DENNIS COURTNEY

A year after the earthquake Dennis C. Courtney and his wife Hannah Callahan moved to their best known residence, 1014 Treat st. between 23rd and 24th Sts.

Dennis owned some wagons for hauling coal.
At the time he was close friends with a man named James Rolph, who was in the coal business.
In 1912, Mr. Rolph became Mayor of San Francisco.
Dennis felt his own future growing brighter.
Mayor Rolph was a rather flambouyant figure about town.
He was ever conscious of his public image.
The nickname "Sunny Jim" began to follow his actions...and his antics
He was usually decked out in a straw hat and brandished a white flower in his lapel.
He granted Dennis Courtney a contract with the city to haul water wagons over a particular route of the city's streets.
So Dennis converted his coal wagons over with large tanks suited to the task and for a long time carried out regular morning runs to keep the otherwise dusty roadbeds in check.
Dennis' nephew, Leonard (by Con Courtney) served as one of the wagon drivers...as did nephew Daniel (by James Courtney).

The entrance to Dennis' house on Treat had to be altered to permit the horse drawn wagons to gain access to the rear of the property where a large barn was kept.
Accordingly, most of the house front was redone.
The large passageway to the rear was located at the lower left corner of the house.

The house was lit by gas-lights.
During the night the street out front was similarly illuminated.
(When the house was finally converted to electricity, the wires were actually run through the gas line conduit.)

One of the more peculiar accessories on the inside of the house was a rather large tub, fitted beneath with burners.
It was made of redwood.

Dennis suffered from rhenmatism, and the tub was filled with Calistoga mud to aid in soothing his aches and pains.
(He would even take his Franklin automobile up to Calistoga itself to partake in "health baths.")

Easter was a special occasion on Treat Ave.
The Courtneys would traditionally serve up a kid goat for the main meal.
Many relatives were invited to attend.
Hannah would made a special point of inviting one unattached person, per year, to also partake of the meal
The holiday kid was pre-cooked at a nearby bakery then re-heated at the Courtney's just prior to the meal.

The horses to pull the wagons were housed in the barn at the back end of the property.
Next door to Dennis lived a garbage man named Dondero.
The proximity of horses began to irritate him.
He took Dennis to court claiming there were too many of the animals per one city block.
However, the court's judgement favored Dennis.
Dondero asked him over to share some wine afterwards, "If you were my own brother I'd still have taken you to court."
After that, Dondero built a high spite fence between his yard and Dennis'.
The two men never spoke again.

In that yard also lived a rather large rooster.
During a visit by the young William Shea, the imposing foul made an aggressive run at the boy.
Billy was merely an infant at the time, and the attack understandably terrified him.
Billy's father, Jerry, who had witnessed the whole event, contributed nothing in the way of help.
Instead, he had a hearty laugh at his son's expense.

A man named Angelo J. Rossi succeeded James Rolph as Mayor of S. F.
(He had previously been a florist.)
He chose to eliminate the city's water wagons and turn the jc to trucks outfitted for the operation.

The year was 1932.
Fortunately for the Courtneys, "Sunny Jim" had just been elected Governor of the State of California.
He sent a specific directive to Mayor Rossi instructing him to allow Dennis to continue business as usual.
And this he proceeded to do...long after the time when all the other water wagons about the city had been eliminated.
(It was a humorous anachronism to see the Courtney wagons surviving beyond their time...especially when one of them would pull alongside one of the more up-dated water trucks!)

(Governor Rolph was also close friends with newspaper tycoon, William Randolph Hearst and his paramour, actress Marion Davies. Sunny Jim was known to periodically retreat to the splendors of San Simeon to "take the cure" for alleged bouts with "pneumonia" ...actually just a ploy to help him dry out from alcoholic overindulgence!)

Dennis and his family were later to move to a large building at 98 Sanchez, complete with a grocery store on the street level.
Then after living there for a number of years Dennis and Hanna retired to a house on Arlington in Redwood City.
— Dennis had the house constructed by an Italian contractor for $4000.
Hanna kept annoyingly strict eyes on the contractor's expenditures, thus keeping costs down to a minimum.

