1929 stipulated that the Goldmans could not establish a grocery store in any community where the old Sun Chain had operated. Originally the selling contract had specified that the restriction extend for a ten year period, but Safeway's legal staff had advised the company that a five year maximum existed in regard to such contractual pledges. Two possibilities presented themselves in 1929. Oil fields around Shawnee, Bowlegs, and Weleetka in east central Oklahoma were producing an atmosphere of boom economy which a grocery chain in those towns should reflect. The Goldmans were unable to secure the holdings in those towns offered for sale and were left with their geographical choice, Oklahoma City.[2]

On the occasion of this their third major business venture the two brothers acquired additional responsibilities. While living and operating their Sun chain in Tulsa, they had attended a cousin's engagement party. The latter arranged for the Goldmans to escort two of her friends from out of town, Margaret and Helen Katz of Stillwater, Oklahoma. The girls' father Jacob Katz, owned and operated a department store which he had opened in the 1890's. After a pleasant evening the brothers asked the Katz sisters to join them at their cousin's wedding and the proposal was accepted. The two couples, Alfred and Helen and Sylvan and Margaret, dated occasionally until Goldmans sold their Sun holding and left for California.

In 1929, despite the financial problems preoccupying the brothers' thoughts, Alfred found time to renew his acquaintance with Helen Katz. The two were married before the end of the year in time for the new bride to make the move to Oklahoma City, Margaret Katz came from Stillwater to visit her sister several times which gave the younger Goldman brother a chance to see her as well. The trips grew more and more frequent until they finally ran together permanently and the two were married June 7, 1939. Thus the brothers had an additional motive to make their business move to Oklahoma City prove profitable.[3]

The state capital represented the largest population center within Oklahoma's boundaries as a potential market, however, the latecoming Tulsans felt some trepidations over the move. The pall of depression that hung over the nation cast an equally enervating shadow on the city. Competition was not lacking either with the presence of Piggly Wiggly, Kroeger, and Safeway food chains, three of the country's largest. Between 1930 and 1937, eleven grocery chains left the tough metropolitan area or declared bankruptcy. Obviously the Goldman brothers would need every ounce of energy and expertise to succeed in this far from promising prospect.

Marshalling all their resources, the two called on their uncles, Morris and Henry Dreyfus, to join them in the Oklahoma City venture. The former assumed an active role in the new business while the latter provided financial support but stayed in Tulsa. The family expended most of its capital on the purchase of six small groceries, five of them located in the suburbs and the sixth on the corner of Robinson and Reno Streets in the downtown area. Borrowing from their experience in Tulsa, the Goldmans turned the city site into a self-service operation under the name, Standard Food Market.[4] An early customer suggested the designation, Sunshine Stores, for the outlying groceries since all of them boasted fresh coats of bright yellow paint.[5] All of the buildings were quite small compared to later designs; the Standard Store possessed a mere 25 feet X 50 feet floor plan. None of the store sites included adequate parking facilities, a condition which influenced an early decision to offer free deliver service at the suburban locations. Goldman reasoned that boys on bicycles could deliver groceries and build up business during the hard times when potential customers were reluctant to use their automobiles. As soon as possible he phased out this obsolete service which contradicted his concept of retail management.

Necessity also dictated other store and chain policies. All sales were cash because the struggling young company possessed no capital reserves to back a credit program. The money pinch presented the Goldmans with another problem that required a special strategem. If the new chain was going to compete with established businesses, competitive pricing was a must. The wholesale grocers of Oklahoma City had to be persuaded to give the stores a discount price on produce orders. This would allow Goldman to advertize cheaper fruits and vegetables than rival stores and thus establish a steady trade. Unfortunately the six stores did not represent enough buying volume to warrant such an arrangement. The single bit of leverage Goldman could wield resided in the family reputation. Oklahoma City wholesalers were keenly aware of the new chain operators' past record in Tulsa as grocers and produce men. With this fact in mind Goldman queried the wholesalers about the possibility of buying at a discount. He countered their reluctance by hinting at the possibility that his family might well establish their own wholesale house in the city barring an agreement on the discount question. The ploy worked perfectly. The wholesalers had no way of knowing that neither the Dreyfus brothers nor the Goldmans commanded sufficient funds to back the bluff.

The Standard and Sunshine stores now boasted a specialty to draw customers. The wholesalers who provided this advantage lost nothing in the process as they slightly altered their delivery routes to include the new customers. Despite the success of this arrangement Goldman still faced an additional obstacle, paying the weekly produce bills. The situation called for more commercial sleight of hand. Noting that the wholesalers allowed ten days for payment on delivered items, Goldman began switching suppliers, ordering fruits and vegetables from one firm this week and another the following week. This enabled him to meet his credit deadlines with the profits earned by vending the produce during each ten day grace period.[6]

Obtaining goods at an advantageous price had proved complicated enough, yet the involved machinations would result in wasted motion unless customers purchased the hard-won offerings. Before anyone could buy the stores' products they must become aware of their availability. Given Goldman's past achievements in advertising there seemed to be no particular difficulty in this respect. However, once again funds, or more accurately an insufficiency of funds, caused Goldman and his partners to seek a substitute for the preferred but expensive newspaper medium. They substituted by issuing floods of handbills touting the superior quality and low prices at their stores. To supplement this practice Goldman instructed company personnel to use the stores themselves as billboards, painting the windows with the news that bananas were purchasable at 3 cents a pound, oranges at 15 cents per dozen, and lettuce at 5 cents a head.[7]

The most remarkable aspect of this nascent food chain, other than its continued existence in the middle of a depression, was its constant growth and expansion. Goldman never paused to reflect on the possibly dire consequences of reinvesting profits during a period of general economy retrenchment. Possessed of a determined self confidence, he epitomized his own financial philosophy that years later he set down in print. On the subject of placing one's self in debt for business purposes Goldman recommended borrowing all the funds available "if you know what to do with the money and how to invest it properly and profitably." In the same optimistic vein he decried the fear of powerful competitors such as those he had faced in the 1930's, suggesting that "it isn't the size of a company that counts, but the advantages of being flexible, using good judgment and being able to grab opportunities...while larger operations must debate or wait on company routine and red tape."[8]

There was nothing about the aggrandizement of Goldman's initial beginning that could be termed indecisive or cautionary. As the Sunshine store leases expired they were either renovated and enlarged or moved to better locations. Simultaneously with the improvement and enlargement process the stores, renamed Standard Food Markets, became self service. The free delivery feature was dropped as emphasis was placed on eliminating costs to maintain competitive prices. This meant affecting a tremendous change in traditional concepts of grocery management. The experiments in Tulsa during the 1920's had attempted to condition shoppers to self service with little notable success. Ironically, the depression by fostering an acute awareness of all price variations actually aided in the developement of modern markets.

Each remodeling, relocation, or addition to the original six stores brought innovations to the field of retail food merchandising. In August, 1932 a store located in the Farmer's Public Market was added to the chain. The new unit contained a bakery which Goldman had enlarged to bake bread for all the Standard Stores. Producing the bread on such a scale allowed him to sell the staple for five cents a loaf. This proved to be an excellent attraction at the stores which made no direct profit on the item but reaped the benefit of increased numbers of customers. The following year Standard erected the first of its large model markets. The big 50 feet X 135 feet floor space was enhanced by a huge parking lot. Built in a residential area of Oklahoma City, the store reflected a nationwide trend toward large suburban outlets with spacious parking facilities to satisfy the new custom of driving to market and carrying home larger orders of groceries thus eliminating the need for daily trips.

While these improvements in facilities were important, they were primarily adaptations of what other retailers were doing across the nation. However Morris Dreyfus and the Goldmans were among those who pioneered self-service produce departments. The pre-eminence of Standard Stores in this aspect of food retailing was acknowledged in 1938 when a national trade magazine, Super Market Merchandising, asked Goldman to contribute an article on the subject. It explained much of the philosophy behind the whole concept of self-service stores through detailing the specifics of produce merchandising.

According to Goldman self-service departments were practical and profitable because they added to a store's income by tending to increase volume while reducing labor and operating costs. Customers could browse through the fruits and vegetables and choose whatever looked tempting. Instead of relying on a clerk's judgment the shopper selected his own quality and quantity, feeling free to change his mind without becoming embarrassed by his own indecision. Goldman's article anticipated the major objection of many grocery managers to self-service produce--the tomato squeezer. He labelled as groundless the fear that enormous losses would be incurred from the lady who manhandles fruits and vegetables, a cliche figure in countless comic strips and movies. To counteract this nemesis and maintain a smooth-running department, store owners should stress proper training for the produce managers who grade, price and display the sometimes fragile items. These operations consume time the article suggested but using checker and sacker personnel to help in readying the produce in the early morning, slow business hours would offset any labor utilization disadvantage. After discussing several technical points of self-service Goldman ended his arguments by indicating his opinion that eventually all stores would be forced by competition to adopt the new methodology.[10]

In 1934 Goldman's expansion program took a giant step forward with the purchase of five self-service Humpty Dumpty stores. Acquired in a receivership sale, the new addition to the chain retained their name and were operated on a separate basis to the public eye although in actuality they were centrally managed and directed by Goldman. Not until the war years was the general public made aware that the two groups of stores were connected through a common owner. This occurred in 1943 when a shortage of newsprint prompted the decision to merge Standard and Humpty Dumpty advertising space. Much of the chain's proliferation after World War II came under the Humpty Dumpty name.[11]

Somehow the appellation, "Humpty Dumpty," seemed more suitable for the type of stores that were evolving in the 1930's and 1940's. It might have appeared odd to a casual observer that despite Goldman's obviously burgeoning chain he was operating fewer stores in Oklahoma City after ten years than in Tulsa after two during the 1920's. The answer did not lay in the depression but in the site of the stores. In 1938 Goldman erected his first out-of-town unit at Shawnee, a store which could only be described as a "super market." The following decade witnessed still larger units which carried to fruition the trend which Goldman helped foster in the 1930's--stores so big and different from the old corner groceries that their development constituted a revolution in the retail food industry.

The origins of this dramatic change in the nation's number one industry are nebulous, primarily due to confusion surrounding the definition of a supermarket. To the average person the term has become so common as to suggest nothing more than a large grocery store, a notion backed by many dictionaries. Simplicity alone can recommend this definition which poses a secondary question of how to define "large." Perhaps the most colorful and image-provoking description appeared in a rather whimsical book purporting to record the story of the world's first supermarket, an entity described as "a large store majoring in food products and minoring in comestic aids, kitchen gadgets, cleansing agents, paper products, stainless steel razor blades, and magazines."[12] A more precise definition was finally evolved in 1936:

> A Super Market is a highly departmentalized retail establishment, dealing in foods and other merchandise, either wholly owned or concession operated, with adequate parking space, doing a minumum of $250,000 annually. The grocery department, however, must be on a self-service basis.[13]

Twenty years later the minimum volume to qualify as a supermarket was raised to $400,000 annually.[14]

The various components of a supermarket as defined above existed in this country for decades before the birth of the modern version of such stores in the late 1920's and early 1930's. Large markets, usually operating under public auspices, were a feature of many cities such as the Faneuil Hall Market of Boston and the Lexington Market of Baltimore. By 1918 over 174 sizable retail markets, some privately financed, could be found in the United States. Although vastly dissimilar in appearance they all had the common characteristics of a large area, several stalls, booths or departments leased to individual proprietors and a big cumulative volume. Propably the Crystal Palace Market of San Francisco, founded in 1922 and housed in a 68,000-square foot building, came closest to qualifying as the major forerunner of the modern supermarket. Its 110 leased departments did an annual multimillion dollar sales volume aided by a 4,350-car parking lot and extensive advertising campaigns. However, the establishment lacked self-service, one of the distinguishing marks of supermarkets.[15]

The man generally credited with introducing this revolutionary idea to food retailing was the amazing Clarence Saunders of Memphis, Tennessee. He made self-service the basis of his intriguingly named Piggly Wiggly Company whose stores were eventually scattered across the country with combined annual sales of 180 million dollars. These establishments started in 1916, while no larger than other grocery stores of the period, featured turnstiles at the entrance and a floor plan that required shoppers to pass virtually all of the displayed merchandise before exiting through checkout stands with their purchases. Saunders sold franchises to others who operated under the Piggly Wiggly name and several of the leading chains including Kroger and Safeway bought them before converting their own stores to self-service. Piggly Wiggly stores continued in operation, especially in the western states, long after Saunders lost control of his company in a 1923 stock imbroglio.[16]

California and Texas furnished social and economic climate friendly to the further development of supermarkets. In the 1920's Ralph's Grocery Company, Carty Brothers, and Alpha Beta Food Markets built retail food stores in California that were entitled to use the appellative, "super', even though they did not. In Texas ABC Stores, Incorporated, Henke & Pillot, and J. Weingarten, Incorporated operated supermarket prototypes by the early 1920's. Later in that decade store and chain owners in both area began utilizing "supermarket" to describe their operations although the term was not a corporate or trade name until 1933. Despite their early and attractive appearance, these southwestern stores failed to startle the nation with their presence as did the depression decade supermarkets developed in New York and New Jersey. Michael Cullen, formerly an executive with Kroger organization, opened the first of what one author has titled the "cheapy" supermarket. These were gigantic enterprises featuring very low prices, crude interiors, and flamboyant advertising. Cullen's fantastic success with his first store at Flushing, New York resulted in a chain of King Kullen Markets selling every type of merchandise before his death in April, 1936.[17]

The neighboring state of New Jersey fostered the inauguration and rise of a similar type of operation which received nationwide notice and powerfully influenced the growth of the supermarket industry. Robert M. Otis and Roy O. Dawson leased a vacant automobile plant at

Elizabeth, New Jersey in 1932, and used its 50,000 square feet to sell groceries and other merchandise at exceptionally low prices. The aspect of this and later Big Bear stores that drew the comment and imitation which made the chain famous was its advertising technique. Supermarkets were never mentioned in Big Bear advertisements. Instead, the company name was exploited in such a manner that Big Bear always "crushed," "slashed," "banged," and "crashed" prices to amazingly low levels. Specially marked items were invariably "sensational," "colossal," "stupendous" or "lowest" buys available. The chain itself claimed pre-eminence as "America's Greatest Thrift Center" or "World's Champion Price Fighter" "where millions shop and save" because Big Bear had "no high-salaried executives," "no large overhead," "no fancy frills or fixtures," and "all your needs under one roof." At the end of a year's operation Big Bear's five million customers at the original store alone gave partial credence to the advertising that became familiar through imitation to every literate American.[18]

For the average citizen struggling with the depression it was enough that the supermarkets offered a chance at a cheaper grocery budget. In Oklahoma City, Goldman and his competitors strove to gain their shares of the public's food dollar. If Standard-Humpty Dumpty thrived much of its success was due to Goldman's willingness to adopt others' merchandising advances and ability to develop his own innovations.[19]

The steady but spectacular growth of Goldman's food chain belied much of the real difficulties he and his partners encountered doing business in the depression atmosphere of Oklahoma. One of the more perplexing problems had its origin in the banking crisis of 1933 and subsequent attempts by the federal government to assuage its alarming affects on the national economy. The governor of Nevada closed his state's banks in October, 1932, when it became apparent that they might collapse due to an inability to cope with the strain of continued hard times. During the next two months bank failures in other western states spread a growing awareness that a new financial cataclysm similar to the 1929 stock market crash might be eminent. This premonition became a harsh reality in the following February and early March. Banks were failing all over the nation causing the governors of 38 states to suspend the financial institutions' activities. Franklin D. Roosevelt, impatiently awaiting his inauguration on March 4, had already publicly expressed his concern that the whole economic structure seemed unlikely to hold together until he took his oath of office. Much of the nation shared his dubious thought as news of continuing bank failures were interspersed with the ominous reports of stock and commodity markets closing in New York, Chicago, and Kansas City.

Oklahoma Governor William H. Murray joined his California, Louisiana, and Alabama counterparts who closed their respective states' banks the night of March 1. Four days later President Roosevelt declared a national bank holiday, a fortunate euphemism which in itself did something to relieve people's tension. However, no one knew when the country's financial system would reopen or under what circumstances. The few days that Roosevelt and Congress consumed in fashioning legislation for a new banking law were uneasy ones for many people as in ingenious methods designed to carry on normal activities without money were devised. Some northern states accepted Canadian currency as a circulating medium; southwestern states used Mexican pesos, and local businessmen tried a variety of credit and money substitutes.[20]

Goldman's experience in dealing with the bank holiday illustrated the imagination and boldness which distinguished so much of his entrepreneurial career. Not long after establishing himself in Oklahoma City, he had concocted a project of sales promotion especially designed to appeal to the depression-conscious public. A printshop was engaged to produce a series of coupon books in \$5, \$10, and \$20 denominations. Each book contained one dollar coupons with perforated divisions which could be torn out to make change. Customers could purchase these each payday and use them to buy their groceries until the next payday. Families who wanted to ensure an adequate food supply but feared to trust their will power at budgeting found the coupons convenient. Those forced to leave their children with babysitters while they worked also appreciated the device as the coupons could be redeemed by anyone, but only for groceries. Naturally the coupons were not acceptable at stores other than Standard stores.

The coupon books had already become an established part of chain policy when the March, 1933 bank holiday was announced. Goldman, following the lead of Oklahoma City's other chain operators, issued instructions to his store managers not to cash any checks until after the federal government's reorganization of the banking system. During the morning of the banks' closing the president of Standard Food Markets received a telephone call. It was from a store manager questioning the no check dictum in light of a request to cash one from Goldman's own wife. Humorous though the situation seemed it caused the chain president to pause and think about other Oklahoma City housewives in similar predicaments. He reversed his earlier decision and telephoned the store managers to cash all checks for the amount of purchase or in the case of payroll checks, issue food coupons.

Having arrived at this judgment, Goldman characteristically explored the matter for possible ways of turning it to his company's advantage. Realizing that workers all over the city had to be paid and that there simply existed no currency in sufficient quantities to cash the checks, he decided to propose a unique plan to several business acquaintances. In lieu of meeting their payrolls in full with momentarily worthless checks Goldman offered to sell his business friends coupon books which could be distributed as part of their employees' salaries. The plausibility of this plan was not lost on the men and hundreds of workers received Standard coupons in their pay envelopes. An unexpected extension of the idea occurred when streetcar conductors were issued coupon books from which they tore the correct subdivision of coupons to dispense change to riders.

The executives of the Standard chain were pleased with the increased flow of shoppers into their stores. They could reasonably expect to retain some of the new customers as regular patrons. There was only one drawback. As the cashed checks collected on Goldman's office desk they finally reached such proportions that their sum total, if uncollected, would bankrupt the entire operation. Although the store managers had been cautioned not to accept checks from strangers, several of them had hinted to Goldman that they were suspicious of some persons' checks. When the banks reopened during the second week in March the Standard accumulation of paper promises was hurriedly deposited. Over half of them came back stamped "insufficient funds" and even more dismayingly "no account." Putting aside his initial consternation, Goldman divided the returned checks among the stores that had taken them and attached special instructions concerning their collection. Small signs were printed with the pointed observation, "We cashed your check when no one else did." Strategically posted near each checkout stand they had the desired effect. Most of the customers quickly settled their debts explaining that they had not yet been able to deposit funds to cover the checks written during the bank holiday while others admitted they had no checking accounts and had been driven by desperation to deceive the store managers. Within a month every returned check had been redeemed save one. Ironically it bore Goldman's initialed approval. A neighbor who was not a customer had asked the Standard president to cash a check for $25 in coupons. The man moved away shortly afterward his nonpayment representing the only deficet resulting loss had paid a handsome dividend of increased business.[21]

Another depression-related problem was not so susceptible to such an amenable and profitable solution. Chain store operations of whatever type began to be the recipients of much criticism and animosity in the 1930's. Since the turn of the century the chain store movement had gained momentum at a rate which seemed alarming and finally downright menacing to independent retailers. Grocers were particularly upset since in 1930 a full 38 per cent of total food sales in the United States belonged to multiunit companies. The independents had no way of knowing that this figure was to remain consistent and even drop slightly as single unit operations grew to supermarket size or formed buying associations to offset the chains' volume business advantage.[22] Before these events occurred, however, resentful and often antagonistic independents successfully brought tremendous community pressure to bear against their larger competitors. They charged the chains with unfair price cutting, coercing manufacturers and producers to sell them products at reduced rates which were not passed on to the consumers, taking money out of local communities into the pockets of absentee owners, evading taxes, and instituting monopolies. Hundreds of thousands of dollars poured into the coffers of local and national antichain organizations numbering over 260 by the 1930's.

The groundswell of opinion against multiunit businesses induced a plethora of discriminatory legislation aimed at the chains. Southern state legislators, beginning in the 1920's, introduced special tax laws to hamper chain operations. Lawmakers in other parts of the nation followed their lead and before the advent of World War II over 700 bills were considered either in the national or the states' legislatures. About fifty of these proposals passed into laws and nearly all were declared unconstitutional. Most of the laws imposed licensing rates that ranged as high as $700 for each store in excess of fifty owned by a single company.[23] The culmination of the anti-chain movement's activities was reached by June 19, 1936 with the passage of the Robinson-Patman Act. This legislation, primarily the product of Congressman Wright Patman of Texas, amended the Clayton Act of 1914 in several particulars whose ambiguities continue to confuse the courts. The most important features of the act proposed to limit quantity discounts to vendors and prohibit advertising allowances to customers.[24]

Oklahoma never passed any discriminatory anti-chain legislation during the depression but the hard times and unfavorable chain store publicity elicited their own worrisome response. Between 1933 and

1935, Standard-Humpty Dumpty Stores were continually picketed by at least four trade unions seeking to negotiate wage and hour agreements. Although no demonstrable damage to business was experienced by Goldman and his partners, the rhetoric of some union spokesmen was irritating. Union workers distributed handbills which claimed that the grocery company was guilty of "flagrant violations of federal labor laws" regarding wage and hour standards. Another grievance, obviously reflecting antichain sentiment, charged that Standard-Humpty Dumpty stores were taking profits from Oklahoma City for the benefit of absentee owners and that Goldman's statements to the contrary were false. Other "fair stores" were listed as alternative grocery shopping markets to Goldman who was "trying to outchain the chain stores." Despite the unions' campaign Standard-Humpty Dumpty maintained satisfactory relations with its employees throughout the depression years.[25]

Goldman's Oklahoma City business venture, begun in a depression atmosphere, could be accounted a solid success before the hard times disappeared in the coming of the Second World War. What had started as a group enterprise eventually became Goldman's sole responsibility. His three closest business associates, all members of the family, were no longer with the company, two of them due to tragic circumstances. Henry Dreyfus, Goldman's uncle and business counselor, died in an automobile accident in 1935. Two years later, his brother, Alfred Goldman, fatally succumbed to a prolonged case of pneumonia. Immediately after the clash of World War II Morris Dreyfus, who had been supervisor of stores, retired from active participation in the company organization.[26]

If Goldman's achievements had been confined to his part in building the Standard-Humpty Dumpty chain his career would be reckoned notable. However, the extension of the chain during and after the war plus a proliferation of other business ventures in which he played a major role enhanced his importance in the Oklahoma business scene. Added to these commercial enterprises was an important role played in national and international food organizations, especially the Super Market Institute. Perhaps the phase of his career which earned Goldman his greatest renown was one that began in the depression era with an idea. The idea became an invention and the invention a symbol of the retail food industry everywhere in the world.

