

Peggy, was born, on March 26, 1922. The family remained in Istanbul\* for 14 months while Harry worked in the rug exporting business with his cousin, Vahram Chimchirian. They lived in the "Makrikoev" section of Istanbul. During World War I the Russians came within 20 miles of this part of the city, but then the Armistice forced them to pull back.

Approximately one month after Peggy was born, in April, 1922, the job offer came from Harry's Uncle Levon Gumushian to go to the city of Batoome in Russia to open up a branch of Levon's Dry Goods Business. Uncle Levon was in Constantinople at the time, from his home in Manchester, England. This was a magnificent offer for Harry and he eagerly and willingly signed the job contract. He was sure his wife would be excited about it and willing to go too, but his uncle said, "In England, a man's wife must sign the contract too. Take it home and have your wife sign it, and then return it to me!" When Harry took it home to Helen, he was surprised at her response. "Let's go to America-- not Russia!" she had said. "My sister and brother live there. We don't know anyone in Russia. I know the English language, but neither of us knows Russian. I'm willing to work hard too, but let's go to America!"

It took one year to make all the arrangements, go through the red tape, etc., and the family boarded the SS CONSTANTINOPLE, a Greek ship which was bound for New York, in July, 1923. They were not allowed (by the government) to take any money out of the country, but they were able to bring a few Oriental rugs which proved of great worth in America.

The trip across the Atlantic ocean took one month and was delayed because of storms, etc. and the ship was therefore one day late arriving in New York, on August 2, 1923. Because of being late, the quota was full and the passengers were not allowed to land! The Kalpakian family spent 3 days on Ellis Island while all the negotiations were going on.

---

\* See page 7 for description of their home in Istanbul.

(They were thrilled with the hot running water in the large hall where they stayed.) Finally, the passengers had to reboard the SS CONSTANTINOPLE and embark for Greece. August 5 to September 1, 1923, the ship was at sea on the way to Greece. Went to City of Piraeus where they stayed for two weeks, September 1 - September 15, 1923.

From September 15 - October 1, the Kalpakian family was at sea enroute to America the second time. This trip was aboard a French ship, a Faber Line, called SS CANADA.

On October 1, 1923, they landed in Providence, Rhode Island. The family stayed all night in the train station and then from here they took the train to New York to Harry's relative (his cousin Vahram's brother-in-law) where their trunks had been shipped. The name of this man was Issakoolian. He was in the Oriental rug business and the company was called ISSAKOOLIAN AND SONS. They stayed one night in a hotel, and left N.Y. by train for Los Angeles. (The hotel room had a bathtub and this was very exciting and new!) The only destination they had of Doodoo and Art in California was: address

PICKERING PLEASURE PIER  
OCEAN PARK, CALIFORNIA

In Los Angeles, they were met by Doodoo and John Boyd and Arthur Clark, (Helen's sister, her husband, and Helen's brother, Arthur.)

The memorable landing in Los Angeles was on October 8, 1923! (Venice) The Boyds had sent affidavits and signed as sponsors for the new family.

Three months later, on January 18, 1924, daughter Elizabeth Armenouhi was born in Venice, California -- the first native born American in the family! The family was living in a little 2-room back house behind the large Boyd mansion at 905 Harding Street. There was plenty of room in the large mansion for the Kalpakians, but they chose to live in the

back house because of their philosophy, gained by experience:

"No matter how large a house is, it  
is never large enough for more than one  
family!"

Harry worked in Demirjian's cupie doll factory for 3 months, then for Uncle Arthur in his cigar store for a short time. In June, 1925, Harry bought his own cigar store. Helen worked with him in the store while he learned English, then she worked for Uncle Art and later at Uncle John's Drug Store. In 1927, she worked at the Windward Drug Company on Windward Avenue (the main street of Venice) at the cigar stand and the cosmetic counter. The family now lived on Alberta Street.

On January 1, 1928, the family moved from Venice to Los Angeles. Harry bought a grocery store on San Pedro Street and the family lived in the little house behind the store. (1965 South San Pedro Street.) In October, 1928, the Kalpakians sold out and moved to 533 West 109th Place, Los Angeles. Harry bought a grocery store on 108th and Figueroa Streets. (10810 South Figueroa Street) He had this store from October, 1928 to September, 1931.

