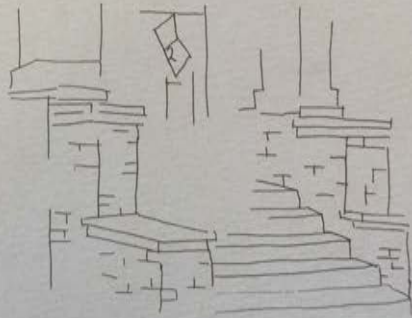


Carroll
The Stoop

by

Ruth Miller Senior





August 1991

Chicago, Illinois

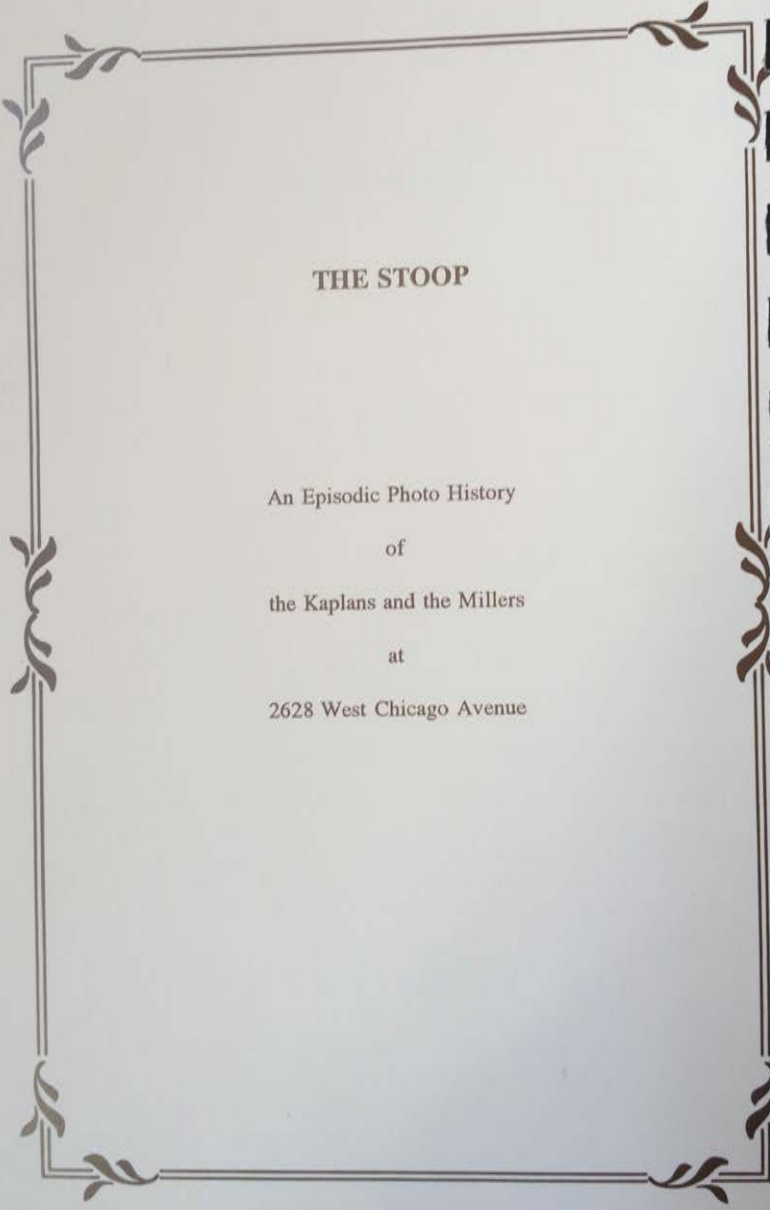
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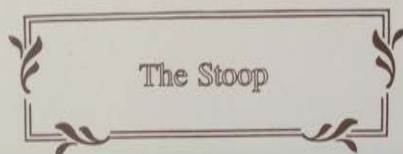
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THE STOOP

An Episodic Photo History
of
the Kaplans and the Millers
at
2628 West Chicago Avenue



The Stoop

It began in 1916. Samuel Kaplan, brother Morris Kaplan and brother-in-law Nathan Miller built the three-flat apartment building next to their partnership's newly relocated American Rug Co.