FOOTNOTES

[1]According to the census figures for 1929, the stories of ruined speculators leaping from windows constituted a myth. Nevertheless, this tradition has lingered in the public consciousness as a convenient symbol of the 1929 Crash. Galbraith, _The Great Crash, 1929_, pp. 133-137.

[2]Sylvan N. Goldman, Interview, Oklahoma City, Oklahoma, February 24, 1974.

[3]Sylvan N. Goldman, Interview, Oklahoma City, Oklahoma, March 5, 1974.

[4]Sylvan N. Goldman, Interview, Oklahoma City, Oklahoma, February 24, 1974.

[5]Mrs. Lavinia Norris to Sylvan N. Goldman, March 6, 1930, Sylvan N. Goldman Collection, Oklahoma City, Oklahoma.

[6]Sylvan N. Goldman, Interview, Oklahoma City, Oklahoma, February 24, 1974.

[7]Sylvan N. Goldman, "Progress Through Service: A Personal Report to the Employees and Friends of Standard-Humpty Dumpty Super Markets" (Oklahoma City: Privately Printed, 1955), S. N. Goldman Collection, Oklahoma City, Oklahoma.

[8]The Sunday Oklahoman, (November 21, 1965), p. 10.

[9]Goldman, "Progress Through Service," Sylvan N. Goldman Collection, Oklahoma City, Oklahoma; Sylvan N. Goldman, Interview, Oklahoma City, Oklahoma, February 24, 1974.

[10]Sylvan N. Goldman, "The Produce Market on a Self-Service Basis - Is It Practical and Profitable?" _Super Market Merchandising_, Vol. III, No. 10 (October, 1938), pp. 42-43, 85-86.

[11]Goldman, "Progress Through Service," Sylvan N. Goldman Collection, Oklahoma City, Oklahoma.

[12]William H. Marnell, _Once Upon a Store: A Biography of the World's First Supermarket_ (New York, 1971), p. 39.

[13]M. M. Zimmerman, _The Super Market: A Revolution in Distribution_ (New York, 1955), p. 18.

[14] *Ibid.*

[15] Charvat, *Supermarketing*, p. 12.

[16] Saunders later opened a chain under the unusual designation, Clarence Saunders, Sole Owner of My Name, but these stores after an initial success faded into obscurity. Immediately following the Second World War he opened the Keedoozle Store which reached the ultimate in self-service by completely eliminating clerks. A series of complicated mechanical and electrical devices displayed and conveyed food items to the checkout stands after customers selected them. Unfortunately the cost of the process proved prohibitive for normal usage and Saunders died in 1953 planning a Foodelectric store. *Ibid.*, pp. 13-15; Zimmerman, *The Super Market: A Revolution in Distribution*, pp. 21-24; Lebhar, *Chain Stores in America*, p. 27.

[17] Charvat, *Supermarketing*, pp. 18-19.

[18] Joseph Neubauer, "Do Flamboyant Advertising Headlines Pay?" *Super Market Merchandising*, Vol. III, No. 10 (October, 1938), pp. 55-56.

[19] See chapter five for a discussion of Goldman's contributions including the grocery shopping cart which became a visual symbol of the supermarket industry.

[20] William E. Leuchtenburg, *Franklin D. Roosevelt and the New Deal* (New York, 1963), pp. 38-39, 42-44.

[21] Sylvan N. Goldman, Interview, Oklahoma City, Oklahoma, March 15, 1974.

[22] Lebhar, *Chain Stores in America*, pp. 60, 67.

[23] Zimmerman, *The Super Market: A Revolution in Distribution*, p. 3

[24] *Ibid.* pp. 4-9; Alfred G. Buehler, "Chain Store Taxes," *Chain Stores and Legislation*, ed. Daniel Bloomfield (New York, 1939), pp. 8-12.

[25] Sylvan N. Goldman, Interview, Oklahoma City, Oklahoma, March 25, 1974; Handbills published by labor unions in Sylvan N. Goldman Collection, Oklahoma City, Oklahoma.

[26] Goldman, "Progress Through Service," Sylvan N. Goldman Collection, Oklahoma City, Oklahoma.

CHAPTER V

THE UBIQUITOUS GROCERY CART AND OTHER INVENTIONS

Life in the United States has produced a multitude of everyday objects whose origin has never been questioned and utility rarely remarked. Perhaps their constant presence has rendered them so mundane that people simply overlook the obvious. Among those items thrown off by the technological whirl of the machine age was one that has become the symbol of the supermarketing industry. Three of America's best known magazines chose to feature the device on their covers to advertise issues devoted to the retail food trade.[1] Whenever cartoonists have sought to suggest the presence of characters in grocery stores the object has appeared in their drawings. Now worldwide in its application to myriad uses Sylvan Goldman's invention, the grocery shopping cart, has become a ubiquitous sign of American ingenuity.

An ordinary folding chair yielded the inspiration which spawned the device that helped revolutionize the retail grocery store. Sitting in his office one day in 1935, Goldman's eye strayed to a chair which suddenly seemed to offer a solution to the problem he was mulling--how to sell more groceries. There was a natural limit to the grocery shopper's buying capacity that had nothing to do with the size of his pocketbook. Stores were equipped with market baskets to carry purchases that quickly became heavy, particularly for the woman buyer who did most of the shopping. If casters were affixed to the legs of a folding chair and a basket placed on its seat, Goldman reasoned, then the most fragile woman shopper could load many more grocery items on such a cart than could be carried under her arm.[2]

With this vision clear in the mind Goldman excitedly sent for Fred Young, one of the Standard-Humpty Dumpty company carpenters. He explained his concept to Young and after some discussion Young took the chair to his worktable for the first of a long series of tinkering sessions. Almost forty years later Goldman recalled the process by which the shopping cart took a definite shape and gave Young a full share of credit in providing the mechanical skills necessary to perform the task. "I'm no mechanic" Goldman espostulated, "I might be able to make a toothpick out of a piece of wood with a good sharp knife. But if you have a good imagination and can think of the idea you can always find some one to build it for you.[3]

The two men worked several months in this manner; Goldman suggesting innovations and improvements and Young applying them to a working model. It was decided that the aluminum frame carrier mounted on wheels could accomodate two shopping baskets. Accordingly, skeletal shelves were devised to hold metal, wide mesh baskets. The lower shelf was approximately nine inches from the floor and there was a 20 inch clearance between it and the upper shelf. When opened the apparatus measured two feet in length, 18 inches in width, and stood just over a yard high. The rear rubber wheels accounted for four inches of that height while the front swivel casters had diameters of three inches. One of the invention's best selling points proved to be the small space occupied by the carrier when folded. After removing the baskets from its shelves the cart occupied a scant five inches of floor space. Perhaps the most impressive dimensions from a grocery store manager's viewpoint were those of the steel-wire baskets measuring 19 1/2 inches long, 13 inches wide, and 9 inches deep.[4]

Goldman's folding carrier was not the first attempt to "come to grips with the problem that had to be solved before the modern supermarket could exist, the problem of a vehicle in which to carry one's purchases as he works his way through the aisles."[5] John and Paul Cifrino, the founders of Upham's Corner Market in Boston, Massachusetts were among the first to try to reach a solution. In the early 1920's they evolved a system whereby customers shopped from counter to counter in their large store examining groceries and receiving slips of papers from clerks designating those items they chose. The purchases were transported by means of a conveyor belt to the checkout stands. This enabled the customer to complete his shopping without having lifted anything heavier than the slips of paper with which he claimed his marketing choices. Unfortunately for the Cifrinos their system suffered from two defects which proved impossible to overcome. The conveyor belts developed a dismaying aptitude for breaking down during rush hours. Improved technology might have alleviated this drawback, however, the result would have been wasted effort. The system required a large number of clerks to operate which would necessarily have precluded its use in self-service situations which predominated, and indeed, were a prerequisite of developing supermarkets.[6]

Another effort bore a closer kinship to Goldman's contribution.

Like many innovations in the retail food business, it grew out of the always fierce competition among the industry's membership. One of the earliest and largest supermarket operations in the Southwest was Henke & Pillot, located in Houston, Texas, Pioneering in self-service stores in 1919 they laid out a floor plan in the shape of an "M" with shelving around the perimeter that was stocked from the rear. Along the shelves they built a fifteen inch wide track raised about 30 inches from the floor and fitted with low side rails. Baskets equipped with tiny wheels and grooved to slide inside the rails were pushed by the customers around the store. While this eliminated the burden of carrying overladen baskets it was not adaptable to stores with different floor plans. In addition shoppers were forced to follow the entire track which discouraged those who entered the store for a few items and were blocked by slower customers.

J. Weingarten, Inc., the chief competitor of Henke & Pillot in Houston, requested one of its employees to devise an answer to the stationary track. Ellis D. Turnham met the challenge by reviving the handle from a toy express wagon, making the front wheel stationary, fitting the wagon's bed with a basket in such a way that the customer could pull it around by the basket's handle. Later Turnham constructed a steel carrier that could be pushed, however, it had no folding device and carried only one basket.[7]

These early experiments while intriguing in their possibilities failed to make a lasting impression on the retail food scene. Goldman's grocery cart fulfilled all the requirements of supermarket operators. It provided an efficient and rapid means of streamlining the self-service concept. As long as shoppers were limited to buying in amounts that they could physically handle sales would be unreasonably curtailed. Fixed means of carrying purchases did not allow sufficient freedom to display all the variegated wares that supermarkets were gradually adding to the standard stock items. And finally, Goldman's carrier possessed the folding feature that made it a practicable working unit for stores whose livelihood depended so greatly on an economical utilization of space.

Interestingly, the origination of the concept and its development into a usable apparatus proved far easier than actually marketing the carrier. Goldman's invention revealed an alert and imaginative mind; the manner in which he promoted his creation illustrated his considerable talents as an entrepreneur and merchandising specialist. On June 4, 1937 the inventor began advertising his new product with a flair that was typical of supermarket ballyhoo with an added ingrediant of titillation that showed Goldman's shrewd understanding of human nature. The advertisement featured a picture of a rather wan-appearing woman shopper clutching her purse in one hand and a heavily loaded wicker market basket in the other. In bold type the caption beside the illustration read "Basket Juggling Is a Lost Art At Your Standard Food Stores." The text accompanying the visual art emphasized "the newest innovation in shopping! Exclusive now at your Standard stores." Further on were described the joys of "Wending your way through a spacious food market without having to carry a cumbersome shopping basket on your arm.... Just pick your items from the shelves. They will be checked and placed in your car without having to carry a single item." This rhetoric was so distinguished by its flamboyant "hardsell" flavor as by the careful omission of any specific information concerning the device that was to transform shopping from drudgery to ecstasy. Goldman had very cleverly touted his product without mentioning its name thus piquing the curiosity of every reader.[8]

One week later the same format was repeated in another newspaper advertisement. It announced that "Standard's new 'No Basket Carrying Plan' met with instant approval last week-end." Again there was no descriptive mention of the miraculous wonder worker.[9] From the tenor of the copy one might well have presumed that the folding carrier was an instant success--just the reverse was true. It seemed that the women customers displayed an extreme uneasiness around the new bits of machinery while men shoppers eschewed the carts on the grounds that they resembled perambulators which were definitely unmasculine objects. After a couple of weeks of disappointing results Goldman improvised a new method of gaining adherents for his carrier. He hired professional models, male and female, "to show the carts weren't wheeled monsters. The men soon joined in and then the women. We were in business."[10]

In the beginning, Young, with the aid of one assistant and a high-school youth who worked after school, produced the carriers in a 20 by 50 foot carpenter's shed located behind Standard's main office building. The men constructed only enough to supply the Standard and Humpty Dumpty stores where Goldman was experiencing so much difficulty in convincing people to use them. Eventually, however, as the idea became popular and the shoppers accustomed themselves to the change Goldman began thinking of producing the carts on a commerical basis. With a capital stock of $10,000 the Folding Carrier Company was chartered late in 1937. Two years later the young firm employed fifteen fulltime employees including salesmen who toured the country demonstrating the carts. For several months, sales were rather slow as the carriers seemed unnecessary to many grocery owners. Once again Goldman devised a new merchandising technique to aid his salesmen. Recalling the models used to demonstrate the carts, he decided to film the public in the act of using his invention. The infant company's salesmen, armed with the visual aid, returned to their territories with renewed confidence which was soon rewarded. By the time the United States entered World War II, thirty men working at top speed in two shifts were required to meet the demand for shopping carts.[11]

Goldman's success with the carriers was not without its problems. Orders arrived faster and faster so that it became apparent that the Folding Carrier Company would have to expand very rapidly if it were to maintain a commanding lead over its competitors who were already moving into the field. Unable to spare sufficient time from his grocery chain to oversee the company's accelerated production schedules, Goldman promoted Kurt H. Schweitzer to the presidency of the firm. Married to a distant cousin of Goldman, Schweitzer had joined the carrier company as its eastern sales represenitive. He had moved up quickly to become vice president and general manager before assuming the role of president. Goldman, freed from the bulk of administrative responsibility, remained active in the enterprise, particularly in the areas of promotion and product development.

The original carrier underwent a long series of improvements to make it more adaptable to the increasing number of tasks it performed. The early models reflected the transitional stages of the carts' acceptance. Two types of baskets were available to store owners unsure of consumer reaction to the new product. Sold as separate items one style of basket was specifically designed for the carriers while the other container was equipped with rubber-covered folding handles for shoppers suspicious of newfangled notions. As the carts grew more popular the baskets became integral parts of the carriers. In 1940 the Folding Carrier Company advertised an altered version of the shopping cart. It features a longer carrier capable of holding two smaller sized baskets on top while the lower platform was replaced by structural supports to compensate for the heavier load of the elongated upper frame. This innovation was offered in response to complaints by some grocery checkers that lifting the lower baskets to the checkout counter was troublesome and that when loaded the regular-sized baskets were too heavy for female checkers.

The problem of maneuvering the loaded baskets from the carrier and sacking the groceries with the least wasted motion led Goldman to fashion a completely new checkout system for groceries. Normally food market managers situated their cash registers on waist-high counters located at the front of the store. Before the advent of the shopping cart customers simply placed their wicker baskets on the counter for the clerk to empty item by item while noting prices on his register. If business were brisk a sacker would gather the groceries from the counter into paper sacks. Goldman's top-positioned double basket cart was devised for clerks who had to reach across the two to three foot wide loading counter to lift the baskets off the carrier. To use the double-decker cart originally designed by the inventor a change was required in the checkout counter itself. Folding Carrier Company's advertising contained instructions and diagrams explaining how to renovate a store's checkout system to accommodate not only the carriers but another Goldman invention as well.

According to the diagrams on L-shaped counter would serve best. The right angle of the "L" faced the customer as he left the store. On the corner of the angle rested the cash register; its sides forming parallel lines running diagonally from the right-angled corner. Immediately to the storefront side of the register a square space was cut out of the counter's interior. Six inches of counter space separated this cutout from a larger diagonally cut section, about three feet across. The shopper's loaded carrier was to be pushed into this larger slot and inloaded by the store checker with his left hand while using his right to tally the items. As he lifted the groceries from the basket he would pack them in an already opened sack resting on and being supposted on three sides by Goldman's newest gadget, the grocery sacker. This ingenious but simple device stood in the interior counter cutout between the shopping cart slot and the cash register. It consisted of a three sided metal wire stand, approximately three feet high, with a shelf built into the frame 18 inches from its top. An opened sack place on the shelf and steadied by the wire framework would provide an easy receptacle for grocery items as they were taken from the carrier basket.[12]

Although the grocery sacker eliminated the need for an additional worker at the checkstand the innovation never became popular. Its inventor remained convinced of the sacker's worth and was nonplussed at the scant enthusiasm accorded his checkout counter aid which the U. S. Patent Office awarded six patentable claims. The cut checkstand, however, caught the notice of many store owners and managers who followed Goldman's suggestions or devised similar plans to utilize the shopping carts.

The invention and manufacture of the folding carrier led directly to other ideas concerned with store efficiency. Before designing the ill-fated grocery sacker in 1941-1942, Goldmnn had already marketed another product of his continuous penetrating scrutiny of the developing supermarket. He had observed that one of the most laborious tasks in any store involved stocking shelves with groceries. As supermarkets listed more and more varieties of goods on their inventories the men who replaced purchased items on to the ever higher constructed gondolas found their jobs slower and arduous. Frequently interrupted to perform other duties, the stockers left cartons and boxes in the aisles where they obstructed the increasing flow of cerrier traffic. The answer to this problem was Goldman's store service truck which streamlined the difficult stocking process. Patented in May, 1940[14] the truck was being widely used a year earlier when first placed on the market. Among the buyers were such famous retailers as Wrigley's, Stores, Incorporated, Safeway Stores, ABC Stores, and Montgomery Ward.[15] A still larger customer for the service trucks and the shopping carts was officially designated in 1941 when both Folding Carrier Company products were placed on the federal government's General Schedule of Supplies.[16]

The store service truck marked the first improvement over stocking gooceries by carrying individual boxes from the store room by hand. Constructed of heavy duty steel the 16 inch by 36 inch bottom support frame held up to 500 pounds of merchandise, normally about six to eight cases of canned goods. Rolling on ball-bearing wheels and casters, the truck's load was steadied front and rear by steel frames. The unique feature of the implement lay in a hinged top rack which was brought over the top of the truck's front upright frame to latch onto the back frame. Each box of cans or other item was placed on this rack eliminating the necessity of stooping to empty the box's contents for stocking on high shelving. So grateful were many stockers around the country to have a device that could transport heavy boxes from the storeroom easily that unless briefed many failed to notice the presence of the top rack which hung discreetly parallel to the front frame when not in use.[17]

Another Folding Carrier product that found an appreciative public was a natural offshoot of the shopping carrier. If grocery buying were rendered easier through the use of a cart then a similar conveyance might be useful in other businesses requiring the handling of multiple articles. By 1940 Goldman's firm was filling orders for his Folding Inter-Office Basket Carrier. Designed for office use, these carriers rapidly became popular with secretaries who handled large amounts of files, books, and mail. They closely resembled the shopping cart in construction and possessed the usual folding feature for storage purposes. The baskets measured 14 by 20 by 8 1/2 inches deep and judging from the widely varied buyers held any number of objects when used. Included in the list of requests for the carriers were the Dupont Company, the U.S. Navy Supply Division, and a host of grateful, overloaded librarians.[18]

Once launched into the metal basket-manufacturing field via the grocery cart invention Goldman's fertile imagination continually discovered additional applications in his grocery stores. The familiar olive green painted metal that had become synonymous with Folding Carrier products provided the structural content for two types of merchandise holders. The National Biscuit Company, processor of crackers and cookies, was the recipient of the bulk of Goldman's floor display stands. These devices were lightweight wireframe stands specially suited to displaying cellophane-wrapped foods. Covering less than four square feet of floor space, the three-tiered stands could be placed virtually anywhere in a store.[19] Gerber Products Company of Fremont, Michigan utilized another Folding Carrier wire display in the late 1940's to successfully experiment with a bit of customer psychology. Gerber's main item of production, baby food, could be advantageously displayed in three and five dozen jar capacity wire baskets. Goldman had been requested directly by Gerber's to manufacture the display baskets for the hard-to-stack glass jars of baby food. Gerber's executives believed that a jumbled array of baby food would increase sales since many customers would hesitate to disturb a conventionally neat arrangement by buying one or two cans.[20]

A decade earlier Goldman's practiced eye had fixed on his grocery stores' dairy cases. The result was still another merchandising innovation which proved as popular with dairy companies as retail grocers. In the 1930's, that era of glass milk bottles and completely closed cooling storage cases, two of the biggest problems of both retailer and milk suppliers were display and keeping the product fresh. Loaded from behind, the milk displays tended to become haphazard in appearance as shippers fumbled among the different sizes of bottles. Goldman eliminated this untidiness and its resultant difficulty in restocking fresh milk by placing the bottles in appropriately sized metal holders. There were two models to choose from the patented Handy Milk Bottle Racks. One type consisted of a slanted slide rack in which gravity forced the rear bottles forward as customers removed those from the front. In the second design a spring holder drew the bottles forward on a flat surface. The base on either model was made of galvanized steel as were the springs on the second type while the bottles were held in line by steel wire. Quart, pint and half-pint bottles could be accommodated by different sizes of holders. Popular Mechanics magazine and a trade journal, Dairy World, published articles featuring Goldman's invention with pictures and text. Both models sold well until the advent of nonglass milk containers.[21]

World War II greatly affected the Folding Carrier Company as it changed or modified the direction of most American business activities. Goldman and Schweitzer dealt with wartime materials shortages, a dwindling labor supply and retooling for war production. Constantly on the lookout for new products the two discovered a possibility in the very stringencies brought about by wartime necessity. Metal quickly became a scarce commodity as the United States began turning out the guns, ships, airplanes and other materiel required for an eventual victory over the enemy. As a manufacturer of shopping carts, baskets, and grocery service trucks, Folding Carrier could not expect, and did not receive, a high ranking on the metals priority list. By 1942 the company's advertising carried pictures and descriptions promoting a wooden dowel basket and carrier. The only metal used in the otherwise oak construction was in the casters, wheels, and frame fastenings. Wood was also utilized in manufacturing ration-stamp change boxes. During the war meat markets were ordered by the government to give change from purchases with red stamps in one, two, five, and six point denominations. Goldman's little device, measuring less than nine inches in length, proved very popular with harassed butchers handling the flimsy stamps.[22]

Even before Pearl Harbor brought the nation into the conflict, the armed forces were seeking manufacturing plants which might be converted for war production. The Navy Ordnance Department requested complete, detailed information on Folding Carrier's facilities and capabilities in December, 1940. This formal action followed an inspection visit by navy personnel in August which had already determined the probability of using the Oklahoma City plant. On December 8, 1941, the day after the Japanese attack, Schweitzer received a warning from the navy advising precautions be taken to prevent sabotage of the factory's facilities.[23]

Less than a month of war had passed before Folding Carrier received its war contract. The basket carrier assembly line was to manufacture tiny arming wire assemblies for 1,000 pound bombs. According to the terms of the contract over 100,000 of the small but essential components were manufactured. Company employees were made to feel the importance of their task by close inspections from federal quality, safety, and security team inspections. After Lieutenant General Leonard H. Campbell, Jr., Navy Chief of Ordnance, wrote a special letter of commendation for the retooling efforts successfully accomplished by the Folding Carrier Company during the war.[24]

The postwar years were a continuation of Folding Carrier's prosperity and growth. In 1950 operations were moved into a six story structure to provide the necessary space to expand production to meet a renewed demand for shopping carts and other products. Owned by the National Biscuit Company, the building was purchased by Goldman for over $200,000 to replace the plant that had housed the assembly line. The new location was equipped with a complete chrome plating apparatus, the only one in the state, so that the firm's metal products no longer exhibited the olive green color that had marked them since the 1930's.[25]

More than the color had changed in the company's major line of merchandise, the shopping cart. In 1947 Folding Carrier introduced the patented Nest Kart. The new cart enabled grocers to stock one piece carriers in a smaller area than the older models. The back section of the carrier's basket, now an integral part of the frame, swung forward when a second carrier's front was pushed against it, thus allowing any number to "nest" each partially enclosed by the one behind. The baskets were shaped so that the front end's dimensions were much smaller than the hinged road and which resulted in a use of only a few added inches for each additional nesting cart's storage space. The 1950 model possessed a 5600 cubic inch capacity basket plus a lower front slanting shelf for bulk purchases. Tubular one piece frame construction with a chrome finish gave the cart a much more streamlined appearance than the older prototypes had offered.[26]

Later in the decade the nesting carts featured another advance, a built-in baby seat. Constructed of a closer meshed wire, the baby seat accommodated children by a hinged plate which could be dropped from the upper portion of the rear end of the basket exposing a divided opening through which the child's legs fit. When marketing the original folding carrier Goldman had never foreseen that the cart's biggest attraction would lay in its baby-sitting potentialities.