Harry and Helen bought their very first home on November 5, 1931 at 6436 Haas Avenue, Los Angeles. While living on Haas Avenue, Harry had a grocery store on Central Avenue, then one on Main Street, then one on 54th Street. Daughter, Harriett, was born on September 9, 1935, while living at this house. They sold this house in 1941.

On September 19, 1941, they bought a duplex at 8643-8645 West Olympic Boulevard, Los Angeles. From 1941 - 1949, Harry had a grocery store at 615 West Pico. (Pico and Flower Sts.) Harry's last grocery store (his 7th) was located in the Highland Park area of Los Angeles, 521 Museum Drive, where he commuted by bus from West Olympic Boulevard! (Long trip!) Harry worked at the Museum Drive store from 1949-1956 when he was "forced to retire after having two operations--one on

back house because of their philosophy, gained by experience:

"No matter how large a house is, it  
is never large enough for more than one  
family!"

Harry worked in Demirjian's cupie doll factory for 3 months, then for Uncle Arthur in his cigar store for a short time. In June, 1925, Harry bought his own cigar store. Helen worked with him in the store while he learned English, then she worked for Uncle Art and later at Uncle John's Drug Store. In 1927, she worked at the Windward Drug Company on Windward Avenue (the main street of Venice) at the cigar stand and the cosmetic counter. The family now lived on Alberta Street.

On January 1, 1928, the family moved from Venice to Los Angeles. Harry bought a grocery store on San Pedro Street and the family lived in the little house behind the store. (1965 South San Pedro Street.) In October, 1928, the Kalpakians sold out and moved to 533 West 109th Place, Los Angeles. Harry bought a grocery store on 108th and Figueroa Streets. (10810 South Figueroa Street) He had this store from October, 1928 to September, 1931.

Harry and Helen bought their very first home on November 5, 1931 at 6436 Haas Avenue, Los Angeles. While living on Haas Avenue, Harry had a grocery store on Central Avenue, then one on Main Street, then one on 54th Street. Daughter, Harriett, was born on September 9, 1935, while living at this house. They sold this house in 1941.

On September 19, 1941, they bought a duplex at 8643-8645 West Olympic Boulevard, Los Angeles. From 1941 - 1949, Harry had a grocery store at 615 West Pico. (Pico and Flower Sts.) Harry's last grocery store (his 7th) was located in the Highland Park area of Los Angeles, 521 Museum Drive, where he commuted by bus from West Olympic Boulevard! (Long trip!) Harry worked at the Museum Drive store from 1949-1956 when he was "forced to retire after having two operations--one on

July 18, 1957 and one on August 4, 1957." Harry was 68 years old when he retired. He listed as his hobbies:

"Reading" and "Grocery Man"

Harry passed away on February 11, 1963 at the age of 75. He was very proud of his family: his wife of 45 years, his four daughters, and his 10 grandchildren:

Children of Angagh and George MacKellar:

James Harry MacKellar	(Born 1948)
Patricia Louise MacKellar	(Born 1951)-January
Nancy June MacKellar	(Born 1951)-December

Children of Peggy and Bill Johnson:

Peggy Ann Johnson	(Born 1945)
Douglas Scott Johnson	(Born 1950)
Helen Kathleen Johnson	(Born 1952)
Brian Clarke Johnson	(Born 1957)

Children of Betty and Finley Bown:

Richard Finley Bown	(Born 1952)
Barbara Clare Bown	(Born 1954)
Ronald Eugene Bown	(Born 1957)

Harriett and Alan Donnell

NOTE: Harriett and Alan Donnell later had two children, but Harry did not live to see them:

Helen Pearl Donnell	(Born 1967)
Howard Harry Donnell	(Born 1969)

## HOME IN ISTANBUL:

The Kalpakians rented an apartment with two bedrooms, a small living room and kitchen on the 3rd floor of a 4 story apartment building. (Each floor had one apartment) There were no elevators, just stairways. The sinks had cold running water, but not hot. There were no bath tubs or showers. Harry's wealthy great Aunt Sultana\*(his mother's aunt) had a private bath in her home which she allowed the Kalpakians to use any time they wished.

Transportation was by foot or by train to go to different parts of Istanbul. The city was very spread out--part of it was in Europe and part of it was in Asia. The train stopped about one mile from where the Kalpakians lived.

---

\*Sultana and her husband had no children.

