

Two E.W. VanHart Incidents and a College Avenue Incident

Preponderance of the 2015 Testimony:

1. These events occurred about 65 years prior to 2015, when they were recorded from WCSS memory, here.
2. These incidents involve one of the Sages' neighbors, an abutter just across 86th Street – then a two-lane road.
3. The neighbor's name and address was E.W. VanHart on the southeast corner of 86th street and Park Street.
4. Rusty: "I think what started the feud was one time when we were wading in the flooding creek that ran through our pasture we wandered into his yard and he yelled at us to get off his property, or something like that." Fred says he was not at that incident but thinks this sounds plausible.
5. However, Fred thinks he heard that the initial and ongoing annoyance came via Dr. Sage finding that Van Hart habitually would rake **leaves from his lawn**, carry them north across 86th street and burn them on Dr. Sages side of the road.
6. As a generality, Fred was in Michigan when some of the several incidents happened.
7. **The VanHart Smoke Bomb Event:** Carl had filled one of his parent's round xmas ornaments with homeⁱ made black powder, and put it on the evil VanHart's porch and lit it and ran across 86th street into the Sage pasture.
8. Fred dimly remembers this and accepts Carl's (re-remembered) version of this story except that Fred believes he didn't go up onto VanHart's [concrete?] porch, thinking that this was too audacious and putting it there could start a fire. Fred still thinks AIF might have been with F & C.
9. Carl originally denied being the smoke bomb perpetrator, but seemed to know all the details. Then he admitted being the perp.
10. **The VanHart Mailbox Event:** This is based on Fred's memory of a VanHart mailbox on the north side of 86th Street being the victim of a drive-by attempt to "blow it up" using a cherry bomb or something similar. Leaning out of the car window, we (AIF?) fumbled around and failed to simply get the cherry bomb inside. The explosive was in desperation crudely jammed between the exterior Mail Flag and the outside of the mailbox. Fred our car placed the cherry bomb, and then sped off to the west before it the explosion went off. He thinks a later inspection showed that about all it did was to smudge the flag and the outside of the mailbox.
11. **The College Avenue Mailbox Event:** "One Halloween, it was just Fred and I. We attached one of my special salt peter time delayed fuses to a cherry bomb, and put it in the mail box across the street from Fred's drive and then went and waited up in an apple tree, I believe, on the north side of Fred's drive." **Fred doesn't remember this but, since Carl is pretty sure, Fred believes this story is true.**
12. Based on some data on when the interurban roadbed was leveled, this event is dated as after Fred returned to Indianapolis from Gary – maybe 1954.

Unresolved Facts:

1. Rusty and Carl's word on whether the VanHart feud was started by raking/burning leaves.
2. Carl's estimated year for the College Avenue Mailbox Halloween Event.
3. Whether anybody else besides Carl and Fred were at any of the 3 events.
4. Whether there was a distinct Creek Flooding Event. Or other events involving VanHart.

Assertions of Fact, Half-Truths, and Other Representations (oldest at top, newest at bottom)

On Aug 10, 2015, at 11:44 AM, PETERS CARL L <clpeters2@sbcglobal.net> wrote:

I started [my 2015 bike trip] at the Kroger in Nora, but didn't turn my watch on until I got to Lara's. I returned to the Kroger via 86th Street, but forgot to turn the watch off until I was driving home on 86th.... I went thru Windcomb to get to Williams creek from the Monon. I saluted the VanHarts house for you two at Park and 86th.

On Mon, Aug 10, 2015 at 1:50 PM, Russell Sage <russosago@gmail.com> wrote:

E.W. VanHart as I remember and especially his mailbox. More crime that Fred was involved in.

On Aug 10, 2015, at 6:21 PM, Fred wrote:

Wasn't it Alf who tried to 1) blow the flag off his mailbox and 2) who lit a smoke bomb on his porch on Haloween?

I do think I was in the car when the former happened.

On Monday, August 10, 2015 8:29 PM, Russell Sage <russosago@gmail.com> wrote:

As I remember it somebody put a bomb/firecracker in E.W's mailbox and it blew the door open, maybe even off. I don't remember AF being there. I think what started the feud was one time when we were wadding in the flooding creek that ran through our pasture we wondered into his yard and he yelled at us to get off his property, or something like that. So that was our way at getting back at him for being so unfriendly.

On Mon, Aug 10, 2015 at 9:05 PM Carl said:

It wasn't me, who filled a Xmas tree ornament with home made black gun powder and put it on their front porch, lit the fuse and ran across 86th street into the Sage pasture.

On Mon, Aug 10, 2015 at 9:32 PM Rusty said:

Fred, If not you then who was it? How do you remember that it was a Xmas tree ornament that was filled with gun powder if it wasn't you who filled said ornament with the deadly powder and then placed it in the mailbox. If not you then you must have been really close to what was a federal offense and therefore guilty by association or maybe even an accessory to the crime. Your only plea is that the statute of limitations has saved your ass. Is this right consular Peters.