Harried mothers were glad to place their young children in the safety of the upper basket leaving them two hands for shopping. Goldman quickly seized upon the practice as a tremendous selling point in his advertising campaign. An early carrier model was equipped with a special baby's seat attachment which unlike the 1952 version had the child facing toward the front of the basket. Research and experience had shown the advantage of having the often inquisitive youngsters face their mothers pushing the carts rather than the tempting array of articles in the shopping basket.[27]

Not all customers appreciated this feature of Goldman's invention, the possibilities of which he himself had failed to anticipate. In July, 1942 Dallas, Texas newspaper readers were surprised to discover that a complaining motion had been placed before the city manager which would prohibit putting children or pets in grocery carts while shopping. Ostensibly the babies' wet diapers caused the baskets to be unsanitary for the next customer. A storm of protests greeted a decision by the Dallas health department which ruled in favor of the complainant. No other city dared follow the Texas health officials' action when adverse criticism by aroused mothers included epithets such as "heartless, selfish child-haters" and "narrow-minded, thoughtless politicians." Luckily the entire episode subsided peacefully as no ordinance was passed leaving grocers to enforce the health department's decision.[28]

To take care of older children the Nest Kart Junior was marketed in 1952. A miniature version of the regular-sized carrier, 22 inches long, 14 inches wide, and 28 inches high, the junior cart was tested in California and Oklahoma stores with interesting results. Not only did the toys keep the children occupied but their parents almost invariably allowed them to buy their selections. Four out of ten mothers left the stores after purchasing two complete carts full of food as the youngsters proved as susceptible to impulse buying as adults.[29]

There seemed to be no end of refinements that might be made to enhance the practicality of the grocery carts. Folding Carrier experimented with a variety of designs and basket sizes trying to reach as large a market as possible. Goldman's 1939 model offered an optional advertising plate which fastened onto the front end of the basket. Although the 1952 carriers could be similarly equipped the concept was never widely adopted. Perhaps the idea was simply ahead of its time since in 1974 Business Week erroneously reported shopping cart advertisements' "first big test in 1,050 supermarkets in New England and upstate New York." An accompanying picture revealed the close resemblance of the "new" device to Goldman's 1939 model.[30]

Improved construction, including rubber bumpers and more efficient wheels and casters helped keep Folding Carrier ahead of the rest of the industry and provided a steady growth for the Oklahoma City plant's sales and its Canadian subsidiary, Nest-Kart Limited of Canada.[31]

Constant attention to improvements in constructing and marketing the shopping carts was necessary if Folding Carrier was to maintain its lead in manufacturing and sales. At one time in the late 1930's the Oklahoma firm produced about 70 per cent of the national market. However, a number of competitors entered the field with slightly modified carts. This constituted a relatively simple operation since Goldman's patents were rather easily evaded. It had required a lengthy appeal[32] before the 1939 folding cart patent application was granted and periodically conflicts developed with other Goldman patent claims and other applicants' inventions. One such incident, occurring in 1949 and involving a Kansas City, Missouri firm, Telescopic Carts, Incorporated, led to an out of court settlement. Orla E. Watson, president of the rival company and Goldman agreed that the latter would withdraw his application and let Watson's stand despite the fact that Folding Carrier's was filed first. In exchange for this concession Goldman received a license which gave him a major interest in Watson's patent. The two businessmen in actual practice would grant sublicenses to other manufacturers only with the consent of both parties.[33]

The agreement, which was intended to prevent lengthy litigation, ended in court by another route. On May 21, 1951 the U. S. Department of Justice filed an antitrust suit against Folding Carrier Company and Telescopic Carts, Incorporated. Also named in the charges were Goldman and Watson who, the suit stated, were attempting to monopolize interstate trade in shopping carts and conspiring to limit the number of companies manufacturing them. Goldman and Watson admitted they had tried to minimize the number of licensed companies manufacturing telescopic carts because their patents had been flagrantly ignored in several instances. They noted that many companies held licenses and that the patent in question had already been held invalid by a federal court nearly three months earlier. In that decision the court had ruled against the patent because Goldman had as early as 1942 "reduced to practice" his application by constructing a number of carts with the telescoping feature thus failing to fulfill the one year's grace period allowed after reduction to practice. In both the March and May suits

Goldman and Watson were enjoined to grant licenses on all their patents at a "reasonable" royalty rate and were prohibited from entering into any agreements for the manufacture or sale of carts.[34]

An alert and progressive company then, was the sole means of maintaining a sizable share of the shopping cart market. Folding Carrier continued to compete successfully and a final Goldman invention in 1956 helped the firm's profit growth. Inspired by his own difficulties experienced during extensive travels the inventor devised the Airport Personal Luggage Cart. Similar in construction and appearance to a folding shopping carrier minus its basket, the carts were well received in tests at train stations and airports. The cart contained space for two or three suitcases and included the baby seat made famous by the grocery carriers. Six-inch diameter front wheels and eight-inch rear wheels gave the new product an outdoors utility and excellent mobility. The only adverse comments were filed by red caps who felt their jobs were threatened by the new carriers.[35]

In August, 1961, a Chicago financier, Henry Litvak, bought the Folding Carrier Company from Goldman. The following year it became the property of Union Asbestos and Rubber Company of Chicago, now Unarco Inudstries, through a merger operation. Folding Carrier's 500 employees and its management staff were not substantially changed in the transfer of the company's ownership.[36]

Twenty-three years before a store owner in Paducah, Texas had called Goldman's shopping cart, "the greatest asset to self-service grocery stores in years."[37] Certainly this was not an overstatement as was apparent the next year in 1939 when the Institute of America Inventors extended its membership to Goldman.[38] The Smithsonian

Institution of Washington, D. C. acquired Goldman's original prototype in August, 1972. C. Malcom Watkins, chairman of cultural history at the Smithsonian Institution, referred to the acquisition as "a very significant addition to the growing collection of objects...related to the history of American business and merchandising."[39]

These official recognitions have insured Goldman's place among American inventors. The actual worth of his contribution has been better illustrated by the wide and varied uses of the shopping cart. That the average citizen appreciated the shopping cart was perhaps shown most graphically by the passage of a Los Angeles, California city ordinance making the "borrowing" of shopping carts from supermarkets punishable by a fine of $500.[40] The Federal Reserve Banks have used the carts to transfer coins and currency in their vaults, while the importing and exporting Siphya Store in Bangkok, Thailand employed "shopping wagons or vans" ordered from your esteemed [Folding Carrier] company."[41] Over 250,000 grocery stores have used the cart which has became the ubiquitous symbol of the retail food industry in the twentieth century.

FOOTNOTES

[1]*Life*, January 3, 1955; *Look*, August 30, 1949; *The Saturday Evening Post*, August 31, 1940.

[2]Sylvan N. Goldman, Interview, Oklahoma City, Oklahoma, April 20, 1974.

[3]These words were spoken during an address to the First Annual Midwest Inventors Conference held in Oklahoma City. Oklahoma City Times (September 28, 1973), p. 23.

[4]Description and specifications are from a Folding Carrier Company advertisement of 1938. Sylvan N. Goldman Collection, Oklahoma City, Oklahoma.

[5]Marnell, *Once Upon a Store: A Biography of the World's First Supermarket*, p. 37.

[6]*Ibid.*, pp. 39-40.

[7]Zimmerman, *The Super Market: A Revolution in Distribution*, pp. 27-28.

[8]Oklahoma City Times (June 4, 1973), p. 27.

[9]*Ibid.* (June 11, 1973), p. 23.

[10]The Sunday Oklahoman (August, 27, 1972), p. 38.

[11]Sylvan N. Goldman, Interview, Oklahoma City, Oklahoma, April 20, 1974.

[12]Description from a Folding Carrier Company advertisement of 1942, Sylvan N. Goldman Collection, Oklahoma City, Oklahoma.

[13]Conway P. Cox to Sylvan N. Goldman, September 9, 1942, Sylvan N. Goldman Collection, Oklahoma City, Oklahoma; Sylvan N. Goldman, Interview, Oklahoma City, Oklahoma, April 20, 1974.

[14]The application for a patent was filed April 8, 1939 and granted May 21, 1940. United States Patent Office, 2,201533, Store Service Truck. Sylvan N. Goldman Collection, Oklahoma City, Oklahoma.

[15]Jack E. Lurie to Folding Carrier Company, May 31, 1939; W. E. Cook to Folding Carrier Company, August 17, 1939; A. H. Williford to

Folding Carrier Company, September 18, 1939; Montgomery Ward to Folding Carrier Company, June 14, 1942, Sylvan N. Goldman Collection, Oklahoma City, Oklahoma.

[16]This action was suggested in E. M. Burke to J. W. Reed, J January 15, 1940, and appeared on the General Schedule of Supplies: Hand-drawn and Lift Trucks, and Parts and Accessories Therefore for the Period from June 1, 1941 to May 31, 1942 (Washington, 1941), pp. 4-5, Sylvan N. Goldman Collection, Oklahoma City, Oklahoma.

[17]Description from Folding Carrier Company advertisement of 1939, Sylvan N. Goldman Collection, Oklahoma City, Oklahoma; Sylvan N. Goldman, Interview, Oklahoma City, Oklahoma, April 20, 1974.

[18]"Folding Office Truck" Business Week, No. 519 (October 5, 1940), p. 49; E. I. Dupont de Nemours & Co., Inc. to Folding Carrier Company, November 5, 1940, U. S. Navy Department, Supply Division to Folding Carrier Corporation, October 19, 1941; Margery Quigley to Folding Carrier Corporation, October 9, 1940, Sylvan N. Goldman Collection, Oklahoma City, Oklahoma.

[19]Description from Folding Carrier Company advertisement of 1939, Sylvan N. Goldman Collection, Oklahoma City, Oklahoma.

[20]"Gerber Baby Food Displays," Sales Bullentin, Gerber Products Company, Fremont, Michigan, November 13, 1948, "Gerber Display Idea," Undated clipping from Sales Management Magazine, Sylvan N. Goldman Collection, Oklahoma City, Oklahoma.

[21]"A Milk Merchandiser for Retail Stores," The Dairy World (December, 1938), p. 60; "Milk Racks for Use in Display Cases," Popular Mechanics, Vol. 106, No. 1 (January, 1939), p. 24.

[22]Description from Folding Carrier Company advertisement of 1942 and 1943, Sylvan N. Goldman Collection, Oklahoma City, Oklahoma.

[23]R. J. Hogan to Folding Carrier Company, August 22, 1942; I. G. Bentley to A. K. Weiss, December 23, 1940; H. R. Springer to Kurt H. Schweitzer, December 8, 1941, Sylvan N. Goldman Collection, Oklahoma City, Oklahoma.

[24]Wallace A. Morse to Folding Carrier Company, January 23, 1942; Ross L. Perryman to Folding Carrier Corporation, August 10, 1942; Lenard H. Campbell, Jr. to Sylvan N. Goldman, January 4, 1946, Sylvan N. Goldman Collection, Oklahoma City, Oklahoma.

[25]Oklahoma City Times (February 15, 1950), p. 27.

[26]Description from Folding Carrier Company advertisement of 1950, Sylvan N. Goldman Collection, Oklahoma City, Oklahoma.

[27]Descriptions from Folding Carrier Company advertisement of 1939 and 1952; Sylvan N. Goldman Collection, Oklahoma City, Oklahoma;

Sylvan N. Goldman, Interview, Oklahoma City, Oklahoma, April 20, 1974.

[28]Oklahoma City Times (July 9, 1942), p. 4, (March 10, 1944), p. 18.

[29]Supermarket News (September 8, 1952), p. 8; The Daily Oklahoman (September 7, 1952), p. 6; Southern California Grocers Journal (October 3, 1952), p. 4.

[30]"Shopping Cart Ads," Business Week, No. 2318 (February 16, 1974), p. 101.

[31]Information from Folding Carrier Company advertisements of 1952, 1954, 1955, Sylvan N. Goldman Collection, Oklahoma City, Oklahoma.

[32]Arguments were presented in the patent hearings that Goldman's invention was not original as the dump truck and a type of cattle feeder supposedly operated on the same principle, however, the Oklahoma Cityan's attorneys presented sufficient evidence to the contrary that convinced an appeals judge to find in their clients favor.

[33]Walson, et al. v. Heil et al., The U. S. Patent Quarterly (Washington, 1961), Vol. 88, pp. 537-538.

[34]Ibid, pp. 541-542; The Daily Oklahoman (May 22, 1951), p. 6; Sylvan N. Goldman, Interview, Oklahoma City, Oklahoma, April 20, 1974.

[35]The Topeka State Journal (December 22, 1954), p. 1; The Daily Oklahoman (July 14, 1956), p. 6.

[36]Oklahoma City Times (August 24, 1961), p. 1; The Sunday Oklahoman (August 27, 1972), p. 1-B.

[37]The Weekly Turnstile (July 25, 1938), p. 4.

[38]Certificate of membership dated February 17, 1939 in Sylvan N. Goldman Collection, Oklahoma City, Oklahoma.

[39]The Sunday Oklahoman (August 27, 1972), p. 1-B.

[40]Undated newspaper clipping, Sylvan N. Goldman Collection, Oklahoma City, Oklahoma.

[41]The Sipha Store to Folding Carrier Company, April 26, 1952, Sylvan N. Goldman Collection, Oklahoma City, Oklahoma.

CHAPTER VII

MARKETS AND SUPERMARKETS

Seemingly, Sylvan Goldman should have been so busy with his inventions that the management of his grocery chains would have suffered from neglect. Nothing could have been further from reality. Much of the inventor's success could be measured by the extent to which he delegated responsibility for his burgeoning business enterprises thus leaving himself free to direct them all without becoming hopelessly mired in the day to day operation of any single one. While Kurt Schweitzer ably handled the Folding Carrier Company's expansion in the 1940's and 1950's, Goldman's energies were primarily aimed at enlarging and extending the Standard-Humpty Dumpty facilities. His dual roles of inventor and entrepreneur did not prevent the Oklahoma Cityan from assuming a major part in the establishment of the Super Market Institute (S. M. I.), an organization which recognized Goldman's seminal contributions to the food industry revolution by electing him president and choosing his shopping cart as an organizational symbol.

World War II and a resultant shortage of newsprint had forced Goldman to combine Standard and Humpty Dumpty advertising. Although the stores continued as separate corporate entities many of their functions and all of their executive control emanated from one source. Expansion was carried on under the Humpty Dumpty name. The first out of town store bearing the younger chain's designation was opened in Lawton, Oklahoma in 1940; it was the ninth Humpty Dumpty store. Others followed in quick succession as Goldman set the pace for supermarket growth in the state. Before the war's end stores were located in Duncan, Bethany, Ada, Norman, and Midwest City. In addition there were stores in Oklahoma City being opened, renovated, and enlarged. One of these, built in 1942 on North Indiana Street, brought into operation the largest supermarket in the state. The 12,500 square foot store was completely air conditioned, featured flourescent lighting, and contained its own bakery serving all types of pastries and breads. To keep pace with the many merchandise changes in the stores a new warehouse was acquired in 1941 and two more were leased soon afterward to cope with the new stores' huge volume of sales.[1]

Flexibility and boldness continued to mark Goldman's business operations. In April, 1945 he purchased a meat packing plant in Marlow, Oklahoma which was destroyed by fire five months later. Undaunted, the Hill Packing Company was acquired the next year to supply the chains with meat. During these war years ration stamps constituted a continual problem for self-service stores as long lines formed at checkstands while clerks fumbled with the bits of paper. To speed up the process Goldman devised checkstands on wheels which could be hurried into place to relieve congestion at the fixed checkout points. Naturally Goldman turned the idea over to the Folding Carrier Company which was soon offering SpeeDee Checkstands to its customers.[2] Another innovation employed by Goldman during the war was a series of cooking schools conducted for housewives acquainting them with the hundreds of new products stocked by supermarkets.[3]

By 1946 the Standard and Humpty Dumpty chains were totally committed to the supermarket revolution. The next decade witnessed a continuation of the trend already begun to close the smaller, downtown stores and relocate in the suburbs. Nationally the retail food industry moved in the same direction. Between 1945 and 1958 an increase of 213 per cent in the number of supermarkets was recorded. Over twenty thousand supermarkets were operating by 1958, and their rise in sales volume since the war totalled 637 per cent. This growth of the supermarket industry reflected efforts by both independents and chains to augment the size of store units.[4]

Several factors can be enumerated to explain the supermarket explosion. Some of these might be categorized as external determinants, changes in American society that favored the new food retailing mode. Beginning with the late war years there occurred significant shifts in the distribution of the national income. Of most importance to the growth of supermarkets was the relative gains made by lower and middle income workers at the expense of those in the higher brackets. These increased funds could be expected to show up in food purchases. Not only did more Americans have more to spend but they tended to buy more expensive foods with the major increases in fresh vegetables, fruit, meat, and dairy products. Technological advances also helped alter Americans' shopping habits. Automobiles, whose numbers mounted steadily in the postwar years, enabled customers to carry home larger purchases from supermarkets that were generally located in areas deficient in public transportation service. Using the same line of logic Goldman's grocery cart also accomplished a great deal in influencing larger less frequent purchases. Refrigeration in the home and at the store added to the reduction in the number of shopping excursions. Meat could be stored longer and frozen foods were introduced, thanks to the improvements made over the old style icebox. Naturally the 23.4 per cent population increases recorded between 1930 and 1958 meant more potential food buyers, however, the salient aspect of this demographic statistic lay in the redistribution of middle and upper income families to the suburbs. A general decentralization of retail trade followed in which supermarkets benefited enormously through participation in shopping centers.[5]

While these external factors partially accounted for the dramatic rise of the supermarket ultimately the individual success or failure of a store or chain rested on management policy and perspective. There can be no doubt that Goldman's imaginative leadership consistently provided the impetus for growth. Realizing the need for competent subordinates, he initited a training and promotion policy that insured a supply of responsible personnel. The efficacy of Goldman's efforts in this area became widely known. In 1949 this was illustrated when the Industrial and Business Training Bureau of the University of Texas requested access to the Standard-Humpty Dumpty training files to use in establishing a retail grocers training program.[6]

Goldman perceived the basic problem of supermarket operations--bigness. If stores were growing larger, which they were, and chains were proliferating numerically and geographically, another established fact, then an organization had to be developed to achieve maximum results with a minimum of effort. The job of the top management level was twofold: it must set the goals of the enterprise and translate them in such a way that everyone in authority understands the company's objectives. For the most efficient operation management should mold the organization into a team effort with its members fully cognizant of the chain of command and their chances to propel themselves upward through the chain.[7]

After assuming full control of Standard-Humpty Dumpty in 1946, Goldman set about recruiting men who could make the decisions necessary in directing his organization's expanding activities. He chose William A. Coleman as his executive vice-president in 1948. Coleman had joined the company two years earlier serving in the capacity of general manager. Goldman searched over twelve months before deciding on Coleman who could claim 21 years' background of work in a national food chain. His new employer was impressed with the breadth as well as the length of his experience which included store management, warehousing, financing, and personnel. Goldman's judgment was vindicated by Coleman's contributions to Standard-Humpty Dumpty, the most notable being the installation of the retail balance form of store inventories which created increased control over gross profits while decreasing operating losses. In January, 1955, he assumed the office of president of Standard-Humpty Dumpty.[8]

Taking over some of Coleman's duties after his promotion was a longtime employee of the company, I. R. Moore. In 1934 Moore had started his career in the retail food industry as a part-time worker in a Standard store. He very quickly revealed an aptitude for designing displays and organizing work which was noted by promotion to a assistant store manager. Later he filled the post of superintendent of stores until the Standard and Humpty Dumpty operations were combined and he rose through intermediate steps to become vice-president and director of sales in 1955. At the same time H. Virgil Sturkie, formerly the retail operations manager was elected a vice-president of the company. He had advanced upward from position to position since beginning as an apprentice meat man in Goldman's original Oklahoma City store.[9]