KALPAKIAN RESIDENCES IN THE UNITED STATES

	<u>Time</u>
January, 1924 - March, 1927 - 905 Harding (formerly Flink St.) Venice, California	3 years
March, 1927 - January, 1928 - 2012 Alberta Street Venice, California	9 month
January, 1928 - October, 1928 -1965 South San Pedro Street Los Angeles, California (Lived behind the store)	10 month
October, 1928 - November, 1931-533 West 109th Place Los Angeles, California	3 years
November, 1931 - September, 1941 <u>FIRST HOME THEY BOUGHT:</u> 6436 Haas Avenue Los Angeles, California	10 years
September, 1941 - 8645 West Olympic Blvd. Los Angeles, California	38 years

1915 - Helen's parents and Haigaz were exiled. She was saved by being a boarding student in Miss Towner's American School in Adana.

1917 - Harry and Helen met in April, became engaged October 2, and married October 18, 1917. Lived with his parents in Adana, Turkey.

Dec. 26, 1918 - Angagh was born in Adana, Turkey.

1920 - Haigaz was found and reunited with Helen and Harry!

Nov. 1921 - Family moved from Adana to Alexandrett, Syria. (Iskenderun)

March 21, 1922 - Moved to Constantinople, Turkey, one week before Peggy was born.

March 26, 1922 - Peggy was born in Constantinople, Turkey.

April, 1922 - Job offer came to work in Russia.

July, 1923 - Left for America the first time. SS CONSTANTINOPLE (Greek ship)

August 2, 1923 - Landed in New York. Stayed on Ellis Island 3 days.

August 5 - Sept. 1, 1923 - At sea on way to Greece.

Sept. 1 - Sept 15, 1923 - Stayed in Piraeus, Greece.

Sept. 15 - Oct 1 - At sea en route to the USA the second time, from Greece, aboard the SS CANADA, a French ship.

October 1, 1923 - Landed in Providence, Rhode Island. Took train to N.Y. Then took train to Los Angeles.

October 8, 1923 - Landed in Los Angeles. (Venice)

January 18, 1924 - Betty was born in Venice.

June, 1925 - Harry bought his own business, a cigar store in Venice.

Jan. 1, 1928 - Moved from Venice to Los Angeles. Harry had first grocery store on 1965 South San Pedro Street. We lived behind the store.

October, 1928 - Moved to 533 W. 109th Place in Los Angeles. Harry's store was on 108th and Figueroa Streets.

April, 1931 - Harry and Helen became U.S. Citizens.

November, 1931- Sept. 1941 - Moved to first purchased home! - at  
6436 Haas Avenue  
Los Angeles, California

Sept. 9, 1935 - Harriett was born, while living at the Haas Avenue house.

1941-1949 - Harry's store was at 615 W. Pico in Los Angeles. (Pico and Flower)

Sept. 1941 - Moved to 8645 West Olympic Boulevard. (upstairs of beautiful duplex)



KALPAKIAN TABLE OF DATES (CONTINUED)

1949-1956 - Harry had Museum Drive store.

1956 - Harry retires from business at the age of 68

July 18, 1957 - Harry had first operation

August 4, 1957 - Harry had second operation

February 11, 1963 - Harry passed away

PART IV

HAIGAZ (HARRY) CLARK

(Helen Kalpakian's younger  
brother)

HARRY CLARK

ne - Haigaz Koolaksezian

Haigaz was born in Adana, Turkey December 15, 1906\*-the youngest child of Asdoor and Elizabeth Koolaksezian. He remembers that his father worked on a farm for other people part of the year. To aid the family's income, he also remembers the children sitting around the table in the evenings picking cotton by kerosene lamps while his father told them stories.

In 1915, during the Turkish massacre of Armenians, Haigaz and his parents were exiled. (His older brother and sister were living in America, and his sister, Helen, was a boarding student at the American school, "Adana Seminary for Girls." Thus, they were spared!)

In exile, Haigaz was given a long white shirt. This was the only item of clothing he had. When the Kurds took him from his mother in exile, he only had a pair of underpants on. The Kurds stole all the clothes from the exiled Armenians because that was all they had to steal. His mother and all the Armenians had been stripped and their clothes were stolen--all the Armenian people were naked. Haigaz's father died in a tent before they had gotten very far into exile. Haigaz, (at the age of 10) was picked up by the Kurds and taken to be a slave. He never again saw his mother.