Sam and Esther, with their four children--Rose, 16; Bea, 13; Hy, 10; and Ben, 8--had the second floor. Morris and Sarah, childless, took the top floor. Nathan and Minnie, Bubbie (Yetta Kaplan), Ruth, 5 and Janet (just a few months old) occupied the first floor--easiest for the oldest and youngest. Evelyn arrived there five years later.

The handsome brick building was fronted by six wide concrete steps and entry--the stoop. For forty years the family and their friends flowed over the stoop. There were good times and hard times...the "Roaring Twenties"...the Depression...Landsleit from Bialystok--"the old country"--brought war relief packages in two world wars (American Rug was a distribution center)...fellow congregants from Moor Chaim schule laid Bubbie out in her burial clothes in the first floor parlor...members of the Workmen's Circle sat with Sam on the second floor, during the trauma of his foot amputation...and all three floors were thronged with celebrants at Kaplan relations' weddings.

For all of us, the words "the stoop" bring a flood of memories. Those of us who grew up there rummaged through boxes of "the pictures" to contribute to this episodic photo history. We wish we had had the foresight to realize that our descendants would cherish glimpses of the family's past. We would have clicked our Brownies and Kodaks more often and with more care. But, with all its inadequacies, here it is to illustrate our point: we had a close, loving family in those years on "the stoop."

Ruth Miller Senior
Passover, 1991

Note: Dates on some of these pictures are conjectures--guessed at by style of a garment, height of a child, construction next door.



The Kaplans and the Millers

in a photograph taken by Mark Yellon around the time of the move to Chicago Avenue.

(From left to right)

Top Row: Nathan Miller, Morris Kaplan, Rebecca (Bea) Kaplan, Rose Kaplan, Samuel Kaplan.

Second Row: Minnie Miller holding Janet Miller, Sarah Kaplan, Yetta Kaplan, Esther Kaplan.

Bottom Row: Ben Kaplan, Ruth Miller, Hy Kaplan.

1916 through the '20s



In the beginning: The "Kinder," Hy and Ben Kaplan and Ruth Miller, obviously dressed for Yom Tov -- 1916.

The lot east of the stoop was vacant, as were the fronting lots across Chicago Avenue, where our Sicilian neighbors on Superior Street, grazed their goats.



Rose Kaplan, c. 1918-19, obviously dressed for a date --with cousin Mark Yellon -- whom she married in 1920.

Ben Kaplan and Ruth Miller were to be wedding attendants, but came down with the mumps!



Bea Kaplan was recruited on graduation from Marshall High School to man the American Rug Co. office at 2630, next door. c. 1920.



Bea Kaplan, ready for a Sunday excursion with Will Lerner. She married him in 1925. c. 1920

The neighbors in the apartment building across the empty lot were Jewish and, later, Polish.



Janet (then still called Jeanette) and Evelyn Miller, ready for a family picnic--in the American Rug truck, probably to Wheeling Dam No. 3. 1924



A new generation: Rose Yellon with young Donald. 1924



Bubbie (Yetta Kaplan) with Don and newly-arrived Alvin Yellon. c. 1923



Hy Kaplan, in the family tradition, also went to work for the American Rug.
1925

A large wet-wash laundry has been built
down the block, and the Coca-Cola sign
has been repainted. The Chicago Ave.
streetcar fare in 1928 was seven cents.



Minnie Miller, dressed up in satin, a dress she probably made. As a former seamstress, she sewed for the family in the early years. c. 1925



Evelyn Miller and Donald Yellon. c. 1925

Although Sam Kaplan often said he yearned to be a farmer, the Kaplans and Millers were definitely urban types--witness the never-tended "lawn."



