

## **White Lightning**

*by Bob Boucher 4/19/2013*

One fine summer day, my Grandma Aldea wanted to visit her brother Pete who lived on his farm a few miles out of town. We all piled into Grandpa's 32 Packard Limo, Grandpa and Papa sat up front, Grandma and Mama in the back, and my brother and I sat on the two small jump seats facing rear. Uncle Jim and aunt Albertine followed in their Chevy.

The caravan proceeded west on Valley Street, turned left on Mansfield Ave, and right on Main Street then proceeded West. After passing the Poor Farm on the right and the Cemetery on the left, Main Street ends in a Y. The north fork leads to Coventry, home of our Revolutionary War Hero Nathan Hale. The south fork leads to Uncle Pete's farm a few miles further down the road, but first the highway must cross the Willimantic River, turn right and follow the river upstream, then finally turn a sharp left as the road approaches the Hop River at Sandy Bottom, one of our favorite swimming holes, and an easy bike ride from town.

The Highway then follows the Hop River another half mile before, making a sweeping right turn at Katzman's Corners. Uncle Pete's farm is only one mile further down the road. That turn at Katzman's Corners is Nasty. The roadway is banked all wrong, three feet lower on the outside and higher on the inside. At 45 you feel like your car is going to tip over. In winter rain or snow it is dangerous, the scene of many bad accidents.

Finally we arrived at Uncle Pete's farm. It was not much of a farm, one bull, three or four milk cows and a few dozen chickens. The women went into the house and visited while sipping sweet wine, nibbling on cookies and chatting like ladies do. The men went out into the barn. I figure the barn was the probably real reason for the visit; it housed Uncle Pete's Still and lots of Mason jars of White Lightning\*.

We kids followed the men into the barn. Once they started drinking, they began talking real loud, laughing and telling stupid dirty jokes. We were told to go outside and play, but outside wasn't much fun except maybe when we chased a few chickens.

After a little while old Uncle Jim came staggering out of the barn and went around the corner, put one hand up on side of the barn for better balance, then he proceeded to relieve himself. Halfway through his Piss Uncle Jim put both hands up on the side of the barn and started screaming,

Help! Help! Help!

The barn is falling on me.

There he was, two hands pushing against the barn wall with all his might while his dickey was still dangling out. Of course the harder he pushed, the harder the barn pushed back. All the men came running out of the barn to save him. Then, in hysterics they gently led poor old Uncle Jim back into the barn.

Drunken men can act so silly at times.

*\*White Lightning is homemade whisky aged in Mason Jars for at least 15 minutes.*