

July 12, 1987 Written (Sunday)

Name - Silva

Roof-Jump 1928-29

My mother had a sister named Silva who lived across the street from us on Third St. East Cambridge in a 3-family house, owned by an Italian family. They also owned the grocery store on the first floor.

I remember going to Mr. Spera's store every day (we had a charge per wk). for whatever my mother would need. My aunt Mame Silva had a nephew who was living with her because his father had died and his mother Lena Simmonds went despondent. My mother took in one son, Manuel Simmonds and she took in the older son Joe. He was a little retarded and she and her husband couldn't handle him. He just about did as he pleased hitting kids in the neighborhood and taking others kids toys, bikes etc.

He also used to hit her when she wouldn't give him his own way. We all had a tough time with him. I got along with him although I was small and younger than he. I used to wrestle with him down the Charles Riber on the grass and he like d me because I wasn't afraid of him.

My aunt used to call me sometimes to take him out for a walk because he had hit her. I would fight with him and he couldn't talk too plain but would never hurt me. Even after chasing me and catching me. I guess things were worse than we thought with my aunt. She was a bit woman. I will never forget one Saturday morning about 10 a.m. I was going into the store across the street from my house where she lived over the store. I looked into the yard to see if Benny Spera whose father owned the store had his bike outside because we were going down to the Charles River riding on our bikes. All of a sudden I saw this big thing come down through the air from the top of the roof. I had just turned away, not realizing someone had fallen off the roof. I guess my aunt couldn't take life anymore with her husband drinking and fighting with her and the beatings she was taking from him. All this and a retarded sea nephew, got too much for her and she jumped off the third story roof. I will never forget that sight and sound as long as I live. Blood all over the cement walk in the yard and all the neighbors yelling and screaming. My poor mother came running across the street and seeing her sister lying there was a traumatic shock. The ambulance came quickly and took her to the morgue, an awful sight for a young kid like me to see.