These three men, Coleman, Moore, and Sturkie, and their careers with Standard-Humpty Dumpty exemplified Goldman's personnel and promotion policy. He believed that advancement should be encouraged from within the organization if the man was qualified for the position; if not, the head of the company must look elsewhere to bring in the required talent. Goldman's predileciton for promoting company men was based on something rather more substantial than sentiment. Beginning in 1948 he inaugurated a regular series of training programs covering every phase of supermarket activities and eventually extending to all levels of employees and management. A special training school was established and periodic refresher courses as well as initial instruction were mandatory. The curriculum was practical and serious with courses continuing for several weeks and classes as lengthy as four hours were conducted by full time training supervisors or company executives. All of those attending sessions received regular wages for their participation which took place during working hours.[10] In 1950 Goldman evidenced his growing concern for the basic principles of human relations by starting a series fo conferences for supervisors, store and department managers. Each participant in the conferences, which were limited to ten participants for the five two-hour sessions, brought a personal case history to discuss with the group. After analyzing the problem the group attempted to derive solutions based on the mutual rights involved in contacts among people. Goldman believed that the entire store group would reflect the attitudes of its management staff thus that staff should be the right catalytic agents to produce a contented and efficient store.[11]

A 1963 study of supermarket operations suggested that very few retail grocery stores accurately measure the performance of their employees. Fewer still, the researcher indicated, possessed any but the haziest notion of how to motivate personnel to excel at their jobs. Prior to the introduction of unemployment compensation, limitations on arbitrary discharge, and greater employment mobility, the standard method of motivation was essentially negative and self-directed. Employees were either warned to perform adequately on pain of losing their positions or exhorted to work for the employer. Under this sort of arrangement wages were reduced to payment for hours spent on the job. "Wages recruit people, but applause motivates them." Salary checks and fringe benefits could not motivate performance because they were rewards enjoyed off the job. Applause or achievement recognition, was a reward tied into performance. Interest and morals induced better performance; applause induced morals and interest.[12]

Goldman understood this dictum and followed its teaching. He constantly tried to instill interest in the work of Standard-Humpty Dumpty. One of the most effective means he found to accomplish this objective was to establish goals through competition. Each Christmas season heralded a renewal of sales contests with cash and gift prizes to the winners. In the autumn Standard-Humpty Dumpty's Circus of Values contest featured efforts by individual stores to outdo each other's circus decorations. The top prize awarded the winning store was $1,000 based on percentage sales increases. On a less dramatic but extremely successful scale female checkers at various stores were regularly given orchids in recognition for following correct procedures and maintaining low cash error figures.[13] Research by investigators has concluded that such recognition creates tremendous morale boosts and that the tangible rewards are of secondary concern to the participants in the contest.[14]

Current management studies have emphasized the fundamental necessity of not formulating policy in a vacuum ignoring the human element. A manager must communicate to his employees a sincere belief that their jobs are important and that they are interested in them as persons. Workers should be informed about company policy and plans and have a chance to express an opinion on them.[15] Goldman obeyed all these rules in conducting Standard-Humpty Dumpty business affairs. Probably the chief organ of communication between employer and employee was the Super Marketer. Goldman authorized its inception in 1947 as a mimeographed newspaper filled with personal notes about company personnel and short news items concerning the grocery business. Within two years the monthly publication was printed on rag paper with photographs. Contests, training classes, editorials, and informative articles on technical aspects of the industry stimulated interest in the company. In 1951 the newspaper informed its readers that questionaires were being sent to each employee's home. Anonymous replies to queries about Standard-Humpty Dumpty management were requested. After the survey's findings were compiled meetings were held to discuss the problems shown in the results and suggest remedies.[16]

Through such practical concern for the rank and file of the organization Goldman retained an efficient "team" spirit that aided in Standard-Humpty Dumpty's tremendous growth during the postwar years. By the middle 1950's the chain totalled 33 stores. None of the openings, which were all attended by appropriate and well publicized formalities, gave Goldman any greater personal satisfaction than the Ardmore store built in 1956. Four years earlier a Humpty Dumpty store had been opened in Tulsa which had symbolically erased the memory of the 1929 setback. Now, however, Goldman was allowed an opportunity to return to his boyhood surrounding as an eminently successful businessman. The details of the Ardmore store's opening derived an equally significant meaning as a classic example of the supermarketing art.

Size alone rendered the new enterprise impressive. Eighteen thousand square feet provided ample operating room for the store's 30 full time employees and 51 part-time workers. The building was surrounded by lighted concrete parking space for 500 cars. Inside, the edifice fulfilled the exterior's promise. Pastel shades of paint covered the walls while the floor which would bear heavy traffic was rubber-tiled. The aisles separating the shelves of food products were wide enough for three shopping carts to pass simultaneously, pushed by customers enjoying the air-conditioning, piped in music, and fluorescent lighting. In the interest of speedy service the store was equipped with the latest technological advances. The checking stands featured electronic counters operated mechanically within electric eye; they stopped each purchased item automatically before the checker rang it up on the cash register. A final belt carried the groceries to the sack boy who placed the filled sacks in a tagged cart from which he later unloaded into the customer's car as it was driven by the store front. Check cashing services were handled by special booths which kept the checkout lines from becoming clogged while electronic doors swung open automatically for those leaving the store.

The Humpty Dumpty unit's offerings of merchandise also reflected the latest supermarket innovations. The meat, produce, beverage, milk, and bread compartments were completely stocked from the rear. The proliferation of products included nonfood as well as edible items. A complete line of kitchen and housewares were stacked cheek by jowl with an amazing variety of foodstuffs including 48 counter feet of diatetic foods, 210 feet of candy, pastries, ice cream, pet foods, and frozen foods.[17]

Goldman's mother attended the Ardmore opening as she had all the previous store inaugurations. She must have contemplated the vast differences between her son's ultra-modern supermarket and the frontier groceries of her own earlier Oklahoma Territory experience. Gone were the bulk foods, crackers and pickles by the barrel, sugar and flour in 25 pound sacks. No longer present were the slabs of meat waiting for the butcher's knife to carve the customer's desired cuts or the glassed-in counters containing the small assortment of foods which the grocery clerk removed upon request. Gone also was the dimly lighted, fly-infested, hot in the summer and cold in the winter store interiors. The contrast of old and new constituted a true revolution in the retail food industry.

Viewing Goldman's Humpty Dumpty opening from a different vantage point, however, a definite connection with the frontier past might be discerned. In many ways the supermarket completed a circle in the history of American consumer buying habits. The centers of retail business and social life in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries were the village store and the trading post. They drew people from wide areas who regarded their presence in the community as a blessing. The trader or storekeeper never bothered with advertising and viewed his customers' search for items among his myriad stacks of merchandise with complete equanimity, secure in the knowledge that his selection was the only one in town. For rural Americans journeying to the general store was a festive occasion during which they encountered neighbors, friends, and one stop shopping. The supermarket's mixed lines of groceries,and nonfood items plus the flamboyant atmosphere created by advertising and store merchandising have reawakened a traditional American buying pattern.[18]

The initial advertisement for the Ardmore store opening in 1956 epitomized Goldman's merchandising genius. He purchased a full two-page section of the local newspaper to ballyhoo the supermarket's wares. Among the enticements listed were gum, cotton candy, and balloons for children accompanied by their parents who could themselves claim free cigars and cigarettes, coffee and donuts, orchids and plants. Circus rides were available with ever $2.50 purchase which might include specially priced women's hosiery, woolen comforters, electric frying pans, and chocolate covered cherries. No where in the advertisement was mention of groceries made.[19]

Goldman firmly grasped the ultimate goal of his stores, the selling of products to shoppers. Merchandising meant making certain that the goods were presented in an effective manner, and for the supermarket era this has often been equated with sensational advertising. Mass displays have become proven psychological inducements to buy various items. Goldman utilized the concept on a grand scale, sometimes with surprising results. One of the wartime shortages that troubled Oklahoma housewives was laundry soap. Near the end of the fighting in 1945, Standard-Humpty Dumpty obtained a large supply of soap and it was decided to offer the long unavailable commodity through a newpaper coupon advertisement. No one anticipated the fervor with which the Oklahoma City women would respond. In their passion to obtain the means for maintaining clean households they bought every issue of the newspaper containing the coupon and then bombarded newsboys for more copies. Later editions did not carry the special offer and hundreds were disappointed until they were reassured the following day that the supply of soap was not exhausted at all the chain's stores.[20]

On another occasion Goldman advertised a giant breakfast cereal sale in a unique manner. To attract more than passing notice an entire box car, filled with cereal, was positioned in front of a Humpty Dumpty store. In 1955 a similar idea was employed to publicize the opening of a new chain unit in a shopping center when an oversized, 15 foot high display appeared in the parking area labelled "the world's largest shopping cart." Naturally the huge replica, loaded with groceries bore a prominent sign indicating its manufacturer the Folding Carrier Company. There seemed to be no limit to the possibilities of selling by size. A national dairy products firm was commissioned to process what was billed as the world's largest cheese, a circular, five foot high speciman.[21]

Despite the magnitude of these merchandising devices they could not compete with Humpty Dumpty's next promotional endeavor. On

September 13, 1958 approximately 62,500 Oklahomans sat in the University of Oklahoma's Owens Stadium at Norman and watched a professional football game. The event, publicized as the "Grocery Bowl," was attended only by those who had accumulated the required totals of cash register receipts from Goldman's chain. An unexpected repercussion occurred when a member of the Oklahoma House of Representatives, Tom Stevens of Shawnee, charged the Humpty Dumpty stores with unlawfully utilizing state-owned facilities. When questioned about the accusation Roscoe Cate, financial vice-president at the University of Oklahoma, said that the decision to lease the stadium had been made by the school's regents. They had accepted $7,000 as a fee of which $1,000 went into the stadium's operating fund. The remaining $6,000 was actually a gift which was earmarked to purchase a high speed computer for the University Foundation.[22]

The postwar development of the Standard-Humpty Dumpty chain in Oklahoma reflected national supermarket trends in ways other than organization, operation, and management. In the early 1930's virtually all supermarkets were independents, however, the chains began adopting the new merchandising methods pioneered by their single large store competitors in the 1940's while other chains, like Goldman's, were built from one unit. By 1950 approximately 37 per cent of the supermarkets could be categorized as independent single unit operations, a statistic which dropped to 20.7 per cent in 1958. Not only were chains gaining a larger share of the industry, but combinations of chains were forming that further consolidated the multi-unit operations. This horizontal integration or merging of stores and chains was much more apparent than the process of vertical integration taking place concomitantly. If a supermarket chain owned a warehouse and provided its own produce needs or acquired a packing plant to process its own meat requirements then this constituted vertical integration. The obvious benefit of reduction of expense through horizontal and vertical combinations resulted from smoother coordination of the chain's various components.[23]

The Standard-Humpty Dumpty company under Goldman's guidance performed the functions of both vertical and horizontal integration. The Dutch Oven Bakery had supplied the stores with pastries and bread since 1932 while the Goldmans' past wholesaling experience had enabled the chain to move easily in that respect. On January 13, 1951 Goldman purchased the Oklahoma Frozen Food Corporation which gave Standard-Humpty Dumpty an entry into the fastest growing prepared food industry. Later in the same year the Sylvan Drug Company which operated units in Humpty Dumpty stores was organized.[24] By 1955 when Goldman made the decision to join in a merger of grocery chains his own organization was already advantageously integrated.

Charles Allen, Jr., a 53-year-old New York investment banker, engineered the merger that eventually brought Goldman into the eleventh largest grocery chain in the country. He started with the ACF-Brill Company, a corporation that had begun in 1869 making horsecars. In June, 1951, Allen and his associates bought control of the concern for about $5.5 million. At that time the company was manufacturing ten per cent of the buses produced in the United States. In a field dominated by General Motors Corporation business futures were never certain, a fact which led Allen to sell its manufacturing plant in March, 1954. The company then possessed cash assets of nearly $7 million but had no business or marketable product.

Through an intermediary, Marx H. Hausman, two brothers, Nathan W. and John E. Lurie, approached Allen with a proposition. They owned the 60 supermarket Wrigley chain that operated in Detroit and surrounding territory in southern Michigan. Hausman, a semi-retired septuagenarian, had originally conceived the idea that he laid before Allen after having interested the Luries. The trio wanted Allen to erect a corporate structure that would hold together a group of grocery chains. The high volume, low profit margin supermarket business would be amenable to such an increase in size. Allen's researchers revealed that during the first nine months of 1955 over 35 mergers had been effected among supermarket chains. The financier was also attracted by the retail food industry's stability and the high average sales amassed by the Luries' chain.[25]

The first step toward forming the corporate edifice was taken by Allen in July, 1955 when he purchased a 50 per cent interest in Wrigley's Stores, Incorporated. The next month the directors of ACF-Brill and Wrigley's formally merged and agreed to acquire additional supermarket chains. On the first of November Standard-Humpty Dumpty's 33 stores joined Big Bear Markets of Michigan, Incorporated who controlled 33 stores, in merging with Wrigley's and ACF-Brill to form ACF-Wrigley, Incorporated. Oklahoma Frozen Food and the Dutch Oven Baking Company, both controlled by Goldman, also became integral parts of the new corporate entity.[26]

Goldman received 415,000 shares of ACF-Wrigley stock and $5 million for bringing has assets into the corporation. He simultaneously assumed the duties of ACF-Wrigley president and became a member of the company's board of directors. Nathan Lurie chaired the board and his brother filled the position of executive vice-president. Norman Hirschfield, president of S.N.G. Industries, Goldman's Oklahoma holding company, since 1954 and an old friend of Charles Allen, was elected financial vice-president.[27]

The new enterprise experienced remarkable growth during its first six months in business. Two additional chains were brought under Wrigley control Foodtown, Incorporated of Cleveland, Ohio and Fred P. Rapp, Incorporated, St. Louis, Missouri, were purchased in February and June, 1956, respectively. These acquisitions raised the number of supermarkets to 148 and helped establish an annual sales rate in excess of $300,200,000 making ACF-Wrigley the nation's tenth largest food chain. Headquarters for the augmented corporation was Oklahoma City where offices and a refrigerated warehouse occupied 144,000 square feet of floor space. Goldman continued as president until January 28, 1958 when he stepped down to become chairman of the board; Hirschfield was promoted to the presidency while William Coleman, another old Goldman associate was elected executive vice-president. The rise of these former Standard-Humpty Dumpty men was a tribute to Goldman's abilities as a developer of executive talent.[28]

The corporation expanded in the years of Goldman's presidency and board chairmanship. Its phenomenal success was largely due to the wealth of experience from which the company could draw. The Luries and Goldman had been members of the Super Market Institute since that organization's inception and the chains acquired by them were operated by others with similarly wide but common backgrounds. The chief acquisition made after 1956 was the 11-store Bettendorf chain of St.

Louis, Missouri. Further expansion came as a result of enlarging existing member chains. ACF-Wrigley consciously tried to open markets in shopping centers which the board was convinced were the best prospects for high average sales.[29]

In December, 1959 Goldman sold his interests in the prosperous ACF-Wrigley concern and soon after retired from the grocery business altogether. He was sixty-one years old and tired of the continual demands on his time and energies. The remainder of his business career was to prove more profitable than these exciting and extremely competitive decades in the grocery and supermarket industry. He had played the role of innovator in every aspect of the retail trade and would continue to utilize the merchandising techniques and knowledge of human behavior in his second career. Despite the concentrated effort expended in building a supermarket empire Goldman's contribution to the industry stretched beyond the boundaries of Oklahoma. His membership in national organizations and attention to local civic responsibilities combined to add a not inconsiderable dimension to his personal business career.

FOOTNOTES

[1]Goldman, "Progress Through Service," Sylvan N. Goldman Collection, Oklahoma City, Oklahoma.

[2]Description from Folding Carrier Company advertisement of 1944, Sylvan N. Goldman Collection, Oklahoma City, Oklahoma.

[3]Goldman, "Progress Through Service," Sylvan N. Goldman Collection, Oklahoma City, Oklahoma.

[4]Charvat, Supermarketing, pp. 28-29.

[5]Ibid, pp. 30-46; "The Lush New Suburban Market," Fortune, Vol. XLV111, No. 5 (November, 1953), pp. 131-132.

[6]James R. D. Eddy to Sylvan N. Goldman, July 26, 1949, Sylvan N. Goldman Collection, Oklahoma City, Oklahoma.

[7]Charvat, Supermarketing, pp. 228-229; Sylvan N. Goldman, Interview, Oklahoma City, Oklahoma, February 26, 1974.

[8]Goldman, "Progress Through Service," Sylvan N. Goldman Collection, Oklahoma City, Oklahoma.

[9]Ibid.

[10]Super Marketer (September 27, 1948), p. 1; (October, 1949), p. 1.

[11]Ibid. (November, 1950), p. 1.

[12]Edward M. Harwell, Checkout Management (New York, 1963), p. 126.

[13]Super Marketer (September, 1951), pp. 1, 6; (December, 1950), p.1.

[14]Harwell, Checkout Management, pp. 126-128.

[15]Ibid., pp. 134-140; Charvat, Supermarketing, pp. 230-231.

[16]Super Marketer (September, 1951), p. 1.

[17]The Daily Ardmoreite (April 8, 1956), p. 7.

[18]Zimmerman, The Super Market: A Revolution in Distribution, p. 19.

[19]The Daily Ardmoreite (April 8, 1 56), pp. 8-9.

[20]The Daily Oklahoman (March 9, 1945), p. 7.

[21]Pictures and description of these promotional materials in Sylvan N. Goldman Collection, Oklahoma City, Oklahoma.

[22]The Daily Oklahoman (August 3, 1958), p. 9; The Oklahoma City Britton North Star (September 18, 1958), p. 1.

[23]Charvat, Supermarketing, pp. 168-169.

[24]Goldman, "Progress Through Service," Sylvan N. Goldman Collection, Oklahoma City, Oklahoma; The Sunday Oklahoman (November 12, 1967), p. 13.

[25]"Behind ACF's Big Switch," Business Week, No. 1330 (May 19, 1956), pp. 195-197; "Report on ACF-Wrigley Stores, Inc., et al.", Dunn & Bradstreet, Inc., January 23, 1956, Sylvan N. Goldman Collection, Oklahoma City, Oklahoma.

[26]"Agreement of Merger, dated November 1, 1955...," Sylvan N. Goldman Collection, Oklahoma City, Oklahoma.

[27]ACF-Wrigley Stores, Report for Fiscal Period Ended June 30, 1956, pp. 1, 5. 12; ACF-Wrigley Stores, Inc., Annual Report for Fiscal Year Ended June 28, 1958, pp. 1-3, Sylvan N. Goldman Collection, Oklahoma City, Oklahoma.

[28]Ibid.

[29]Ibid.; Business Week, "Behind ACF-Brill s Big Switch," p. 197; Sylvan N. Goldman, Interview, Oklahoma City, Oklahoma, April 22, 1974.

CHAPTER VII

THE SUPER MARKET INSTITUTE

The retail food industry was irrevocably altered by the advent of the supermarket. Goldman and others like him across the nation worked independently in the late 1920's and early 1930's in developing their stores and chains of markets. As the economy of the United States grew ever more complex, their efforts proved increasingly difficult. Engaged in a revolutionary period of the industry's history, it became obvious that the marriage of technology and entrepreneurship which had fostered the supermarket needed some degree of central direction. Goldman was to play a dynamic role in the organization that strove to structure the new science of supermarketing in an orderly fashion.