Bea Lerner with Don Yellon. c. 1925



Since Don Yellon is wearing the same outfit as in the preceding picture, the assumption is that the date of the above, with Janet and Evelyn Miller, is also the same. c. 1925



Bubbie (Yetta Kaplan), Nathan Miller, Ruth Miller, Janet Miller and Evelyn Miller. Passover, 1925.

Bubbie loved adornment and carried herself with great dignity.



Janet Miller, Ruth Miller,
neighbor Lottie Lapinsky
and Evelyn Miller in a
home-made production of
"The Frog Prince."
c. 1925

In the pre-radio and TV
years, we devised our own
entertainment. For this
production Ruth adapted
the script, Gertie Lapinsky
made the costumes (the
Lapinsky porch on Rice
St. can just be glimpsed),
the stoop was the setting.

Early 1930s.



Ruth Miller

By now the lot next door had a brick building built smack against the stoop--a laundry. And the goats grazing across Chicago Ave. had made way for a dry cleaning plant.





Minnie Miller brings her first grandson, Paul Senior, to the stoop. 1935



Minnie Miller, left, and with daughter Evelyn.



Minnie Miller in the mid-30s, dressed to go to a meeting of the Chicago Builders of Los Angeles Sanitorium (later the City of Hope), which chapter she chaired for many years.



Minnie Miller, Dick and Arthur Lerner, she home from her meeting and the boys home from Chopin School. c. 1936



A different stoop...

Minnie Miller, Sarah and Morris Kaplan, Janet Miller on a January holiday in sunny Arizona. 1936



Minnie Miller and Paul Senior. 1936



Paul Senior, a "charro" home from Mexico, with his cousins, Richard and Arthur Lerner (nicknamed by Paul Dickie-botz and Arthur-botz, hence the Botz Boys). 1940



Paul Senior back to the stoop
on a visit from Mexico. 1941
with Dad, Clarence.



with Tia (Aunt) Janet.



Bubbie and Zadie,
(Minnie and Nathan Miller),
mama and tia (Ruth Senior and
Janet Miller).

The youngest of Bea's children -- Marilyn Lerner, with Minnie Miller and Bea in the background. c. 1945



Marilyn and Minnie are still here, but Bea has vanished.

new grandson for
Minnie Miller to
"qvell" about--
Gerry Stahl.



-- Minnie Miller
with Gerry Stahl.



-- Minnie Miller,
Gerry Stahl, Janet
Miller, Marilyn Lerner



Great-grandchildren's day at the stoop -- 1946



Marilyn Lerner

Marilyn Lerner and Gerry Stahl



Elinor and Marcy
Kaplan (Hy Kaplan's
daughters) and Gerry
Stahl

Minnie Miller
with Gerry Stahl
and Marilyn Lerner



Portrait of the artist as a young man.



Arthur Lerner

c. 1947

1950s



Above -- Minnie Miller.



Below -- with visiting daughter Ruth



The passageway between the shop and the house was often used to park the family car(s) when they became affordable. The first one was a Maxwell.

After the stoop

The children grown, married and dispersed, Bubbie, Sam and Esther, Morris and Sarah passed away, the building at 2628 was sold in 1955.

Minnie Miller died in 1963 in Florida. On July 5, 1965, family members gathered at the Workmen's Circle Colony in South Haven, Michigan, to celebrate Nathan Miller's 80th birthday.



Rear: Clarence Senior, Hy Kaplan, Dick Lerner, Ben Stahl, Alan Stahl.

Center: Ruth Senior, Nathan Miller, Gert Kaplan, Evelyn Stahl, Lillian Lerner.

Front: Dan Lerner, Ann Lerner.



Return to the stoop

At Passover 1990, Ben Lerner, Ruth Senice and Donald Yellon came back to the stoop on a sentimental journey. Some seventy-four years had passed since Ben Kaplan and Ruth Miller first sat up those six steps.



Jack Yellon took the first photo in this collection. His grandson, Alan Yellon, took the last.