Haig stayed with his owner until some other Kurd bought him and took him away. The first Kurdish owner had a little girl about his age who taught him the Kurdish language while they were taking the cows into pasture lands every day. She was very unhappy and cried when her father sold Haigaz to a new owner for some wheat, etc.

Haigaz's job with the new owner was to stay with the man's wife while he worked in the fields all day, because the man was afraid someone would try to steal his wife from him. Haigaz was not required

---

\* 1906 was the date for passport purposes. Real birth year was 1904.

to do hard work here.

While with these people, Haig went into the village with five of the country wives, including his owner's wife, and helped them barter for goods. Instead of just trading wheat for dress material, Haig (at age of 10) told the merchant he would sell him the wheat for gold. (The country people never heard of money!). So--Haig got quite a lot of gold and then bought the 5 women many more things in addition to 25 yards of material each, etc. (Underwear, head scarves, etc.) His owner became very jealous that this kid could do things and could trade so much better than he could--that one day he threw a knife at Haig which just missed his head. Then Haig knew he had to get away from here. He ran away once and they caught him. (Because he had run in the direction of the first owner). The second time he ran away at midnight--in the opposite direction and they did not find him. Once, while on the run, it started to rain hard, so Haigaz took off his shirt and sat on it to keep it dry. When the rain stopped, he put the shirt on again and got going again. He traveled about 200 miles on foot! He wandered on foot from village to village, begging, stealing, or working for food.

Young Haigaz endured many narrow escapes and had some harrowing adventures, constantly running away from danger.

At one time, Haigaz worked with some Turkish soldiers in Hallep. (Aleppo, Syria) He had changed his name to Mahmed or something like that and they thought he was Turkish. The soldiers paid him to take some of their gold and exchange it in town for money for them. For this they gave him 8¢. In those days, shish kebob cost 2¢ and a suit of clothes cost 12¢. Haig was even able to save money!

Haig stayed in two Armenian orphan schools, about 200 miles apart,

about 9 months in each place. After the French or English left the area, the orphan school was given to the Turks and all Armenian students were sent to an orphan school in Jerusalem. Haig had already been found by his sister Helen, so he didn't go.

Before being reunited with his sister Helen, Haigaz and another boy, named Hagop Shishmanian, were about to be taken to England by an English General so they could become husbands for his two daughters. Both Haig and Hagop were good students at the Doartyol Foundling Home and both of them had signed up to go to England with the general, but when Haig was found by his sister, he cancelled out. Hagop did not want to go to England alone, so he cancelled out too and went to the orphan school for Armenians in Jerusalem.

The Foundling Home at Doartyol published a list of all the orphan's names and when one of Helen's girlfriends saw the list, she showed it to Helen. When Helen saw Haigaz's name, she sent for him. Thus, the reunion with his family occurred in 1920, and Haigaz went to Adana to live with his sister, Helen, and her husband, and one-year-old baby, Angagh.

In 1921, this family moved from Adana, Turkey, to Alexandrett, (Iskenderun) Syria. Haigaz remembers that in this city, Haroutune opened up a store to sell all of his goods before coming to America. Also, while they were living in Iskenderun, Haroutune took a boat and went for a few days to the Holy Land--he wanted to see it while they were still near the area. While he was gone, a fortune teller came and told Helen and a few other women that she would tell their fortune for a loaf of bread. Helen gave it to her--then she told Helen that she was going to have another baby and that she would be leaving. Helen was expecting Peggy, but Haig thinks she did not know it yet at

that time. When Harry returned and she told him what the fortune teller had said, he told her the woman was just hungry and had made up the story. But it turned out to be true!

From Syria, the family moved to Constantinople, Turkey, in 1922. Peggy was born one week later, on March 26, 1922! Haig said that Constantinople was built on wood and there were many wood ticks that used to bite him. His arms would swell up, etc. The Kalpakians then rented another room that wasn't as bad. The Armenian name for Istanbul was BOLIS. In 1923, the Kalpakians sailed from Istanbul to America -- and Haigaz was with them!

OTHER INFORMATION:

Haigaz was with the Kurds first for 18 months. Then to the Arabs for approximately 8 months. Then worked with the Turkish soldiers in Hallep. (Aleppo) Then 2 orphan schools for about 9 months each. Total time away from his family was five years. (He was found by Kalpakians in 1920.)

