

Notes dated May 25, 1977

Billy's story in response to questions by son Arthur at Magnolia Street home in Augusta.

In 1935 Billy was 19 and began selling life insurance in Newport. His first day commission was \$265, but instead of returning to selling the second day, he went with granddad at the old man's instance to Augusta to open a liquor store. The store was to occupy what is now Harris Department Store, next to Cannon Drug.

Billy went to work sweeping hay off the floor and out of the way. Granddad begin processing the first delivery, that is checking invoice against order and delivery.

Billy made first sell right out of the case, he remember it as either a pint or half pint of whiskey, but couldn't quite recall the brand. For two weeks the two of them lived in the back end of the store during the week and went back to Newport on the weekend.

They moved the whole family to Augusta at the end of two weeks and lived in the house on Mulberry Street just south of the library. That would be center of the block, between Methodist Church and Dick Gregory home.

Nine months later the city voted itself dry, so the store was closed and all moved back to Newport.

Other notes from other times, and various sources...

apparently tried to open stores in Little Rock area two times and was burned out both times.

First attempt was in Little Rock, second was in Levy or what is now North Little Rock. At least the Levy store was known to be arson and a complete loss. No dates on these attempts.

Arthur (1881-1941) worked in a store in Newport at first, Otto Bowen is name I remember today 1/30/03 but not certain. The 1906 newspaper ad also implied that he had worked for someone in another grocery store for nearly 9 years. Family tradition holds he went to Salt Lake City, UT when about 12 years old and worked for about three years, again probably for Otto Bowen.