Undoubtably the Super Market Institute played a seminal role in the amazing success of the new merchandising concepts. By 1936 there were approximately 1,200 supermarkets scattered across the country. Although all were components of a significant movement toward change in the food industry none possessed an awareness of the others. Many of them introduced new selling ideas in their own stores without realizing that the same thing was occurring elsewhere. Ironically, the man who first recognized the need for an organization which would apply cohesive force to the industry was not himself directly engaged in the retail food business. M. M. Zimmerman, the chief founder of the Super Market Institute, was a writer. He had ample opportunity to follow the developing trends in food distribution beginning in 1914, when, as a staff writer for Printer's Ink he authored a series of articles on chain stores. In 1931 his second series on the same subject was published in book form. The thrust of his study suggested that the voluntary movement by independents constituted the best means of competing with the chains.[1]

Five years later Zimmerman wrote a third series of articles analyzing the techniques of the supermarkets. The research for the articles convinced the journalist that the new markets composed a separate and unique phenomenon and deserved their own news organ, Super Market Merchandising, which he founded in November, 1936. With the aid of Zimmerman's trade magazine supermarket operators began communicating with one another. The result of several months' public exposure of their common problems and goals was a meeting on May 11, 1937 in the editor's New York office. A twenty-three-man organizational committee was set up to call a national convention. In July Zimmerman's journal announced the SupermMarket Institute convention to be held during September in New York City. The meeting would feature speakers on mass distribution trends and problems as well as organizing the proposed association.[2]

The charter of the Super Market Institute (SMI) revealed that the organization would not only establish and maintain a cooperative union among owners and operators but would serve as a central clearinghouse for research and data concerning the industry. When the convention was called to order in New York's Astor Hotel on September 27, 1937, about one thousand persons were present. Most of this number were representing manufacturers and processors from other sectors of the food distribution scene. Among those manufacturers who set up display booths was Goldman's own Folding Carrier Corporation. The invention that would contribute so much to the ultimate form that grocery stores would assume in the coming years, the shopping cart, attracted a great deal of attention from the conventioneers.[3] Only 124 actual supermarket operators attended the meeting; Goldman was among them. He listened to William H. Albers, president of Albers Super Markets, Incorporated of Cincinnati, Ohio, deliver a speech emphasizing the importance of supermarket owners adopting a policy of promoting naaionally advertized brands. He pointed out the need to build customer and manufacturer confidence by offering known brands at reasonable prices, something the chain stores had failed to cccomplish. Albers realized the primary importance of demonstrating that the budding supermarket industry would be a responsible business.[4]

The convention agreed with Alber's reasoning and showed the Ohioan their approval by electing him the Institute's first president. Zimmerman became the SMI executive secretary and Goldman was chosen as one of eight directors at large who supplemented the list of six regional directors. The next year's convention met in Chicago. Albers was reelected president and Goldman once again was picked to fill a director's post. The major portion of the conclave's attention was claimed by the "Clinic of the Super Market" which became a mainstay of all future conventions. This program consisted of sessions on how to operate a supermarket. Most of the speakers utilized film slides to illustrate their practical presentation on widely varied subjects such as Goldman's "The Produce Department on a Self-Service

Basis--Is It Practical and Profitable."[5] His article was later condensed and published as part of a series by the Americna Institute of Food Distribution of New York.[6]

Goldman never missed a convention during the war years. His wife accompanied him to the 1939 meeting in Cincinnati and served on the entertainment committee.[7] Diversion from the alarming war news from Europe was welcomed. The Super Market Institute, recalling the accusations of profiteering hurled at some branches of the food industry during World War I, discussed the possible effects of the European conflict on the 1940's grocery market. A resolution was passed condemning profiteering and pledging to "do everything within our power... to bring foods to the ultimate consumer at the lowest cost."[8] Also scheduled on the 1939 agenda was a panel discussion forecasting supermarket trends for the coming year. Goldman predicted a continued prosperity if the United States stayed out of the war. He also heralded the demise of the old style supermarket saying "that the day is past when a large, unattractive garage building can be used for a food market where customers can be drawn solely on price appeal." He did not discount the importance of low prices, however, he noted the chain competition could meet the supermarkets' prices thus other features such as ample parking facilities and attractively designed interiors would be required to outdraw the multi-unit operations.[9]

By the date of the 1940 convention the threat of American involvement in the war seemed less likely. At any rate the bulk of the program was devoted to operational studies. Again Goldman was chosen to participate; his topic concerned "The Outlook for Super Market

Expansion During the Coming Year." The general tenor of his and other speakers' remarks was optimistic.[10] The next four conventions were conducted in a war atmosphere. They were notable for the government participation in the programs. The Office of Price Administration, the President, and various other federal officials and agencies briefed the delegates on food rationing and allocations.[11] Goldman was asked to serve on the Oklahoma state committee of the Food Distribution Administration in 1943 and he added that duty to his lengthening list of wartime responsibilities.[12]

Some 600 operators attended the 1944 SMI meeting and cast their votes for Goldman to fill one of the vice-presidency vacancies.[13] He served in that capacity until 1950. The postwar conventions were jubilant affairs with the number of delegates sharply increasing at each conclave. The organization had outgrown its temporary offices in the Super Market Publishing Company and now warranted a full time permanent staff with new accommodations in Chicago. The Institute invited Don Parsons to become SMI's executive director. Parsons accepted in October, 1949 bringing a wealth of background experience to the position. He had worked as promotion manager for McCall's Magazine and as an officer of the Federal Advertising Agency, employments that had made him entirely familiar with the national problems of merchandising Within five years he headed a staff of twenty-five who carried on the necessary administrative work of the Institute while engaged in their major task of research.[14]

Goldman's reelection as vice-president in 1948 invested him with a unique honor. Since he was then serving as vice-president of the National Association of Food Chains, the Oklahoma merchant became the only person to serve in both capacities simultaneously.[15] The twelfth annual SMI convention proved to be the vice-president's most harrowing; he served as its general chairman. The success of the Chicago meeting led the delegates to pick him for the same job for the next year.[16] Goldman must have wondered, half seriously, if the Institute's action in choosing its seal two years before had been part of a "softening up" process to obligate his assumption of these onerous tasks. The SMI device consisted of a circular illustration with "SUPER MARKET INSTITUTE--That there may be more for all" inscribed around it. The main figure in the illustration was unmistakably a shopping cart loaded with groceries.[17]

If Goldman did harbor any suspicious, which was unlikely, concerning his consecutive chairmanships, they were dissipated at the 1951 Chicago convention. The Standard-Humpty Dumpty chief executive became president of the Super Market Institute, a position to which he was reelected a year later.[18] His tenure was notable in many respects, not the least of which was the advent of the Korean War and its effect on the entire food industry. The Asian struggle did not divert the Institute from inaugurating several new programs which greatly expanded its scope of operations. Finally, the Goldman presidency dealt with government officialdom in an effort to create a closer harmony between Washington and the food industry.

Almost ten years before the outbreak of the Korean War, President Roosevelt had established the Office of Price Administration and Civilian Supply (OPA). This agency, headed by Lion Henderson, was enjoined to guard against inflation brought about by World War II. Henderson's efforts to hold the line had become hopeless by early 1942 because he lacked any real authority. Congress responded to FDR's plea for legislation to correct this deficiency with the Emergency Price Control Act of 1942. Henderson, the Price Adminstrator, was empowered to fix prices and rents in special areas and award subsidies to producers who would agree to stabilize their prixes. The OPA issued a General Maximum Price Regulation which was aimed at keeping prices at the March, 1942 level. A large loophole in the freeze developed as food prices rose 11 per cent that year. Once again Roosevelt asked Congress for help and received it in the form of the Anti-Inflation Act of October 2, 1942, giving the president authority to stabilize wages and prices at a definite level. There was considerable consternation in many quarters of the economy but the inflationary spiral slowed to a 1.5 per cent of living raise between the spring of 1943 and the end of the war in 1945.

After the war President Truman wanted to maintain the OPA in operation. However, Congress contemplated ending the agency for several months before passing a very weak Price Control bill which the chief executive angrily vetoed. A few days later on July 1, all price controls ceased and the cost of living leaped ahead. The stopgap law initiated months later was allowed to expire and inflation continued although the economy exhibited a general prosperity until the fall of 1949 and the early part of 1950 quickly escalated beyond a mere police action and Truman imposed wages and prices controls. The Office of Price Stabilization (OPS) assumed virtually the same responsibilities of the defunct OPA.

The membership of the Super Market Institute was directly affected by every move the new agency might propose. An emergency meeting of the Institute was called in August, 1950 to discuss the problems of doing business during wartime. They realized the necessity for price stablizations to control inflation and passed resolutions favoring them. To keep an eye on the precise nature of any governmental action a special Washington counsel, David Ginsburg, was appointed by the Institute's board of directors in December, 1950 to represent SMI interests. At the same time a Washington news reporting service was retained which communicated all pertinent data to Chicago by teletype. The biggest problem obstructing effective action lay in the difficulty of gaining a clear expression of the Institute's membership. Questionaires had been issued asking for members' opinions but the situation shifted so rapidly in the nation's capital that SMI workers there were frequently forced to rely on their own initiative.[20]

The problem of a united stand regarding price ceiling was acute. For example the meat prices suggested by OPS simply would not allow a margin of profit for grocery stores in some areas of the country while in others the level was so high that it was not feasible. In September, 1951, OPS regulations allowed retailers to charge $1.19 for sirloin steak, however, Oklahoma City area housewives would probably not pay higher that 98 cents. From the government's viewpoint it seemed suspicious when SMI and other retail associations asked for widely varying price markups. Ginsburg reported to the SMI directors that their quick action in asking for a general price freeze in 1949 when OPS was created had helped allay fears in that government agency that the supermarkets operators were self-seeking.[21]

Price Stabilizer Michael V. Disalle had met with the SMI Defense Committee in February of 1951. Headed by Goldman, the committee presented DiSalle with a special report detailing several steps it deemed necessary to obtain relief for supermarket operators squeezed by the freeze order issued January 26, 1951. On behalf of the Insitute Goldman expresses their acceptance of obtaining quick relief from inflationary pressure but now without establishing complete permanent regulations.[22]

Considerable friction developed between the OPA and the Institute in the last half of 1951 and continued until the latter part of 1952 when controls were loosened and finally dropped. SMI's Washington representative, Ginsburg, enjoyed some success on the vital issue of convincing the OPS that up-to-date statistics should be used in setting price levels. Much of the supermarket operators' chagrin in the face of OPS rulings emanated from the fact that the price regulations were adjusted according to 1944 data. Ginsburg insisted on reminding OPA officials that such rulings could only be regarded as highly temporary and that new Grocery Margin Survey ought to be made subject to technical review by the Institute and other retail business groups.[23] Upon leaving office in May, 1953, Goldman reflected on the complicated struggle to reach workable agreements in price stabilizations and concluded that they had served the useful but temporary psychological purpose of allaying fears of shortages, however, he was convinced they were no longer needed "and will not be again in the foreseeable future."[24]

At one point in the often rancorous SMI-OPS dialogue the two entities, representing private enterprise and government, had reached an amiable accord. Goldman, while presiding over the 1952 Institute convention in Cleveland, Ohio, received a telegram from his Humpty

Dumpty executive vice-president, William Coleman. On the morning of May 15 Goldman shared its contents with the assembled SMI delegates. Colemnn's message requested that they take action to alleviate the potato shortage. Black marketeers had cornered the supply of potatoes and were forcing grocers to pay extra for normal deliveries and refusing to supply them at all unless they agreed to purchase quantities of high-priced onions. As a result food retailers were charging as much as $1.50 for a 10-pound sack of white table stock potatoes although the official OPS ceiling was only 80 cents.[25]

The Institute passed a condemnatory resolution less than an hour after listening to Goldman's reading. They were "of the opinion that the time for drastic measures to halt this despoiling of the public had arrived." The resolution recommended that SMI members together with all other food retailers try to persuade the public to halt or at least curtail its potato purchases and substitute alternate foods such as rice and macaroni. This action, the Institute believed, would wreck the profiteers' plot and stabilize both the price and distribution of available supplies until the temporary shortage of potatoes ended with the harvesting of the new crop.[26]

All three national wire services carried the news of the resolution. Ellis Arnall, the new director of OPS, commended the maneuver and urged American housewives to boycott potatoes. He denied rumors that his office intended to lift controls over the vegetables which he said were in short supply due to a reduction in planting the previous year.[27] The New York Office of Price Stabilization assumed an active role in stopping the potato profiteers. Seventeen investigators, headquartered at Utica, were assigned to one part of the state. Their probe uncovered complaints by retailers that they had been forced to buy poor quality lettuce and other unwanted produce in order to purchase scarce potatoes. In Auburn, New York restaurant owners admitted buying seed potatoes which were not covered by federal price controls but were prohibited for use other than for planting by national and state law.[28]

Before the furor had abated with the deliveries of the 1952 crop of potatoes the SMI-inspired boycott had stirred up a general debate on the federal farm program. Goldman and the other Institute leaders could congratulate themselves on a highly successful publicity campaign which had enhanced the supermarket operators' national image and performed a genuine public service.

Of more enduring importance to the Institute than his role in the price stabilization controversy was Goldman's substantive contributions to SMI's long range research programs. This facet of the supermarket organization's activities loomed as the best answer to the growing need for a reliable guide to the industry's increasingly complex future. Before his election as president Goldman had participated along with the chiefs of 296 other comapnies in answering questionaires as part of an SMI survey. The forms, sent out in February, 1951, were returned by nearly two-thirds of the Institute's membership. A total of 4,199 stores with a combined 1950 sales volume of $2,613,200,000 were represented in the findings. Despite the fact that the nation's five biggest food chains did not belong to the Super Market Institute the survey provided a fairly valid record of the industry at midcentury.[29]

Probably the most striking aspect of the survey report was embodied in the expansion figures. Over a four year period SMI members had built 37 per cent of the 1950 aggregate of stores. In addition another 38 per cent of existing units had undergone major remodeling. Even more impressive was the projection for the future; in 1951 the number of new supermarkets was anticipated to increase by 21 per cent with substantial improvements scheduled for an additional eight per cent. The average sales volume of individual units had risen in 1950 to approximately $900,000. This enlargement convinced SMI analysts to revise the definition of a supermarket in regard to minimum sales volume from the 1937 figure of $250,000 to $500,000 a year. By this definition 54 per cent of the SMI stores could be classified as supermarkets. These units illustrated the efficiency of larger operations by garnering 81 per cent of the total SMI member sales.[30]

The only disquieting statistic recorded by the survey dealt with profits. The trend toward higher store operating expenses had continued in 1950. Coupled with higher taxes and price stabilization problems over three-fourths of the companies showed greater overhead expenses especially in the area of salaries. Consequently less than half of the SMI member stores revealed higher net profit figures while a large minority, 44 per cent, suffered reductions. Since the food industry's overall profit margin consistently measured only 1.5 to 2 per cent these statistics seemed particularly ominous.[31]

Goldman once remarked that "making a living selling groceries was a tough, technical business."[32] This knowledge prompted much of his labor as SMI president from 1951 to 1953. For several years prior to Goldman's election the Super Market Institute had held mid-year discussion meetings to supplement the annual conventions. At the December, 1951 Hollywood, Florida meeting Goldman advanced two proposals for the board of directors discussion and consideration. The first of these envisioned a continuing series of area meetings devoted to the practical aspects of supermarket operations. The other involved an expenditure of SMI funds for a scientific study by competent management engineers on productivity per-man-hour.[33]

A former Institute president, Claude Edwards had outlined a comprehensive program and philosophy of operation at an earlier discussion meeting in 1949. The Korean War and the subsequent preoccupation with Washington activities prevented the SMI membership from acting on Edwards's ideas. Goldman had taken note of SMI's budgetary balance which showed a surplus of over $255,000 in June, 1951, and had concluded that the money should be utilized.[34] That plus factor added to the apparent stability of the economy created a favorable climate for the organization to embark on new programs.

In his official proposal Goldman revealed his personal theories on the role of the Super Market Institute. A trade association such as SMI, he argued, had a primary obligation to help its members earn a fair profit on their operations. However, a corollary responsibility existed for the Institute, to cooperate with agriculture, manufacturers, and processors in aiding the American community to obtain a greater participation "in the good things of life." The Oklahoma merchant then quoted extensively from the work of Harvard University economist Sumner Slichter on the influence of special-interest groups. Slichter viewed such combinations as trade unions and farmers, the aged and veterans, as basically narrow and selfish thus unable to draw much support outside their own groups. The economist also criticized pressure groups for failing to develop influential leaders of thought;

they lacked a disinterested viewpoint and deep concern for the welfare of those outside their own coteries.[35]

Goldman interpreted these observations to dictate a change in SMI policy away from day-to-day problem solving to a broader community service philosophy. Accordingly he offered his two projects. He noted the inability of the majority of SMI members to support the wide employment of specialists nor could they afford to send representatives long distances to conferences of the specialized instruction type. To fulfill the need for such consultative resources a regular schedule of regional managers meetings ought to be inaugurated and sponsored by the Institute twice a year in the spring and in the fall. The nation would be divided into four regional areas; Pacific and Mountain, Central, Southern, and Eastern, for the two or three day programs.

The meetings would be devoted to specialized subjects, the first of which, Goldman suggested, could be fresh fruits and vegetables. Since operating and merchandising problems on produce differed materially from section to section the program and agenda would have to be tailored to each local area. The responsibility for the meetings would be assumed by the regional directors who would arrange for panels, speakers, and demonstrations. The cost of the project need not be high since delegates would pay their own expenses.[36]

Although the SMI board of directors approved of Goldman's proposal it discussed the concept at some length. Several board members expressed misgivings about the responsibility for programming, claiming that they would hesitate to assume such a duty. Goldman mentioned the possibility that some of the Institute's permanent staff could arrange the meetings, however, Don Parsons, the executive director explained his people were already overloaded. The SMI president then revealed that he had previously experimented with programming by using his own company specialists who had turned out a complete presentation in a week's time. Another objection was raised by a member who was fearful that the meetings would duplicate and interfere with similar NAFC (National Association of Food Chains) clinics. Goldman countered this objection by pointing out that over fifty per cent of SMI's membership were single unit operators and thus could not attend NAFC activities. He also argued that the envisioned SMI meeting would go into much greater detail than NAFC clinics and would involve men who were directly connected with the daily workings of the meeting topics. In the face of their president's obvious preparations to answer all objections the board voted unanimously to accept Goldman's proposal.[37]

Characteristically Goldman played a large part in developing the first round of regional meetings on produce. Just as he always insisted on his own company store managers demonstrating techniques to workers, Goldman demonstrated the efficacy of his own proposal by helping with its practical application. At the second meeting held in Oklahoma City four of the twelve program committeemen, including the chairman were Standard-Humpty Dumpty executives. The program itself was an epitome of pragmatism covering the entire process of produce merchandising from ordering to displaying the fresh fruits and vegetables.[38] The regional meeting became a standard part of the Super Market Institute's programming.

Goldman's second recommendation to the 1951 board of directors meeting aimed at a piece of pure scientific research. From SMI's own questionnaire poll the future rapid expansion of the supermarket industry was already well known. Reports from many sections of the nation indicated that this expansion had begun to create an intensely competitive situation. For some companies the only sales gains were coming through the addition of new units while the volume of individual markets was stationary or dropping. The question of overexpansion was openly discussed by some operators. Goldman proposed that the Institute hire an outside firm of management consultants and engineers to study the problem of increasing production per-man-hour in an effort to lessen the rise in the cost of doing business.

The study, as Goldman planned it, would go beyond a mere statistical approach; professional engineers would be required to do field work at the store level. Their findings in turn would not constitute a list of minor techniques and devices such as the placement of a roll of Scotch Tape on the stocking truck to repair torn labels. Instead the end product of the study would be the development of a "Labor Expense Control Manual" for each of several types of organizations studied. Goldman estimated the probable cost might be about $50,000. He proposed an initial investment of $10,000 to finance an exploratory study which would be assigned to an outside firm of management consultant engineers. If their findings justified it, then an additional sum would be appropriated to complete the study.

In contrast to his first proposal the SMI president's suggested research project met with virtually unqualified approval. The board actually exceeded Goldman's initial funding request by suggesting that the $50,000 figure should not become a limiting factor in view of the importance of the proposed study. Once again his board members discovered that their chairman had done his homework. Goldman revealed that he had already been in contact with two management consultant companies; Booz, allen & Hamilton of Chicago and Dunlap & Associates of New York, which had submitted estimates on the cost of the study at approximately $50,000. He realized along with the board that after the project was started additional money would probably be necessary. The proposal was enthusiastically endorsed by a unanimous vote.[39]

Immediately after the meeting adjourned, Goldman asked William Applebaum, director of research for Stop & Shop, Incorporated, of Boston, to head the Research Advisory Committee. The choice was a logical one as Applebaum had made several outstanding contributions in the area of applying methods and statistics to supermarketing.[40] He chose fifteen SMI members to serve on the committee including Goldman and Parsons in an ex officio capacity; later this aggregate proved too unwieldy and the number was reduced to five. By the time Goldman left office in 1953 his original proposal had blossomed into a full grown and ongoing program.

A long range research program was prepared with the object of accomplishing three goals: to reduce waste in food, material and equipment; to make work in the industry simpler, easier and more productive; and to achieve improvements in merchandising, operating, and management techniques. Toward this end liaisons with processors and manufacturers were established. Applebaum reported his opinion that these were likely to produce cooperative ventures in research attracting as much as $1,000,000 yearly. To handle the Institute's part in the joint endeavors a permanent research staff working under Curt Kornblau was added to the SMI organizational chart.

Under Kornblau's direction the first issues of the <u>Store Manager</u>

Guide had published by 1953. Every SMI member received a free copy of this continuing series plus an extra one if the individual employed a personnel or research director. So popular was this compendium of practical information that each issue sold over two thousand copies beyond the initial free subscription list. Another publication inaugurated under the new research project's auspices was an "Index of Super Market Articles" published between 1936 and 1952 in the three major trade journals, *Chain Store Age*, *Progressive Grocer*, and *Super Market Merchandising*. Over 2,400 articles appeared in the index's first compilation. A third published product of the research project was a "Figure Exchange." Distributed monthly, this report analyzed and interpreted statistics garnered from over 100 participating companies.

Not all of Goldman's work during his tenure as SMI president dealt directly with the organization and its inner workings. As chief executive of the Institute he was called upon to act as a spokesman for the supermarket industry. Among the occasions of this type was included a guest editorial for *Food Field Reporter*, a grocery trade newspaper. Goldman addressed himself to one of the most pertinent problems that faced all retail food manufacturers, how to receive the fullest benefit from their advertising dollar. He noted that each year grocery and food processors spent hundreds of millions of dollars in advertising their products to the consumer and that the amount was charged against the cost of distribution. Such an expense, Goldman reasoned, could only be justified if it increased volume and reduced unit costs to the consumer through the economies of mass production and distribution. However, many manufacturers were not getting full value for their advertising investment.

Before the advent of supermarkets and self-service merchandising strong, direct consumer demand was required to break the service counter barrier. Open displays of merchandise had changed that, allowing advertising to exercise a much greater influence than previously, in the instance of some products up to 40 per cent sales increases were recorded with the shift to self service. Too many manufacturers, Goldman believed, had forgotten that this benefit did not come automatically. The supermarket still controlled preferred shelf position, special displays, and local store advertising. These factors could dramatically affect sales. Operating on an average net profit of 1.5 per cent, the supermarket managers were inclined to use their merchandising skills to raise sales on products whose manufacturers had adjusted their trade practices to meet modern retailing needs.

Those in the food industry were urged by Goldman to make a strenuous effort toward better trade relations with retailers. Packages should be re-designed to allow for an adequate clear space, or "white dot" in the grocer's jargon, in which the price could be written or stamped. Shipping containers should be loaded in such a manner that price-marking could be accomplished efficiently. Promotions and prices should be carefully planned to give the retail grocer a fair margin of profit. Goldman summed up his arguments by referring to the importance of the manufacturer-distributor discussion panels organized by the Super Market Institute. He suggested closer cooperation in them and with the new joint research projects sponsored by the supermarket organization.[42]

When Goldman stepped down from the presidency of SMI in 1953, he could view the results of the Institute's and his efforts. The regional programs and research projects were well launched and already bearing recognizable returns. A successful publicity campaign had been waged which had partially thwarted the machinations of potato black marketeers. Membership in the Institute had risen to 595 companies operating over 6,600 stores with sales in excess of $6 billion. Few of the operations were large chain complexes; only 19 per cent of the membership owned more than one store. Despite the fact that SMI represented less than two per cent of the nation's food stores, the membership's markets produced 16 per cent of the national sales volume.[43]

Goldman continued to take an active part in SMI activities until the mid 1950's accepting no offices but retaining a seat on the executive board, his by virtue of being a former president. Not all of his energies were devoted to the Institute as he also held membership in the National Association of Food Chains and attended some of the meetings of the International Food Congress. The NAFC, organized in 1933, was composed of companies who operated grocery chains rather than single store operations. Its activities were similar to those of the Super Market Institute, however, the membership was less active in promoting primary research since these larger retail combinations frequently possessed their own research staffs.

