



After business reverses in Boston, John moved the family to Maine in 1909
 (first Rockland, then Bangor; the Jewish community in Rockland was too small for him)

John continued his business in Bangor: as the owner of the "John Paul Company", he manufactured and peddled men's dress pants throughout the state; Pickering Square was "home base", and the Schiro family, with a business next door and homes side by side, were the Pauls "best friends".

(subsequently , when John became ill and could no longer work, Henry left college and took over, reorienting the business to retail men's work clothes/odd sizes, based on the regional demographics and niche needs)

Dear Judy,

Thanks for all the information. Eventually we will get this pieced together, so that our children will know. I think that's a very worthy effort.

When you get to see Meredith's scrapbook, you will notice that sometimes I spelled Sidney with an "i" and sometimes a "y". That's because I really wasn't sure... so I guess I covered my bases by doing it both ways.

My notes from when you and I talked last winter say that John Paul was 18 when he came to the US, which is different from Charlie's notes from a 1994 conversation with my father (and also my own recollection of discussions with Dad, which seem to indicate that John was younger when he immigrated). We should probably try to figure that out, just for the record. There is a big difference between 12 and 18. We also still need to try to figure out when the family moved to Bangor. I guessed 1903, but Jim thinks it was 1907 (which could be).

All of the information that I wrote about John's interest in medicine came from notes I took as we talked last winter. Maybe I misunderstood what you were saying, so we should probably review the details and then run it by Aunt Alice for confirmation. Here's what I have in my notes from our discussion:

1. John Paul came to the US at the age of 18. His parents had been paying someone to be in the army in his stead and, because of a change in the law, that was no longer possible. That's why he left Lithuania.

2. He had been attending the Pharmacia in Lithuania, which was a medical school. (question: Could "Pharmacia" have been another name for high school? If so, given the European schooling system he might have been around 12... and possibly medicine was a goal, for later.)

3. He tried to get into medical school in the US but couldn't because his English wasn't good enough. (I do know that the interest in medicine was genuine, because my Dad said that his father was a self-taught expert on medicine and had a full set of medical books that he read often. Those books used to be in the E. Summer Street house, but after my parents moved to Howard Street, despite a lot of looking, no one could find them.)

4. When he couldn't get into medical school, a friend of the family got him a job in a pants factory, and that's how he got started as a manufacturer.

5. He brought his brother Sam over and took him into the business. There were problems with the brother's decisions, and that led to the ultimate demise of the business. (I left that out of the bio..)

6. John died at the age of 67. (That would be consistent with the recent info you sent, which has my father at age 28 when his father died – not 19 as I said in the page in Meredith's scrapbook. I now recall my father telling me that he and my mother first noticed each other when he was going to the synagogue every morning for his father's yortzeit (sp?), and he stopped by my grandmother's house afterwards – which was something of a tradition in Bangor. It all still fits with the timing of my father's need to leave Columbia, because I recall hearing that John Paul's final illness (advanced diabetes and heart failure) lasted for many years, with him in a nursing home at the end. And my father told me many times that he had no choice but to leave Columbia to go home because of his father's advancing illness. I made a leap that the return from Columbia and John's death were closer together, which evidently wasn't so.)

I never knew about the Rabbinical training. That's fascinating. I do know that John was a very religious man, and that's where my father got a lot of his commitment to tradition. As a child growing up, I always thought it was nice the way my father and Uncle Sidney fasted together on Yom Kippur, walking back to our house for a nap before returning to evening services. It was something they did together, every year, very much as a team. Perhaps it was a way of honoring their father.

We both got a bit of a different slant on the Bangor business. My father definitely told me they were not well off... in his words, certainly no where near as poor as my mother's family (they were *very* poor!), but not affluent (a lot of that is perspective, based on what others have – and in those days, many people were starving). The house they grew up in was on the same street as the synagogue, right next to the Schiro family, who were their best friends. Later on they moved to E. Summer Street, which is the house I grew up in. When John saved a little money, he loaned it to his best friend Mr. Schiro so he could open a shoe store right next to John's. Old Mrs. Schiro once told me she always thought of the Pauls as family.

The story that I got about the Bangor business was that John manufactured dress pants, just like he did in Boston, but the market in rural Maine for dress pants was extremely limited (for most families, maybe one pair a year). When my father was faced with the decision about whether or not to take over the business, he said yes only on the condition that he could convert the operation to a men's retail work clothes business – catering to the farmers who came from all over the state to Bangor once a week to sell their wares. From that he moved into work uniforms for companies and odd sizes. He never resumed the manufacturing part.

My father also told me that he and Sidney looked like John. I still wonder why we have no pictures of him.... (would have been nice)

My father also told me that John was a very stern man, and extremely strict. I think he was definitely the disciplinarian. Dora, by everyone's account, was very sweet. And my father really revered her. My mother once told me to watch and see how a man treated his mother, for that was a good indicator as to how he would treat his wife. She said my father was very good to his mother.

When we get this all sorted out, I will redo Meredith's page (it's all on computer, and the pages just slip into the book, so that will be easy). Then we will have a text that is as consistent as possible. I am committed to keeping it to one page, so it will just touch on the highlights... giving the children a sense of their heritage. With four separate families, I think anything more than a page is overkill (and won't be read).

All this makes me wish we had asked more questions and written things down. I always thought I talked a lot with my parents about their families, especially in all the hours I spent with each of them at the end. But there is so much I still don't know..... and it really is a great