On Aug 11, 2015, at 2:54 PM, PETERS CARL L wrote:

When my boys were about 8 to 12 years old, they had a neighbor friend, Dorian Peters (no relation) over, and they found in some old box way back in a bunch of old things, a cherry bomb from our youth. Now by their generation, cherry bombs were verboten, but you could buy smoke bombs that looked like cherry bombs of old. They thought it was a smoke bomb. They gave it to Dorian and told him to hold on to it, until it was about to ignite and then throw it, so the "smoke" would be in the air. He did, and boy, did they get a surprise and **Dorian got little bits of shrapnel in his face**, for he did throw it at the last minute. I first learned about this 20 years later.

On Tue, Aug 11, 2015 at 4:34 PM, Carl wrote:

I remember two events. One Halloween, it was just Fred and I. We attached one of **my** special salt peter time delayed fuses to a cherry bomb, and put it **in** the mail box across the street from Fred's drive and then went and waited up in an apple tree, I believe, on the north side of Fred's drive.

Another event, I don't know, if both of you were along, I know Fred was a co-conspirator, **I had filled one of my parent's round xmas ornaments with home made black powder**, and **we** put it on the evil VanHart's porch and lit it and ran into the Sage pasture.

One of my most brilliant performances occurred in my kitchen, when **I got impatient and tried to dry my black powder formula brew**, which I had mixed with water in order to get an even consistency **by putting it on a pie pan and holding it over a lighted candle**. I could never understand **how "understanding" my mother was!**

On Tue, Aug 11, 2015 at 9:40 PM Rusty wrote:

He is a lucky boy. I saw a boy, a patient, who held on to a firecracker too long, letting go of it in the last second. He ruptured one of his ear drums which needed surgery to repair.

Phil Moenning came over to my house once when I was mixing up some gunpowder. I had a pipe cleaner wick and I wanted to show him how it worked. So, and this was really stupid) I placed the wick over the opening of a ball jar that was partially filled with gun powder and was sitting on my desk top. I lit the wick and we watched it slowly burn, just like it was suppose to until it broke in half and fell into the jar. And you know what happened. There was a huge flash and smoke filled my bedroom. I found a **large black crater in the top of my desk** that I had to explain to my mother. Luckily we weren't hurt or burned.

On Wed, Aug 12, 2015 at 10:31 AM, clpeters2@sbcglobal.net wrote:

I remember it well.

On Wednesday, August 12, 2015 10:40 AM, fchase@gmail.com wrote:

So what year do you think this might have been? I didn't live on College Avenue after 7th Grade. I don't remember any houses or mailboxes on the east side of College Ave. while I lived there.



1942-43 maybe, from College Avenue our Dutch Colonial 'Cottage' to the west.

On Wed, Aug 12, 2015 at 12:07 PM, Carl wrote:

Probably after you moved back.

On Aug 13, 2015, at 8:31 AM, Fred wrote:

So we did this in 1955 maybe?

I've found these facts:

1903 Interurban railroad begins serving the Pleasant Grove area.

1914 Pleasant Grove renamed Home Place and subdivided.

1938 The last interurban car travels through Clay Township.

The area we now know of as Home Place was originally called Pleasant Grove.

The name Home Place appears to have been derived by a man named Orin Jessup in 1914.

Orin Jessup owned the Orin Jessup Land Co., and in 1914 he purchased the land between 111th and 104th streets and between College Avenue and McPherson Street. Hamilton County records show division of the land in plots for sale in a planned subdivision called Home Place.

Blog entries about "The College Avenue Interurban":

http://dirtamericana.blogspot.com/2010/03/college-avenue-interurban-stop-by-stop_31.html

I have not found when the interurban roadbed on the East side of College Avenue was bulldozed away. (I assume there would not be any mailboxes along there prior to that.)

On **Aug 13, 2015, at 9:58 AM**, Fred wrote:

" I remember my dad being disappointed that he didn't buy a couple of those lots as an investment."

What year might that have been?

On Thu, **Aug 13, 2015 at 11:02 AM**, Russell Sage wrote:

Can't say that I recognize anything in the pictures from "The College Avenue Interurban"

I do remember walking along the interurban roadbed on the East side of College Ave. and finding railroad spikes and few decaying ties.

The roadbed must have been bulldozed when the lots were sold and houses built.

I remember my dad being disappointed that he didn't buy a couple of those lots as an investment.

from: Fred
date: Thu, **Aug 13, 2015 at 11:58 AM**

"I remember my dad being disappointed that he didn't buy a couple of those **lots** as an investment."

What year might that have been?

On Thu, **Aug 13, 2015 at 12:30 PM** Rusty wrote:

I would guess **late 40's or early 50's**

from: Ann Chase <annlouisechase@yahoo.com>
to: "Frederick N. Chase" <fchase@gmail.com>
date: Thu, Aug 27, 2015 at 10:28 AM

subject: Re: Flooding

I definitely remember the flood - it extended halfway up through the apple orchard. I think I was about seven - 1942? - not sure about the date. It was a big "event"!

ⁱ That would be *Carl's home*!