Goldman, a member of NAFC from its beginning, was elected to the organization's vice presidency in September, 1946, and served in that capacity for two years. His duties were not nearly as strenuous as those connected with the same position in the Super Market Institute.[44] Goldman contributed to many of the periodic panels and clinics conducted by NAFC. Although somewhat removed from actual store operations by 1958, he chaired the NAFC Management Clinic on Operating Efficiency and Productivity held that year. Two years earlier Goldman moderated a panel discussion for the national convention on architectural and operations analyses of new shopping centers and solo markets, a subject in which he was particularly well qualified.[45]

In June, 1953, Goldman attended the Second International Congress on Food Distribution. At the Ostend, Belgium meeting Goldman was chosen as a vice president and member of the committee of honor. The convention featured discussions and lectures concerning the general area of collaboration between producers and distributors of food emphasizing self service concepts.[46] Three years later a third congress was scheduled for Rome, Italy. Goldman was one of those who represented the Super Market Institute which contributed $100,000 worth of groceries, fixtures, and equipment to build an American style supermarket within the special exposition hall on the outskirts of the Italian city. It was probably the only market in history with marble floors. The United States government spent a quarter of a million lira on the exhibits building which had formerly been an athletic center erected by Mussolini; the supermarket had to use as flooring material the same, expensive Carrara marble that dominated the architecture of the remainder of the structure. Over 400,000 Italians visited the SMI exhibit which featured a completely stocked store. The American food merchants wanted to donate all of the grocery exhibits to the poor of Rome as a good will gesture. Instead the Italian government insisted that the gift be delivered to the state in order that the national welfare department could gain credit for the eleemosynary act.

Before returning home Goldman, accompanied by his wife, toured several European nations examining the state of the retail food industry in each. He discovered that Switzerland's storekeepers had adopted more of the modernized American concepts than any other European country. England, France, Sweden, and West Germany were next, according to Goldman, in changing from the inefficient traditional merchandising of the past.[47] Because of overcrowding and overbuilding in most European cities sites for markets of a size common in America were simply not available. Transportation also limited the development of supermarkets as relatively few European families owned automobiles with which to carry home large purchases. Scarcity of merchandise, lagging development of brand name selling, and inferior but expensive packaging also contributed to the retardation of Europe's food industry.[48]

Goldman's contributions to the development of the supermarket extended beyond his inventions and commercial enterprises in Oklahoma. As a member of national and international organizations he did much to spread the innovative ideas which culminated in the revolutionizing of the nation's retail food industry. Despite this obvious devotion to business on all levels of concern Goldman still found ample time for other activities which were to make his name remembered by many who were only vaguely aware of his commercial background.

FOOTNOTES

[1]M. M. Zimmerman, The Challenge of Chain Stores Distribution (New York, 1931).

[2]Zimmerman, The Super Market: A Revolution in Distribution, pp. 73-76.

[3]Picture and Description of exhibit in Sylvan N. Goldman Collection, Oklahoma City, Oklahoma.

[4]*Ibid*, p. 82-83.

[5]For a brief discussion of the article see pages 61-62.

[6]Sylvan N. Goldman, "Produce on Self-Service Basis," Executive Service on Food Distribution, No. 250 (New York, 1938), p. 9.

[7]M. M. Zimmerman to Sylvan N. Goldman, July 24, 1939, Sylvan N. Goldman Collection, Oklahoma City, Oklahoma.

[8]Quoted in Zimmerman, The Super Market: A Revolution in Distribution, p. 87-88.

[9]"Convention Panelists Speak Out," Super Market Merchandising, Vol. IV, No. 10 (October, 1939), p. 27.

[10]Sylvan N. Goldman, "The Outlook for Super Market Expansion During the Coming Year," Super Market Merchandising, Vol V, No. 10 (October, 1940), pp. 12, 36-37.

[11]The New York Times (September 21, 1943), p. 43; Zimmerman, The Super Market: A Revolution in Distribution, pp. 88-89.

[12]Leo W. Smith to Sylvan N. Goldman, January 13, 1943, Sylvan N. Goldman Collection, Oklahoma City, Oklahoma.

[13]"Conference Attracts Nation-Wide Attendance," Super Market Merchandising, Vol. IX, No. 7 (July, 1944), p. 15.

[14]Zimmerman, The Super Market: A Revolution in Distribution, p. 95.

[15]The Oklahoma City Times (August 3, 1948), p. 7.

[16]Don Parsons to Sylvan N. Goldman, April 30, 1949, Sylvan N.

Goldman Collection, Oklahoma City, Oklahoma; The SMI Carrier, December, 1949, p. 1.

[17]The SMI Carrier, October, 1949, p. 9; Super Marketer, (April, 1951), p. 1.

[18]Super Marketer, (June, 1951), p. 1; The New York Journal of Commerce, (May 17, 1951), p. 1.

[19]Link, American Epoch, pp. 522, 530-532, 674.

[20]Super Market Institute, Inc., Proceedings of the Board of Directors Meeting, (Chicago, May 12, 1951), pp. 4-6, Sylvan N. Goldman Collection, Oklahoma City, Oklahoma.

[21]Ibid, pp. 7-8; Super Marketer, (Spetember, 1951), p. 2; The New York Journal of Commerce, (September 7, 1951), p. 3.

[22]Super Marketer, (March, 1951), p. 3; SMI Information Service, Bulletin No. 21, Sylvan N. Goldman Collection, Oklahoma City, Oklahoma.

[23]Super Market Institute, Inc., Proceedings of the Board of Directors Meeting, (Chicago, May 23, 1953), pp. 17-24. Sylvan N. Goldman Collection, Oklahoma City, Oklahoma.

[24]The SMI Carrier, May, 1953, pp. 6-7.

[25]The Cleveland Press, (May 15, 1952), p. 1.

[26]Copy of the May 15, 1952 resolution in Sylvan N. Goldman Collection, Oklahoma City, Oklahoma.

[27]The New York Journal of Commerce, (May 20, 1952), p. 1.

[28]The Utica Press, (May 17, 1952), p. 4.

[29]"The Super Market Industry Speaks: A Factual Report by the Members of Super Market Institute," 1951, pp. 1-2, Sylvan N. Goldman Collection, Oklahoma City, Oklahoma.

[30]Ibid, pp. 9, 13-15.

[31]Ibid, pp. 10-12.

[32]Sylvan N. Goldman, Interview, Oklahoma City, Oklahoma, April 20, 1974. This estimation of the food industry holds true today. Dr. Gordon F. Bloom of the Massachusetts Institute of Technology told an interviewer in May, 1974 that "the era of cheap food in America is at an end." He blamed the increased labor costs of the 1960's high prices. He indicated the way to eliminate runaway overhead expenses was through a streamlining effort by the industry in removing all inefficiencies in packaging and shipping. He also urged innovative cost-saving ideas such as utilizing lasers or sonic beams to cut meat.

The Daily Oklahoman, (May 21, 1974), p. 19.

[33]SMI Carrier, January, 1952, p. 4.

[34]Super Market Institute Inc., "Proceeding of the Board of Directors Meeting" (Hollywood, Florida, December 1, 1951), p. 79, Sylvan N. Goldman Collection, Oklahoma City, Oklahoma.

[35]Ibid. pp. 1-2

[36]SMI Carrier, December, 1951, pp. 4-5.

[37]Super Market Institute Inc., "Proceedings...," December 1, 1951, pp. 4-11, Sylvan N. Goldman Collection, Oklahoma City, Oklahoma.

[38]From the Regional SMI Managers Meeting on Produce Program (Oklahoma City, Oklahoma, March 24-25, 1952), Sylvan N. Goldman Collection, Oklahoma City, Oklahoma.

[39]Super Market Institute Inc., "Proceeding...," December 1, 1952, pp. 10-11, Sylvan N. Goldman Collection, Oklahoma City, Oklahoma.

[40]Zimmerman, The Super Market: A Revolution in Distribution, p. 117.

[41]Super Market Institute Inc., "Proceedings...," May 23, 1953, pp. 39-42, Sylvan N. Goldman Collection, Oklahoma City, Oklahoma.

[42]Sylvan N. Goldman, "How Cooperation Can Produce "More For All!" Food Field Reporter, July 30, 1951, p. 2.

[43]Super Market Institute Inc., "Proceedings...," May 23, 1953, pp. 49-50, Sylvan N. Goldman Collection, Oklahoma City, Oklahoma; Zimmerman, The Super Market: A Revolution in Distribution, p. 101.

[44]John A. Logan to Sylvan N. Goldman, October 31, 1946, Sylvan N. Goldman Collection, Oklahoma City, Oklahoma.

[45]Wallace N. Flint to Sylvan N. Goldman, October 26, 1956, August 20, 1958, Sylvan N. Goldman Collection, Oklahoma City, Oklahoma.

[46]Super Marketer, June 18, 1953, p. 2; Supermarket News, (June 22, 1953), pp. 1-2.

[47]The Oklahoma City Britton North Star, undated clipping, Sylvan N. Goldman Collection, Oklahoma City, Oklahoma.

[48]Zimmerman, The Super Market: A Revolution in Distribution, pp. 294-297.

CHAPTER VIII

A BUSINESSMAN'S AVOCATION---
GIVING AWAY MONEY AND
OTHER PHILANTHROPIES

Americans have earned a worldwide reputation for exceptional generosity. Nowhere has this notion gained wider acceptance than in the United States whose Twentieth Century news media have consistently celebrated individual and group giving. So prevalent has the conviction become that its citizens are the world's most compassionate and open-handed, that the country believes the philanthropic impulse to be an integral part of the national character. Yet the word philanthropy has assumed connotations which are not altogether suggestive of good works or deserving of approbation.

Despite the fact that many citizens have feared the international consequences of American generosity, distrust and criticism of philanthropy and philanthropists has sprung from a more profound and fundamental belief in democracy. A person might be quite willing and eager to help others, but does not wish to humble himself enough to accept the charity of those seeking to aid him. Rich men are expected to share their wealth generously and are roundly criticized if they do not. Yet every evidence of philanthropy elicits comments impugning their motives, questioning the means by which they gained their wealth, and disparaging the worth of their benefactions.[1]

Unwise or hypocritical giving would seem to have characterized the efforts of most philanthropists according to American literature and many Americans. Some have sneered at the activities of "do gooders" while conservatives have condemned "sentimental humanitarianism" and radicals have stigmatized generosity from the wealthy as a substitute for more substantive reform. This prejudice has so permeated thinking on the subject that philanthropists themselves resent the appellation and deny that their works have a philanthropic intent.[2]

No amount of individual misgivings and public criticism, however, can obscure the reality of American philanthrophy's worth. It has been one of the principal methods of social advance in the United States. The goal of philanthropy has had a much broader aspect than charity; it has encompassed a wide range of endeavor aimed at improving the quality of human life. Every segment of society has benefited from philanthropic reformers, scientific research funded by philanthropists, and a host of tax-supported services and institutions which began as privately financed enterprises.

The motivation which has animated individual philanthropists has remained obscure despite numerous attempts to explain the giving habit. In today's cynical society news of charitable donations or endowments of worthy causes has most often occasioned offhand remarks about the tax advantages accruing to the donor. Those fancying themselves shrewd judges of human behavior have claimed to perceive an act of contrition for past wrongs as the motivating factor behind every eleemosynary impulse. Philanthropists themselves have hesitated to ascribe specific reasons for their benevolence and probably that has been the wisest course. It seems unlikely that anyone could accurately judge their feelings about a subject that tends to embarrass both the giver and the recipient.

Some groups have achieved special recognition in the general field of philanthropy. Among them the most impressive record has been established by American Jewry. Statistically the Jews have contributed more to charities on a proportionate basis than any other recognizable grouping in the United States.[3] Annually the aggregate amount of Jewish philanthropy totals over $680 million of which one quarter goes to non-Jewish individuals and organizations.[4] Not a recent phenomenon this devotion to giving can be traced back in American history through many generations. For example, the Community Chest movement began in the United States in 1914, but Boston Jews had predated that multiple financing idea by organizing the Federated Jewish Charities in 1895.[5]

Several Jewish scholars have tried to explain their religious group's enviable philanthropic record. Their findings have helped illuminate some of the salient characteristics of American Judaism. The earliest Jewish immigrants were imbued with the concept of the community. So universal was this belief that no Jew could imagine an existence apart from their small enclaves in America. Jewish merchants who lost their livelihoods and impoverished, wandering Jews could expect and obtain financial help from their religious brethren. This practice has not been discontinued today despite the fact that the American Jews have undergone a constant assimilative process which has rendered them at times nearly invisible within the United States' twentieth century homogenized society.[6] Thus some observers of Jewish life have suggested that community pressure has played an important role in determining individual Jews' charitable actions, not merely social prestige but the desire for acceptance. The giving habit has grown so prevalent that one scholar has applied the term, "the Charity Establishment," to the complex of Jewish philanthropic organizations.[7] The fact of long term activities by a variety of frequently competing Jewish philanthropies has caused another writer to regard fundraising "almost as an end-in-itself, it seems to have become the key function and purpose of Jewishness and Judaism."[8]

For the Jews charity has had little of the mysticism connected with it that has always been a feature of Christian philanthropics. Aid has not been offered to persons because they deserve it, but rather because they have a natural right to it. Whether due to community pressure, obligations of wealth, or compassion for the unfortunate the motivation for Jewish charities has become a way of life strongly reinforced in each succeeding generation by early parental training.[9]

One particular area of humanitarian concern has attracted consistent Jewish support for more definite reasons than those already acknowledged. Among Jewish people there has developed a sensitivity toward social and political liberalism and a determination to erect safeguards against any sort of despotism. The fight for civil rights, especially racial equality, found Jews in the forefront of the struggle. As long as Martin Luther King, Roy Wilkins, and James Farmer were working with the nonviolent and religiously oriented student leaders of the Negro civil rights movement strove for equal rights, Jewish groups and individuals joined with them.[10] In the summer of 1964, of the three civil rights workers martyred at Philadelphia, Mississippi, two were Jewish. This interest and participation in liberal social causes can be easily understood. Having experienced discrimination, Jews felt an identification with other oppressed groups. They realized that a society which tolerated a minimum of systematic prejudice would offer Judaism its best defense against anti-Semitism.[11]

Sylvan Nathan Goldman was born and reared a Jew and had become a wealthy man by 1960. In January of that year he received a letter from Robert A. Magowan, former president of Safeway Stores. It was a congratulatory message marking Goldman's retirement. Magowan expressed his opinion that while the Oklahoma Cityan "was not likely to find a hobby as engrossing as making money," he would "discover that it is almost as much fun to give it away."[12] Actually Goldman had started much earlier in sharing a part of his accummulating material possessions. His philanthropies have been representative of his widely varied interests in charities, religious causes, human relations, family, art, and civic affairs. All of them bore the stamp of his genuine concern for community welfare and several projects the acumen that distinguished his entrepreneurial pursuits. Whether the motives which prompted Goldman's generosities stemmed from his Jewishness, sympathy for the less fortunate, or psychological expiation for some heal or imagined shortcoming can only be partially perceived. However, the broad nature of his benevolence and the length of his community service strongly indicates that simple good will has directed much of his nonbusiness activities.

There has rarely lived a man with a claim to financial means that has not been constantly approached by those with propositions to help him spend his excess funds. Goldman has responded to many such proposals but characteristically has also discovered worthy causes on which to bestow his time and money. Certainly the project which had its origin in 1950 was typically Goldman in the manner in which he started with what seemed to be a relatively simple bequest and ended by setting a trend toward a vastly increased patronage of the arts in Oklahoma.

At an Oklahoma City Chamber of Commerce meeting in 1950 Goldman listened as E. K. Gaylord, president of the Oklahoma Publishing Company, casually commented on the absence of any likeness of Will Rogers at the municipal airport. This revelation failed to elicit any suggestions for immediate action to rectify the situation. Goldman did not become interested in providing an artistic remembrance of Will Rogers for the airport until he read a newspaper account of a Fort Worth statue unveiling. Amon Carter, publisher of the Fort Worth Star-Telegram, presented the Texas city with a life-size equestrian statue of Will Rogers. Carter had also presented castings of the artwork to the Will Rogers Memorial at Claremore, Oklahoma and Texas Technological College at Lubbock, Texas.[13]

Thinking of obtaining another casting of the sculpture for Oklahoma City, Goldman called Mrs. Electra Waggoner Biggs, designer of the model. She directed him to the Texas sculptor who had completed the work and he suggested that the Oklahoman ask Carter about additional castings. Believing that his quest was nearly finished, Goldman telephoned the Fort Worth publisher. His request for a casting of the equestrian pose was flatly refused by Carter. It seemed that the Texan wanted to present Oklahoma City with a casting himself. Faced with the prospect of accepting as a Texas gift, a statue of Oklahoma's illustrious cowboy humorist, quickly touched the Oklahoma merchant's state pride. He rejected the offer, telling Carter, "we're not that hard up in Oklahoma. We don't have to take anything from a Texan."[14]

Not content with making the embarrassing gesture of providing a statue for Will Roger's home state, Carter proceeded further to nettle Goldman's civic feelings. The publisher jokingly queried the whereabouts of Oklahoma's pride all the years since the plane crash of 1935 which had ended in death for Rogers and Wiley Post. He claimed that his fellow Texans had contributed more to the Claremore memorial than Oklahoma and California combined.[15] After a few more taunting remarks in the same vein Goldman, now thoroughly aroused, reached the decision to find an alternate statue, preferably one sculpted by as eminent an artist as could be found.[16]

Preoccupied with the problem of locating a suitable statue, the Oklahoman overlooked the tenacity of Amon Carter. Seventy-two-years-old at the time of the controversy, Carter was a self-made man. Trying to escape the poverty of his early life, he had drilled 99 dry holes before finally striking oil. When he sold his holdings years later the selling price was $16.5 million. Carter spent part of this fortune in purchasing the Fort Worth Star-Telegram. His editorial policy was sheer boosterism as he utilized all his resources to battle the pre-eminence of archrival Dallas with vitriolic attacks on that city's character and generous philanthropies to enhance Fort Worth's appearance.[17] While Goldman searched for a sculpture and a sculptor, the irascible Carter telephoned Oklahoma City and expressed his desire of presenting the city with a Rogers bust and of Goldman's refusal of the offer. Street immediately notified his fellow cityan and received a determined reassurance that the airport would have its statue, but not from a Texan.[18]

Goldman had visited the Claremore memorial and recalled seeing a life-size standing sculpture of Will Rogers. It was one of two commissioned by the state of Oklahoma which paid $35,000 for the statues, the second of which rested in the Hall of Statuary in the capitor building in Washington. The artist's name that Goldman sought was Jo Davidson, world famous as the "Biographer in Bronze." Pleased at the renowned identity of his chosen statue's artist, Goldman located Davidson in New York. The sculptor readily agreed to make a bust casting from the original mold. However, there was a drawback, the mold had been stored in Davidson's studio in Paris since before World War II and had gone through the German occupation. He did agree to search for the mold upon his return to France.

Several months later Goldman received a note couched in typically lighthearted Davidson prose. "God bless the Germans. They love art," he wrote. The Will Rogers mold had weathered the invasion of Hitler's storm troopers. The bronze casting from the mold arrived at Goldman's Humpty Dumpty warehouse in the early part of November, 1951. The Oklahoma groceryman's acquisition received one of its highest accolades when one of the Humpty Dumpty warehousemen cautiously unpacking the statue instantly recognized it as a likeness of Will Rogers -- after glimpsing the bust from the rear.[19] Davidson would have been pleased at hearing the unconscious compliment since the original sculpture almost did not become a reality.