IN THE UNITED STATES - Ocean Park, California

Haigaz worked first for Doodoo's husband, John Boyd. The druggist and one of the soda fountain girls in Boyd's drug store taught young Haigaz the English language. Haig got room and board in Boyd's big house on Harding Street plus \$75 a month. He washed bottles, cleaned the store, etc.

Then Boyd and 5 other druggists incorporated into a company and opened 5 drug stores and sold Haigaz stock in the company. They then went bankrupt and Haig lost his money. The Boyd's then attached Haig's car saying he owed them for room and board. But he paid \$25.00 fee to authorities and got his car back. He told them he did not owe Boyd's anything!

Then Haig worked for Uncle Art in his Venice cigar store for a while. Next, Haigaz bought his own cigar stand in the lobby of a building at 6th and Flower in downtown Los Angeles, for \$600. He later sold this business for \$600 and went to San Juan Capistrano to apply for a job in a restaurant. (He was sent by an employment agency.) Haig knew soda fountain work from Boyd's drug and bluffed his way through re: how to cook hamburgers, and he got the job! His boss had a large dinner restaurant in back and a small hamburger and soda fountain place in the front. The boss told Haig to run the small place. Haig did, and got so much money for the man, they hired a fountain girl to help. Haig eventually bought the small cafe from his boss (Mr. Hunter.) Mr. Hunter called Haigaz "Shorty." Haig bought the business for \$800 and he assumed the \$1500 mortgage on the new soda fountain fixtures. Haig earned all of this in about three months.

People used to go to Tia Juana to gamble in those days and the highway went through San Juan Capistrano. So, business was very good on Saturday and Sunday. But Haig had to figure out a way to drum up business from local townspeople during the week.

So, he went to a printer and had 500 tickets printed. Each time a customer ate \$2.00 worth of burgers or ice cream or soft drinks at his place, he would give them a free hamburger, plus soda. (He punched the ticket for them with each purchase until it totaled \$2.00. Some items were 10%, 25%, etc.) His place was next to a theatre, so he would stand at his door and pass out tickets to young ranch worker boys when they were going in to the theatre. Soon people started coming in-- business boomed--and he bought a brand new Ford!

Peter and Margaret Koumjian and Mr. Odebashian used to go to visit Haig in San Juan Capistrano. Koumjians were trying to fix Haig

up with their daughter, Alice. They invited him to dinner several times and he took Alice some places, until it was clear what they had in mind. Then he quit going--Alice was too close a relative.

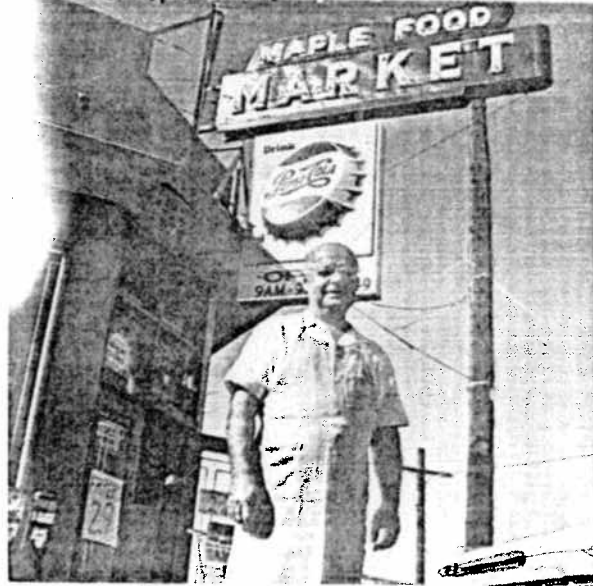
Haigaz met and married the lovely Martha Hallaian who lived in Long Beach. They both worked together in the San Juan Capistrano restaurant business, then in the restaurant business in Venice, and in 1944 they moved to Fresno, California. Here they had a grape ranch, a chicken ranch, and were also in the grocery business until retirement.

NOTE: When I asked Haigaz in April, 1978, if over his adult years his exile experiences as a child had any effect on his life, he answered: "No, I was too busy working. But now that I am retired, I sometimes wake up at night dreaming I am still running!"

(Compiled from what Haigaz told me when Mother and I visited them in Fresno on April 5, 1978. B.B.)



UNCLE HAIG IN FRESNO



July 29, 1961

Harry Clark in front of his  
grocery store in Fresno,  
California. July 29, 1961