The sculptor had been shocked at the suddenness of Rogers' demise in August of 1935. A longtime acquaintance and friend of the humorist, Davidson had on several occasions attempted to persuade him to pose, only to have Rogers repeat a favorite sally: "You lay off of me, you old head hunter." Wanting to keep his memory alive, Davidson talked to Sidney Kent of Fox Films and accepted the latter's loan of some of Rogers' movies to work from. Two cameramen installed a movie screen in the sculptor's Parisian studio. For a week Davidson immersed himself in his subject and finished some small models of the Oklahoma cowboy standing casually "and giving the world his drawled nuggets of wisdom and his precious humor."[20]

Soon afterwards the Oklahoma state legislature passed a bill authorizing the funds to commission a statue of Will Rogers. His wife Betty, recommended Davidson for the contract. She sent the sculptor her husband's clothes which Davidson used on a model to achieve the insouciant nature that was Will Rogers. Twenty thousand people crowded the rotunda of the Claremore memorial to witness the unveiling of the sculptor's art, an eight foot statue that Davidson regarded as one of his best.[21]

On December 31, 1951, the Goldmans gave a party, inviting their guests "to share a private showing of a bit of sculpture."[22] The next day Davidson's bust of Will Rogers was presented to Oklahoma City and on April 20, the statue was formally dedicated. It stood on a five foot marble post facing the west entrance of the airport lobby. The Oklahoma City Chamber of Commerce voted a special resolution of appreciation to Goldman. Not only had the acquisition marked the possession of a product of one of the world's greatest contemporary sculptors, but more important the gift's value lay in its being "a pioneer event in the beautification of Oklahoma city."[23] The resolution expressed the hope that the Rogers bust would be followed by similar gifts from other public spirited citizens, a sentiment echoed by state newspaper editors.[24]

Ordinarily the unveiling ceremony would have ended the sculpture episode, but Goldman's persistent style of philanthropy dictated otherwise. Two days after the bust was unveiled its creator died of a heart attack at the age of 68 on January 3, 1952. The Will Rogers casting was his last completed work of art. Goldman, who had not yet issued payment for the bust called the sculptor's widow and asked if she could use the commission immediately while waiting for Davidson's estate to be settled. Payment was made personally by the Goldmans who flew to Paris to complete the transaction. Seven years later while visiting the French city, the Oklahoma couple called on Davidson's studio again and questioned the widow about the possibility of procuring some additional works by the deceased sculptor. Most of his collection was absent on loan to museums or had been sold previously but she agreed to send pictures and descriptions of any available pieces. Six busts were eventually uncovered and Goldman decided to purchase all of them. Three of the statues were heads only, Abraham Lincoln in terra cotta, Woodrow Wilson in marble, and Franklin D. Roosevelt in bronze. Two other busts were head and shoulder bronzes of Dwight D. Eisenhower and John J. Pershing, both represented the men in their roles as commanders-in-chief of the United States Army in Europe. The sixth portrait, a Will Rogers bronze was presented to the Oklahoma Hall of Fame while the remaining five were placed in Oklahoma City at the Oklahoma Art Center on permanent loan.[25]

Nor was this the end of Goldman's excursion into the fine arts. During the next several years he presented various institutions with works of art, some of which were originals that he directly commissioned. Eighteen months after his initial gift to Oklahoma City he presented a Will Rogers bust, another casting from the Davidson mold, to the Tulsa municipal airport.[26] This was the second of four major Will Rogers art works that Goldman purchased and later bestowed on Oklahoma institutions. The Oklahoma City merchant never met the man whose portraits he dispensed. However, Goldman held a memory of Will Rogers that dated back to his World War experiences. Upon returning home from France at the war's end he had gone to a showing of the Ziegfield Follies in New York City. Goldman later recalled that the sight and sound of the cowboy philosopher from Oolagah, Oklahoma, standing nonchalantly and delivering the witticisms for which he was famous, helped ease the memories of the St. Mihiel salient and the Meuse-Argonne forest in the mind of a young Oklahoman.[27]

The only painting of Rogers that Goldman acquired was given to the Will Rogers High School of Tulsa, Oklahoma. On January 27, 1954, Will Rogers, Jr. appeared at the unveiling ceremony at the Tulsa school. He expressed his satisfaction that the school was receiving the portrait, one of two originals painted by Count Analdo Tamburini, Italy's court painter. He regarded the two paintings, the other hung in the Claremore memorial, as the best portraits of his father. Goldman had obtained the painting after learning of fund raising efforts by the high school's alumni and student body to buy a portrait for the school. Part of the money that already had been collected was used to frame Goldman's gift.[28]

This particular philanthropy resulted in a curious aftermath. The artist's widow, the Countess Dolia C. Tamburini, filed suit in federal court in Tulsa for the recovery of the painting presented to city high school. She claimed that Maurrie Morrison of California who sold Goldman the portrait was not authorized to sell it having only exhibition rights on the painting. The suit noted that the Goldman Foundation had purchased the painting for $2,500 and remained the owner while the Tulsa board of education was named the beneficiary of a trust agreement which allowed Will Rogers High School to possess and exhibit the portrait. The Countess Tamburini valued her deceased husband's work at $15,000 and insisted that according to the terms of his 1925 will all his possessions in the United States were bequeathed to her. The issue was settled verbally out of court. In exchange for a financial consideration the Countess relinquished all her rights to the portrait with the stipulation that a bronze plate identifying Tamburini as the artist be placed beside the picture.[29]

Once launched into the business of providing portraits of schools' namesakes Goldman looked around for similar possibilities. The building of a new high school in Ardmore offered him an opportunity. Dr. Charles Evans, onetime president of Central State College at Edmond, Oklahoma, and a past secretary of the Oklahoma Historical Society, was to honored in 1960 by his hometown through naming a newly constructed high school in his memory. Goldman had attended school in Ardmore when Evans had held an administrative position in the town's school system. On January 30 he presented a portrait of the educator to the school.[30] Two years later a new high school in Oklahoma City was the recipient of a portrait. This time Goldman went a step further and managed to get former president Herbert Hoover to sign the painting which he had purchased for the school bearing the chief executive's name.[31]

Having served the memory of Oklahoma's Will Rogers by placing portraits of bronze and paint in public buildings, Goldman turned his attention toward another state son, Wiley Post. A close friend of Rogers, Post had piloted the airplane that crashed into the Alaskan landscape in 1935 depriving Oklahoma of its famous humorist and its foremost aviation pioneer. A transplanted Texas sculptor, Leonard McMurry, was approached about the possibility of providing an original statue of Post to help dedicate the Wiley Post Airport opening in October, 1961. McMurry accepted this first of several Goldman commissions and the Post bust was completed in time to enhance the inauguration of the new airport.[32] Four months later a casting of the Post sculpture was presented to the Tulsa airport.[33]

McMurry was Goldman's choice of sculptors again when he decided to add a bust of Sequoyah, the innovator of the Cherokee alphabet, to the lobby of the new state capital office building. On the same occasion in December, 1964, Goldman also distributed the last of the Davidson busts of Will Rogers to grace the lobby of the second new office building.[34] Eight years later a casting of McMurry's Sequoyah bust made a companion donation to Carl Link's "Blackfoot Indian," an oil painting, which Goldman gave to the Cowboy Hall of Fame in Oklahoma City. The two works of arts were appraised at a combined figure in excess of $17,000.[35]

Numerous additions to this listing of Goldman's patronage of the arts could be made. However, of more significance was the manner in which this notable record was compiled. Many so-called patrons of the arts have ordered commissions and purchased works of artistic merit without ever becoming involved in the processes of appreciation and discrimination. The story of Goldman's search for the Will Rogers bust demonstrated his interest and ability to recognize the need for a piece of art and to fill the requirement. Was this merely a manifestation of the competitive spirit that had characterized his business career? While it was true that Amon Carter's presence in the scenario quickened his initial interest in the matter, Goldman also possessed an excellent taste for art and a regard for the sensibilities of artists.

Leonard McMurry has presently been working on a nine foot statue of Stanley Draper, one of Oklahoma City's two or three most outstanding civic leaders. The work was commissioned by a group of interested citizens including Goldman. Having dealt with the philanthropist before in similar contractual agreements, McMurry knew what to expect from his patron and was quick to compare Goldman's actions with those of other wealthy men who have paid for his talents. Periodically Goldman, now a septuagenerian, has visited McMurry's studio to check on the progress of the project. Not content with a cursory glance at the imposing statue, Goldman has climbed a ladder to scrutinize the sculptor's rendition of Draper's physiognomy. Upon his descent he has consulted with McMurry concerning the accuracy of the likeness. Far from becoming annoyed with this procedure, the sculptor welcomed the real interest shown by Goldman whose suggestions, McMurry has contended, reveal a critical insight that he has frequently taken into account on the Draper statue and past projects. McMurry has experienced many situations in which the person ordering a commission has virtually ignored the end result much less bothered with the intermediate stages of creation. He can also be sure that Goldman's perserverance of purpose will extend to the niceties of insuring the artist's presence at unveiling ceremonies and the inclusion of his name on any plaque or other device commemorating the occasion. McMurry can still recall some instances when such recognition was not accorded his efforts but never when Goldman was involved with the operation.[36]

These then were the characteristics of Goldman's patronage of the arts: recognition of the need for beautification, possession of the critical instinct to distinguish excellence, genuine interest in the progress and culmination of the artist's work, and careful attention to the finalization of the art object's ultimate destination. Perhaps all the just mentioned might be summarized in a single word, involvement. Goldman sometimes gave as much as many have given -- with money -- instead of time and interest. However, the distinctive aspect of his patronage was the frequent contribution of his personal energy and attention in addition to financial considerations.

The same qualities that distinguished Goldman's patronage of the arts also characterized his other philanthropies. His contributions to the field of human relations have provided an outstanding example of Goldman's philanthropic style. In 1959, Donald Sullivan, the Oklahoma state director of the National Conference of Christians and Jews (NCCJ) asked Dr. Glenn Snider, Director of Teacher Education at the University of Oklahoma to request that the school sponsor a workshop for people in education in the area of human relations. Snider called an interdisciplinary faculty meeting to discuss the feasibility of offering such a program. After several meetings the committee agreed to establish courses for credit in the suggested field. The enthusiasm of the faculty members of the committee led the body to propose a permanent center for the study of human relations as an integral part of the university system. University of Oklahoma president, Dr. George L. Cross, responded favorably to the committee's proposal, however, he pointed to the total lack of funds and the extreme unlikelihood of funds becoming available through normal university channels to support the project.[37]

The committee turned to the representatives of the voluntary organizations which had provided the original stimulus for the 1959 and 1960 workshops. Dr. Sterling Brown, a national director of the NCCJ introduced the committee to Oklahoma City businessmen Harvey Everest and Charles Bennett. These two joined Snider, Donald E. Sullivan, J. Clayton and Dr. Feaver in the formation of an informal committee to expedite the establishment of a human relations center. One of the first men asked to help with the project was Goldman. At a meeting in Bennett's newspaper office, the latest recruit in the proposal's movement, stated the situation in his customarily direct fashion: "Apparently what you need is $100,000 to guarantee operation of the center for five years."[38]

To offset the disadvantage of approaching potential donors with such a figure, and out of a commitment to the concept, Goldman volunteered a contribution of $40,000 to underwrite the center's expenses for two years. During the next three years he reinforced his support of the center by vigorous fundraising efforts which included trips with members of the committee to Tulsa, Ardmore, and other state communities. He also attended regular meetings of the center's founders constantly pressing for the rapid implementation of the project's activities.[39]

The Southwest Center for Human Relations Studies was officially inaugurated October 1, 1961, as a continuing program of the Oklahoma Center for Continuing Education. According to the proposal, the center's major goal was "to reduce tension and conflict as it may exist between and among people or between and among groups." Included in this rather broad category of concern were the areas of race relations, religious group interaction, labor-management relations, school-community contacts, and problems arising from industrialization, urbanization, and feelings of alienation on the part of communities and individuals. To accomplish an alleviation of these problems the center would offer workshops, seminars, adult education classes, consultative services, and engage in primary research.[40]

The center's activities have been as varied as its goals. The Indian Education Unit was very energetic in its attempts to increase the social and political awareness of Oklahoma Indian groups. Beginning with a series of organizational meetings in the western part of the state the education unit's workers developed SOLID, the Southwestern Oklahoma League for Indian Development. Concentrating on the Indian population of Comanche and Colton Countries, Lawton-based SOLID directed a variety of services, most notably a tutoring program with older Indian youths helping younger children. It also conducted a continuing series of conferences on Indian alcoholism. A subsidiary operation of the Indian Education Unit was responsible for publishing and distributing 5,000 copies of "Know Your Rights" booklets to Indians in western Oklahoma.

Another human-relations-oriented program involved the establishment of the Consultative Center for School Desegregation on July 1, 1968. Funded by the United States Office of Education and implementing Title IV of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, the center sought to aid educational personnel in dealing with special problems occasioned by school desegregation and integration process. It provided technical assistance and in-service programs to public school systems, institute programs for teachers, and activities which reached thousands of public school teachers and administrators.

Exemplifying the catholicity of the Human Relations Center's interests has been the Law Focused Curriculum Project which was funded by the Oklahoma Crime Commission in February, 1973. The project has worked to establish a program to positively influence the attitudes of school-age students towards the role of law in society. More specifically this goal has been approached through workshops and seminars which educationally prepare teachers law enforcement, and legal personnel to use law-focused curricula in fourteen selected Oklahoma schools and communities.[41]

The research and teaching functions of the center has been greatly enhanced by Goldman's philanthropic interest beyond his initial contribution in 1961. In the summer of 1968, Goldman and Mrs. Leta M. Chapman of Tulsa made a combined gift of $70,000 to advance the work of the center. The bequest was earmarked for the inauguration of a new University of Oklahoma academic unit in human relations. Goldman pledged additional annual payments to support the Goldman Professorship of Human Relations. This position would be the first of several which would comprise a department offering Bachelor of Arts and Master of Arts degrees. Within four years the new department had 26 human relations students enrolled in the MA program which held the distinction of being one of three in the country.[42]

Goldman's interest in the center has never flagged from the moment of his initial involvement. He regarded its work as essential to a viable solution of the seemingly insoluble social problems at the local, state, and national level. At a November 1973 special meeting at the center in Norman he voiced this belief on behalf of the center's Founders Council whose membership was honored at the event. Just as he insisted on following the creation of art projects to a finished conclusion, Goldman regularly inquired as to the progress of the center's organization, growth, and programming. On numerous occasions his special talents as a fundraiser were solicited by the center's administrators. The human relations council was almost wholly dependent on such efforts during its first years and remained heavily supported by private solicitation.[43]

Although the bulk of his philanthropic endeavors have been channeled through the Pioneer Foundation, an entity incorporated in the 1950's to simplify the giving process, Goldman was an active philanthropist while at the peak of his business activity. Beginning in 1936 the William Jenning Bryan Crippled Children's School of Oklahoma City received an annual visit from the busy supermarket entrepreneur. Each November, 70 to 80 children enrolled at the school enjoyed the Thanksgiving Party arranged and attended by Goldman.[44] Nor was Goldman reluctant to extend his philanthropy to the world of business. The Folding Carrier Company received a special award of merit from the President's Committee on National Employ the Physically Handicapped Week for its record in hiring the partially disabled.[45] Recalling from his Ardmore youth the plight of Indians left stranded in the new society dominated by an invading white culture, Goldman also made it a company policy to employ as many Native Americans as possible.[46]

A list of private, informal Goldman benevolences could never be accurately or completely compiled. The number of his known contributions to the state of Oklahoma and city of Oklahoma city has exceeded his own remembrance. Among the civic organizations that have claimed his attention was the Oklahoma City Chamber of Commerce in which he served as vice president for two terms in 1951-1953 and 1957-1959.[47] As a result of his community services he was named a lifetime director of the Chamber. In April, 1973, President Richard Nixon saluted Oklahoma's Frontiers of Science Foundation which numbered Goldman among its original trustees.[48] He has also served on the board of trustees for the Oklahoma City Mercy Hospital Advisory Council, the Thomas Gilcrease Institute at Tulsa and the Oklahoma Zoological Society. Such diverse organizations as the Boy Scouts of America, Young Men's Christian Association, the Oklahoma City Symphony, and the Oklahoma Heritage Association have benefited from his services as a director. In addition Goldman was president of the Oklahoma Art Center and with fellow cityan J. B. Saunders provided the financial assistance to give the Oklahoma City Arts Council a permanent office in 1970.[49]

For his contributions to these and many other causes Goldman has received the encomiums due his active civic life. In 1966 Governor Henry Bellmon named him as a member of the Oklahoma Ambassadour Corps organized the previous year during ceremonies at the state's exhibit at the New York World's Fair.[50] Two Oklahoma schools have awarded Goldman, a man without a high school education, honorary doctorates.

Oklahoma City University in May, 1974 and the University of Oklahoma in May, 1971 gave him the opportunity to don academic robes in recognition of his contributions to higher education.[51] The Oklahoma chapter of the National Conference of Christians and Jews gave Goldman a special citation in 1963 for his civic and religious leadership. Two years later he was the recipient of the Eleanor Roosevelt Humanities Award National Citation. Wisconsin Senator William Proxmire presented this honor which had been awarded only once before 1965.[52]

On November 16, 1971, Goldman was elected to the Oklahoma Hall of Fame. The enumeration of his business, civic and philanthropic activities within the state made the choice an obvious one.[53] Goldman has received awards, citations, congratulations, and finally, official historical recognition. Yet the breath of his concern for the betterment of society was perhaps best reflected in a statement by an admirer who meant no irony or slur when he praised the Jewish philanthropist "as a man, as a citizen, and as a Christian."[54]

FOOTNOTES

[1]One of the most caustic and censorious appraisals of the philanthropic habits of America's wealthier classes, especially in the area of foundations, can be found in Ferdinand Lundberg, The Rich and the Super-Rich: A Study in the Power of Money Today (New York, 1968), pp. 465-530.

[2]A penetrating analysis of the ambivalence in American thought toward philanthropy can be found in Robert H. Bremner, American Philanthropy, (Chicago, 1960).

[3]Mannheim S. Shapiro, "The Sociology of Jewish Life," Meet the American Jew (Nashville, 1963), comp. and ed. Belden Menkus, pp. 110-111.

[4]Yaffe, The American Jew, pp. 168-169

[5]Bremner, American Philanthropy, pp. 140-141; Stuart E. Rosenberg, America is Different: The Search for Jewish Identity (New York, 1964), p. 92.

[6]Glazer, American Judaism, pp. 18-19; Interview with Sylvan N. Goldman, Oklahoma City, Oklahoma, April 20, 1974.

[7]Yaffe, The American Jew, p. 180.

[8]Rosenberg, America is Different: The Search for Jewish Identity, pp. 92-93

[9]Yaffe, The American Jew, pp. 166-167, 178.

[10]Between 1965 when the slogan "Black Power" was popularized and 1967 when the Arab-Israeli War took place the affinity which had developed between Blacks and Jews largely disappeared. Whites became unwelcome in the violently militant black organizations and jews became disaffected at the urban riots of the 1960's which destroyed many Jewish businesses. The rift widened as black militants identified the Middle Eastern conflicts as a "Zionist imperialist war against Islam. Glazer, American Judaism, pp. 166-173.

[11]Albert Vorspan, "Jews and Social Justice," Meet the American Jew, comp. and ed. Menkus, pp. 116, 118-119.

[12]Robert A. Magowan to Sylvan N. Goldman, January 15, 1960, Sylvan N. Goldman Collection, Oklahoma City, Oklahoma.

[13]Tulsa Daily World, (January 2, 1952), p. 1.

[14]Fort Worth Star-Telegram, (January 3, 1952), p. 1.

[15]This contention was hotly denied by N. G. Henthorne, editor of the Tulsa Daily World and chairman of the memorial commission. Henthorne related the financial background of the Claremore shrine. Mrs. Will Rogers donated the land on which the memorial was located and state funds totalling $200,000 were appropriated to erect the building. Five prominent Oklahomans contributed the money to build the crypt and garden in which the Rogers family was buried. Carter had been the donor of the equestrian statue which was placed at the memorial's west entrance gate on November 4, 1950. Tulsa Daily World, (January 2, 1952), p. 1.

[16]Sylvan N. Goldman, Interview, Oklahoma City, Oklahoma, April 20, 1974.

[17]Apparently in the Goldman confrontation there was no element of the virulent anti-Semitism that had led Carter to refer to Dallas as "Jew-town" on one occasion. His son, Amon Carter, Jr., has done much to erase this image having served as chairman of a Christian-Jewish brotherhood dinner in 1967. Yaffe, The American Jews, p. 43.

[18]Fort Worth Star-Telegram, (January 3, 1952), p. 1.

[19]Sylvan N. Goldman, Interview, Oklahoma City, Oklahoma, April 20, 1974.

[20]Jo Davidson, Between Sittings, An Informal Autobiography, (New York, 1951), pp. 298-299.

[21]Ibid, pp. 299-300.

[22]Taken from one of the invitations, Sylvan N. Goldman Collection, Oklahoma City, Oklahoma.

[23]Resolution from the Board of Directors, Oklahoma City Chamber of Commerce to Sylvan N. Goldman, January 3, 1952, Sylvan N. Goldman Collection, Oklahoma City, Oklahoma.

[24]Oklahoma City Times, (January 9, 1952), p. 22.

[25]The Daily Oklahoman, (December 16, 1960), p. 4; Sylvan N. Goldman, Interview, Oklahoma City, Oklahoma, April 20, 1974.

[26]Tulsa Daily World, (June 11, 1953), p. 1.

[27]From the Foreword of the to be published A Cowboy Philosopher On the Peace Conference, Sylvan N. Goldman Collection, Oklahoma City, Oklahoma.

[28]Tulsa Daily World, (January 28, 1954), p. 1.

[29]Tulsa Daily World, (June 4, 1954), p. 21, (January 14, 1955), p. 14.

[30]The Oklahoma City Times, (January 31, 1960), p. 18.

[31]*Ibid*. (September 24, 1962), p. 8.

[32]*Ibid*. (October 18, 1961), p. 1.

[33]Tulsa Daily World, (February 18, 1962), p. 1.

[34]Tulsa Daily World, (December 16, 1964), p. 1.

[35]Sylvan N. Goldman to Dean Krakel, November 3, 1972, Richard Muno to Sylvan N. Goldman, July 12, 1972, Dean Krakel to Sylvan N. Goldman, July 15, 1972, Sylvan N. Goldman Collection, Oklahoma City, Oklahoma.

[36]Leonard McMurry, Interview, Oklahoma City, Oklahoma, May 29, 1974.

[37]Glenn Snider, Interview, Norman, Oklahoma, March 13, 1974.

[38]*Ibid*.

[39]*Ibid*.; The Daily Oklahoman, (October 27, 1961), p. 8.

[40]Oklahoma Center for Continuing Education, The Southwest Center for Human Relations Studies (Norman, 1973), pp. 4-5 Sylvan N. Goldman Collection, Oklahoma City, Oklahoma.

[41]*Ibid*., pp. 9-11; Oklahoma Center for Continuing Education, Annual Report of the Southwest Center for Human Relations Studies (Norman, 1969), pp. 3-4, 7-9, 11, Sylvan N. Goldman Collection, Oklahoma City, Oklahoma.

[42]Sylvan N. Goldman, "Memorandum Regarding the Human Relations Center and the Goldman Chain" (Undated Manuscript), George Henderson to Sylvan N. Goldman, May 20, 1971, Sylvan N. Goldman to Peter Kyle McCarter, September 23, 1970, Sylvan N. Goldman Collection, Oklahoma City, Oklahoma.

[43]Glenn, Snider, Interview, Norman, Oklahoma, March 13, 1974.

[44]Super Marketer, (December, 1954), p. 8.

[45]Award of Merit citation in Sylvan N. Goldman Collection, Oklahoma City, Oklahoma.

[46]Sylvan N. Goldman, Interview, Oklahoma City, Oklahoma, April 20, 1974.

[47]The Daily Oklahoman, (January 5, 1951), p. 6 (January 4, 1957), p. 9.

[48]The Frontiers of Science program originated in 1954 as a plan to promote Oklahoma's centennial celebration in 1957. The success of the Atoms for Peace Exhibit during the April exposition and accompanying science show encouraged the foundations trustees to continue as a permanent operation. Since the mid-1950's the organization has sought to improve and expand the teaching of science in Oklahoma schools and the encouragement of scientific research. Ibid. (April 14, 1973), p.1.

[49]The Sunday Oklahoman, (August 9, 1970), p. 27.

[50]The Daily Oklahoman, (June 3, 1966), p. 3.

[51]The Oklahoma Journal, (May 9, 1971), p. 17; The Daily Oklahoman, (May 20, 1974), p. 7.

[52]The Southwest Jewish Chronical, (September 1965), p. 35.

[53]Jack Durland, "Oklahoma Hall of Fame Citation for Mr. Sylvan N. Goldman, November 16, 1971," pp. 3-5, Sylvan N. Goldman Collection, Oklahoma City, Oklahoma.

[54]Arvard Hudson to Sylvan N. Goldman, January 25, 1963, Sylvan N. Goldman Collection, Oklahoma City, Oklahoma.

CHAPTER IX

A BUSINESSMAN'S RETIREMENT

In 1959 Goldman retired from the chairmanship of ACF-Wrigley. This marked the end of a career in the grocery business spanning four decades. At the age of sixty-one the supermarket developer could have been expected to slow down the busy tempo of managing a constantly expanding corporation and set a more sedate pace of travel, relaxation, and rest. One of his closest business associates remarked to him on the occasion of the conferring of his second honorary doctorate that the newspaper stories outlining his past business career "all make you sound as if you died twenty years ago."[1]

The man who made this observation, H. Arthur Littell, had reason to know the truth; he has been responsible for much of the direction of Goldman's business affairs since February 1, 1962. Littell was brought into the Oklahoman's company from Texas. Following an academic career during which he received a BA and MA in finance and investments from the University of Texas, he had gone directly into the related fields of insurance, investments, and real estate. He brought to Oklahoma at the age of 39, twelve years' experience with two large investment firms. It would be a necessary background for the task which his new business affiliation required.

Goldman's future course was somewhat uncertain in 1962. His liquid assets totalling several millions of dollars were waiting to be used in some manner. Littel's job was to work with him concerning the diversification of his interests. So successful has this collaboration proven that Goldman Enterprises in fifteen years' time earned far greater sums from a variety of investments then Goldman's grocery businesses did in forty years.[2]

Probably one of the reasons that newspaper accounts had ignored the proliferation of his financial interests since 1959 was Goldman himself. When asked what his most absorbing business venture was, he replied that "The only thing I ever knew was gorceries--groceries and produce."[3] This modest disclaimer did not quite reveal the actual content of Goldman's career. For some years prior to his retirement from ACF-Wrigley he had engaged in business enterprises that were not necessarily related to the supermarket industry.

One of Goldman's investments, begun in 1955, showed that he was not only an inventor himself but could recognize the worth of others ingenuity as well. A Philadelphia inventor, Serenus Arthur Harry Young, pioneered a revolutionary process which caught Goldman's interest. A specialist in reinforced plastics, Young worked in the early 1950's to develop a low cost process by which glass fiber reinforced plastic products could be mass produced. The breakthrough came in the molding apparatus which had handicapped the entire industry up to the 1950's since it depended largely on hand labor. Yound devised a method by which the molding materials were metered automatically into a tank, where they were mixed, then piped into preform molds. These items in the past were made by mechanisms similar to hat-felting machines or by hand, neither process capable of producing products of varying thicknesses required for many commercial uses. Young's system was entirely automatic and reduced the time for making a plastic container from several hours to four minutes. Not only time but production costs were cut drastically as a competitive container costing $118 to manufacture with the old methodology could be produced the new way for about $43 apiece.

The inventor obtained the backing of David Kahn and Herbert Weisburgh of New York who helped arrange demonstrations for government purchasing officers and potential investors. Goldman and Kurt Schweitzer, president of the Folding Carrier Company, became interested in the commercial possibilities almost immediately. In September, 1955 Kahn, Weisburgh, Schweitzer, and Goldman invested $75,000 in the project and later added $400,000 more. Young was designated executive vice president of a new company and assumed the responsibility for building a pilot plant near Swarthmore, Pennsylvania. There production was gradually increased until a licensee contract was signed with Banner Fiber Glass Corporation of Paterson, New Jersey. The four investors had decided that their infant company, Pressurform Container Corporation, would not go into large-scale manufacturing but license the process instead.

Pressurform had already broken ground in merchandising the containers produced by Young's perfected process and would continue to manufacture for developmental and demonstration purposes. Goldman was chairman of the company's board and Schweitzer its president. They were old hands at finding markets for new products. There was little trouble in utilizing Young's process in making reusable military shipping and storage containers. An indication of the size of this market was illustrated by the fact that seven per cent of the national defense budget for defense materials in the 1950's was spent on packaging. Until Young's breakthrough reinforced plastics production had been too slow and cumbersome to permit their use for this purpose. Pressurform produced the first reinforced plastic containers for military use. As the news of the Young process spread there was a rush of applicants applying for licenses so that by October, 1956 Pressurform had issued 30 of them and were negotiating with industrial representatives from France, England, and Columbia. Among the uses suggested for the Pressurform process were shipping containers for missle and radar parts, television cabinets, luggage, bath tubs, machine housings, and chair frames.[4]

From the esoteric world of plastics production to life insurance sales was a long jump but one that Goldman was able to complete with apparent ease. On July 6, 1955, Norman Hirschfield, president of S. N. G. Industries, and he signed the charter which brought into being the Western Life Insurance Company. This venture was the farthest removed from the supermarket business of any in which Goldman ever engaged.[5] Nevertheless the insurance company enjoyed a steady growth after its inception as an old-line, legal reserve company which in the arcane vernacular of the business meant that Western Life's premiums would be stable for all ages without any special assessments. The charter also provided that the company could issue health and accident policies.[6] Capitalized with $100,000, Goldman's company had reached a $1,000,000 sales figure only a year after its organization.[7]

Goldman never took as active a role in Western Life as in his other investments. He sold the company in February, 1966 to the Gulf Insurance Company of Dallas, Texas. By that time the company had been licensed in 22 states and had over $161 million life insurance in force with a 1965 premium income of $2,653,157. Gulf bought all of Goldman's 35,000 outstanding shares of stock in the deal which left Western's Oklahoma City management and offices virtually intact.[8]

The business in which Goldman Enterprises has specialized in the 1960's and 1970's has been real estate. Goldman's interest in this area stemmed directly from his earlier experiences in supermarketing. In fact the two facets of his business career were natural concomitants. The continuing search for available and suitable market sites virtually assured an eventual competence on the part of a chain groceryman. And as the majority of new supermarkets were built in suburban areas, it was not surprising that Goldman gradually slipped more and more heavily into the retail phenomenon of the post-World War II period, shopping centers. He acquired several properties that were beyond the fringe of Oklahoma City's polulated area fearing that a delay in buying would mean a possible shortage of choice market locations later.

On April 20, 1955, plans for a combination shopping-medical center in southwest Oklahoma City were announced by Goldman Enterprises. For Goldman the news was a "lucky" culmination to a land purchase made with some trepidation. According to the grocery magnate, he had paid more than he intended for the land on which the shopping center would be built. Nick N. Reding, the original owner, had been reluctant to sell the tract which was once part of a farm before Oklahoma City burgeoning suburban growth threatened to engulf the crops and livestock. Anxious to obtain the advantageously situated land, Goldman after months of negotiations with Reding raised his buying price and offered payment in a manner giving the seller a tax break. As a clincher he promised to name his intended project after Reding and painted a glowing verbal picture of the future grandeur of the completed shopping center.[9]

The first step in developing his new acquisition sent Goldman to the Oklahoma City planning commission. That body granted a zone change on Goldman's request to local commercial listing to four acres north of Southwest 44 between South Western and South Klein on April 15, 1955.[10] Five days later a $500,000 building permit was issued to the Manhattan Construction Company covering the first unit of the projected center. Twelve tenants would occupy the 750 feet long by 150 feet wide structure. A medical center was planned for a later development which would provide six offices along the rear of this building unit. The second unit which continued north almost to Southwest 39 extended the center's length to 1,330 feet and completed a parking area large enough to mark off 700 parking spaces. Taking advantage of the expected automobile traffic, Phillips Petroleum Company decided to occupy a separate building which would house a service station.

Early in September the shopping center was still six weeks from completion. May winds and rain had caused bogging mud and material damage to the construction site. Despite these delays the center finally opened formally October 20. The edifice was strictly modern in appearance and construction. The main architectural feature of the complex, which was the largest erected in Oklahoma City up to that time, was the overwhelming expanse of plate glass relieved only by shop partitions, aluminum strips, and doors. A granite base with stone trim decorated the facade of the brick structure which was completely air-conditioned. In keeping with the hopefully style-making modernistic design the center's largest store, a Humpty-Dumpty market of course, contained the latest twist in supermarketing technology, a power-run food conveyor. Loaded sacks of groceries could be placed on a conveyor belt located near the checking stands and moved through openings in the plate glass windows to the sidewalk. Humpty Dumpty employees would be waiting outside to carry the bags to the customers' cars as they drove by the covered exterior walk.[11]

The entire shopping center was equipped with a 12-foot, aluminum-covered canopy. This feature was included for two reasons. It afforded protection from bad weather while shoppers walked beneath its cover and gave the center's developers a chance to eliminate store front parking in an effort to avoid traffic congestion. Adding to this inducement to shop at several stores on foot the center provided free strollers for carting children along the mall. The source of this latter innovation was rather easily ascertained given the history of Goldman's folding carrier and its popularity with harrassed mothers of small children. The formal opening of the center was attended by all the ballyhoo associated with a supermarket opening which was among the scheduled events. The city's largest shopping center should have had and did possess the community's biggest neon sign which measured 26 feet across and stood 36 feet above the ground. A free circus capable of entertaining 2,000 persons at a time ran for two weeks completing the major promotional attraction for the center.[12]

The Reding Shopping Center must be remembered as a trend-continuing project which was to eventually help alter the retail merchandising pattern of Oklahoma City. Most of the complex's tenants were branches of downtown establishments.[13] While in 1955 this expansion of existing urban stores to the suburbs was not regarded as an ominous sign for the continuation of the inner city's commercial hegemony, subsequent events proved otherwise. Goldman was one of those who recognized the import of Oklahoma City's tendency to sprawl in every direction from the downtown area dispersing the metropolitan area's population. Lacking an effective commercial mass transit system the subruban shopping center was the natural alternative to driving long distances to a downtown area increasingly plagued with traffic congestion and expensive parking.

Goldman bought several parcels of land, in some cases in section-sized lots, on the periphery of the city. Often the risks were considerable because the purchases were made in advance of zoning regulations and the placement of rival commercial properties. On more than one occasion he acted defensively by bidding on additional property to protect his original investment plans. The constant danger of overextension spurred the always aggressive Goldman imagination to more and larger developments. In 1956 his Almonte Development Company publicized plans for a residential subdivision located on Oklahoma City's southwestern side, west of May Avenue from SW 52 to SW 59. When fully developed it would cover approximately 265 acres. A shopping center utilizing 27 acres of this total would serve 1,000 homes in the $9,000 to $12,000 class. The Almonte Company set a new pattern later followed by virtually all of the future Goldman real estate developments, in not actually building the houses or shopping center. Instead the company exercised architectural supervision and arranged an integrated promotional program for the whole division. Goldman provided the major share of the project's financial underpinnings while Donald Davidson White, William A. Coleman, and Norman Hirschfield were general partners in the company. Coleman and Hirschfield of course were senior executives in Goldman's operations. White was an architectural graduate of the University of Nebraska and held a master's degree from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology. In addition to his academic background he brought to the project his acquired expertise in land development gained as an FHA land planner for Oklahoma and Arkansas and as Oklahoma City planning director.[14]

Three years after the launching of the Almonte subdivision Goldman helped form a finance company with seven other Oklahoma City businessmen. Along with Goldman the incorporators, Sylvanus G. Felix, Jean I. Everest, Dean A. McGee, John J. Griffin, Guy H. James, John E. Kirkpatrick, and R. A. Young, took all the stock of the $1 million Great Western Business Investment Company. William Gill, Sr. was named president of the company which proposed to offer capital for the construction of new and expanded business and industrial projects all over the state. It was estimated that the organization could expand their authorized capital to $12 million through credit which would in turn release as much as $60 million more for a variety of projects. The eight stockholders also served on Great Western's board of directors.[15]

Thus Goldman was hardly a novice in the real estate development business in 1962 when Littel joined in reshaping his finances. After the initial diversification of type and geography had been agreed upon, Goldman's holdings spread until the term "business empire" would not be an exaggerated adjective to employ in their description. For the next fifteen years the basic pattern of Goldman Enterprises remained fairly constant. Littel suggested areas for investment and Goldman added his merchandising talents to aid in the development of the projects. Delegating to Littel the tasks of overseeing the entirety of Goldman Enterprises position, the former grocer has concentrated on the success of each venture relying on Littel's monthly situation reports for a general overview.[16]

By 1974 Goldman interests were scattered over several states, cities, and Puerto Rico. The two major concerns of his interests centered on real estate development and saving and loan institutions. Some of the ventures were fully owned businesses while others were joint projects with associate investors. Included in the planned diversification program were apartment complexes in Atlanta, Georgia and San Juan, Puerto Rico; housing and commercial developments in Houston and Dallas, Texas and Tucson, Arizona; and banking and savings and loans in Houston and Otero, Colorado. Not all of these investments met with Goldman's initial approval. He maintained a businessman's understandable reluctance to become involved in commercial areas unfamiliar to his experience.[17]

To guard against failure Goldman has always kept in mind the basic business principles that he evolved in building his grocery chain. All of his accummulated knowledge of merchandising concepts and financial dealings when reduced to a common denominator meant understanding people. Just as a successful political officeholder generally developes an instinct about how their constituencies will react in a given situation so does a businessman learn to guage in advance what will effectively appeal to his customers. In most instances where selling an idea or product was the requirement for achieving a financial goal, Goldman simply applied the selling techniques learned while vending groceries.

The Otero Savings and Loan Association of La Junta, Colorado was one of those opportunities for investment that Goldman only reluctantly undertook. However, once embarked, he felt no qualms. His closest business associate, Littell, has remarked that the key to Goldman's success has been self discipline in maintaining an inner confidence so that if he "doesn't always make the right decision, he can always make the decision right."[18] Goldman attempted to insure the vindication of the Otero investment by recalling a lesson learned in the past. When he had purchased grocery stores in Oklahoma City during the depression years the original names of the stores were left unchanged at first on the theory that people enjoy the feeling of dealing with a known, local individual. When Goldman Enterprises gained a controlling interest in the Colorado savings company no sweeping personnel changes were affected. The officers and the board of directors stayed nearly intact; they were replaced only when death or retirement created a vacancy. The exception of course was the president of the company and chairman of the board, Merle C. Carpenter who was hired away from a Pueblo, Colorado firm thus maintaining an image of a local institution serving local interests.[19]

Carpenter has succeeded in retaining the flavor a home-owned and operated business while expanding the scope of the Otero company's activities. Offices for the enterprise in January, 1974 were located in Pueblo, Colorado Springs, and Denver as well as La Junta while three additions were planned for the next year. Otero's publicity has dwelled less on the firm's assets in excess of $55 million than on its linkage with local past history. Much has been made of the fact that the savings and loan association was begun in Otero County, Colorado "83 years ago in July, 1890." Reflecting that pride in a common heritage that all area Coloradoans feel, the association adopted as the company symbol, Six Flage--the United States, Colorado, Texas, Spain, France, and Mexico--that flew over Southeastern Colorado and Otero's first office.[20]

The same caution Goldman displayed in furthering the Otero investment was evident in his ventures into the much larger community of Houston, Texas. Despite his large share in the projected $150,000,000 Regency Square development Goldman's name has not been prominent in the wealth of publicity surrounding the project. Instead the firm of Marvin E. Legget & Associates, Houston residential and commercial developers and Anrem Corporation, a subsidiary of American National Insurance Company, were named as the program planners. Legget and Goldman have been partners since 1964 but few Houston businessmen were aware of the connection since it was believed that resentment and possible obstacles might have been placed in the project's path if it were known that an out of state developer was involved.

The Regency Square project made public in September, 1971 began its construction of what its publicity material has termed "the Golden Micropolis" in 1972. It comprised 125 acres at the corner of Houston's Southwest Freeway and Hillcraft Drive bounded on the north by Harwin Drive. Thus far only one building, the 12-story Texas Bank & Trust Tower, has been erected from among the projected 14 high rise office buildings. The structure contained 234,000 square feet of floor space and was to have an 893-car garage. Among the directors' names of the building's principle tenant, Texas Bank & Trust, were those of Legget, Littell, and Goldman.[21]

Obviously at seventy-five years of age Goldman has not retired in the ordinary sense of the word's meaning. Most individuals at a similar stage in life would be reluctant, if indeed they were physically and mentally able, to continually enter new fields of business endeavor. Yet Goldman has set an unusual standard of success in his retirement years. It must be considered as extremely doubtful that he will ever quit the lifelong habit of conducting his own business affairs. One might easily gain the assumption that Goldman's entrepreneurial career has represented his total life.

If a man who has survived over seven decades of life and possesses wealth whose aggregate totals in the millions of dollars and still works on a routine basis then that individual appears suspect of being driven by habit or compulsion. In Goldman's case his devotion to his business can be explained in other ways. He has felt no need to escape to the golf course for relaxation because no tension or apprehension results from his daily attention to business detail. The intricacies of finance and merchandising offer a familiar and welcome challenge, free of any attendant worry. For Goldman his vocation has also been his still very enjoyable avocation.

Many social scientists and social critics have condemned American businessmen whose careers have seemingly dwelled wholly on the art of making money. The stereotype of the capitalist who cannot quit his appointed rounds due to an insatiable greed or because of an atrophied consciousness of the world around him has been unfortunately prevalent. Goldman's fascination with business has stemmed less from any desire to accummulate greater wealth than from the satisfaction that comes from utilizing one's painfully acquired skills and knowledge to the fullest extent. When speaking of his latest business venture Goldman made no reference to the profit possibilities of the Regency Square project. It was the unusual beauty of the central fountain plaza that he emphasized just as in earlier years the real thrill of building a larger, more modern grocery market was not the prospect of bigger profits but the satisfaction of creating a new commercial concept.[22]

Goldman's personal life has been marked by the same steady tenor that has characterized his business and public career. Although he has probably not thought of himself as part of the mainstream of American Jewish life his family relations, religious beliefs, philosophy and even his business affairs have reflected his presence in this ethnic grouping. According to a statistical description of the Jewish community in the United States Jews have tended to have closer family ties than other societal groups. They have compiled a lower divorce rate and birth rate than the national average with the average number of children being two. The Jewish community has produced more self-employed businessmen than any other group. Although regular in attendance at temple services few Jews' personal religiosity has been very profound. Reform Jews have emphasized the moral and ethical values of Judaism rather than the theological content. Despite their intense interest in politics they have not been known to vote for ethnics especially but have been more consistent voters than other groups because of a greater awareness of the power potential of political hegemony.[23]

Goldman married when past thirty years of age. He and his wife reared two sons, Monte and Alfred. Both of them entered the family business after college educations and show an unusually high regard and affection for their father.[24] Goldman's philanthropies have provided more than ample evidence of his adherence to the ethical and moral values of his religious faith. He has been a frequent contributor to political campaigns and a friend of several state and national figures of the Democratic and Republican parties yet he has never espoused the particular causes of Jewish officeholders.

If Goldman has failed to view himself as a member of the Jewish community, readily identifiable from a non-Jew majority, he has done so quite accurately. Oklahoma Jewry, and especially the Reform branch, has become very similar to the surrounding Christian community; their culture patters "are to a large extent, the same as those of the general American community in terms of language, leisure time activities, and ...even of stereotypes in thinking--including religious concepts as well."[25]

A man's life can never be adequately chronicled or explained, only a partial description is possible. Goldman's hearty constitution and logical but imaginative thinking processes render premature any final statement of his contribution to the historical development of Oklahoma. That his career as a pioneer businessman, inventor, and philanthropist has had a beneficial effect on the course of the state's progress from frontier to modernized society cannot be challenged.

FOOTNOTES

[1]H. Arthur Littell, Interview, Oklahoma City, Oklahoma, May 7, 1974.

[2]Ibid.

[3]Sylvan N. Goldman, Interview, Oklahoma City, Oklahoma, April 20, 1974.

[4]The New York Times, (October 8, 1956), p. 38; The New York Journal of Commerce, (October 8, 1956), p. 4; Electronic News, (October 22, 1956), p. 10; The Oklahoma City Times, (January 3, 1957), p. 18.

[5]Sylvan N. Goldman, Interview, Oklahoma City, Oklahoma, April 20, 1974.

[6]The Oklahoma City Times, (July 7, 1955), p. 11.

[7]C. H. Powers to Sylvan N. Goldman, July 30, 1956, Sylvan N. Goldman Collection, Oklahoma City, Oklahoma.

[8]The Oklahoma City Times, (February 25, 1966), p. 11; The Wall Street Journal, (February 25, 1966), p. 4.

[9]Sylvan N. Goldman, Interview, Oklahoma City, Oklahoma, April 20, 1974.

[10]The Daily Oklahoman, (April 15, 1955), p. 14.

[11]Ibid. (April 20, 1955), p. 7.

[12]The Oklahoma City Times, (April 27, 1955), p. 21; The Capital Hill Beacon, (October 16, 1955), p. 2.

[13]Included in the list of tenants were the Oklahoma Tire and Supply Company, C. R. Anthony, Incorporated, Andy Anderson Sporting Goods Company, T G & Y Stores, Lerner's Shops, and Parks Apparel Company, Ibid.

[14]The Daily Oklahoman,(July 8, 1956), p. 4.

[15]The Oklahoma City Times (April 24, 1959), p. 1, (May 12, 1959), p. 7.

[16]H. Arthur Littell, Interview, Oklahoma City, Oklahoma, May 7, 1974.

[17]Sylvan N. Goldman, Interview, Oklahoma City, Oklahoma, April 20, 1974.

[18]H. Arthur Littell, Interview, Oklahoma City, Oklahoma, May 7, 1974.

[19]Sylvan N. Goldman, Interview, Oklahoma City, Oklahoma, April 20, 1974.

[20]Otero Savings, "Statement of Conditions" August 31, 1973, *The Otero Club Newsletter* (January, 1974), Sylvan N. Goldman Collection, Oklahoma City, Oklahoma.

[21]H. Arthur Littel, Interview, Oklahoma City, Oklahoma, May 7, 1974; The Houston Post, (October 3, 1971), p. 4, (October 22, 1972), p. 3.

[22]Sylvan N. Goldman, Interview, Oklahoma City, Oklahoma, April 20, 1974.

[23]Yaffe, *The American Jew*, pp. 227, 240-241; Joseph R. Rosenbloom, "The American Jewish Community", *Meet the American Jew*, ed. and comp. Menkus, pp. 16-17; Shapiro, "The Sociology of Jewish Life," ed. and comp. Menkus, p. 102.

[24]Abraham G. Duker, "Emerging Culture Patterns in American Jewish Life: The Psycho-Cultural Approach to the Study of Jewish Life in America," *The Jewish Experience in America*, ed. Karp, pp. 386-387.

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