Sometime after this Dennis was driving his car with his wife as the passenger.
They were involved in a crash and Hanna was hospitalized.
It was later determined she was sent home too soon, for blood clots had formed which proceeded to block her circulation.
The situation proved fatal.

Due to his rheumatism Dennis often required two canes to aid him while walking.
Additionally, his car had been especially fitted to allow him to drive it without incurring undue pain.

Due to his slow reaction time he had been previously involved in minor accidents.

Dennis and Hanna had produced two children: Lawrence and Bernard.

Bernard went on to become a well-to-do bank examiner and married Ruth Barrett, of a wealthy and affluent background.
Recalling his years living near the horses on Treat Ave. Bernard lost his left eye when one of the animals reared and kicked him.
A glass eye was fitted as a replacement. later after his marriage to Ruth, His wife Ruth died & he married Lusille Bygrave a teacher and well known S.F. family
Unfortunately, Lawrence was a n'er-do-well.
He had the reputation of being a "lady's man," a real talker.
He also drank too heavily.
As a profession he chose teaching.
In that capacity he settled for a time in Denver, Colorado.
It is ~~rumored~~ Lawrence even ~~tried his hand~~ at being a Christian Brother!
Yet, contrary to that priestly image, for one reason or another he spent some time in jail while in Denver.

~~While yet in San Francisco he married a redhead named Mary Nyhan.~~
~~She was a nurse at S.F. County Hospital.~~
~~She was also taken to drinking.~~ Leonard's wife
~~Prior to meeting her he was a cab driver.~~
Lawrence surfaced variously as a bookkeeper, a clerk, a bartender and as a salesman.

During his last mentioned undertaking he was living in Colma.

Hayden
Things not having worked out with ~~Mary~~ he married Clara.
When last heard of he had moved to Baltimore, Maryland where his last known wife, Jackie, had been born.
As far as anyone remembers, Lawrence Courtney had only one child... an attractive daughter, name ~~unknown.~~ Marie

Even considering his rheumatism it is remembered that Dennis danced at a family gathering while at the ripe old age of 84.
He passed away in subsequent years.

CORNELIUS DANIEL COURTNEY

It is believed he was born on July 14, 1877.
He was the youngest of twenty-one children (products of three different marriages).
His parents were Daniel Cournane and Mary Ann Crowley.
He was born in Daniel's house at Knocknasartnett.
He attended school at "Killarney Presentation Convent."
At about age twenty he left home to sail for America.
Initially he set foot in San Francisco, but then he extended his journey to the Yukon gold rush in Alaska.
Within a few years he was back in San Francisco, via Portland, Oregon.

Con's first employment while in San Francisco was as a blacksmith.
He resided close to his brothers, Jim and Dennis, in the Happy Valley section of the city, "South of the Slot."

Before too many years had passed he married Julia Spillane and moved up to Precita St.
Their first stop was at 349 Precita; then they moved a short distance down the block to 355.
The house at 355 had been an old ranch "going back to 1850."
The lot used to extend all the way down to Army St.
Both parcels on Precita faced out onto a pleasant stretch of greenery known as Bernal Park, affording the Courtney children an attractive playground.

He was at that time employed with the carriage manufacturing and repair firm known as "(Olaf) Nelson & Courtney," at 565 Grove.
Then one morning Olaf Nelson was mysteriously found dead beneath one of the buggies at the shop.
Con continued with the business on his own.
Not long afterwards, on the morning of April 18, 1906 the great San Francisco earthquake rocked the city to its foundations.
It is believed the wagon shop burned to the ground with the insuing fire.
The house on Precita suffered little damage.
At brother Jim's house a few blocks away only a few bricks dropped down the chimney.

In the aftermath of the disaster a small shanty town of sorts was set up in the large downhill yard on Con's property.
Refugees from the catastrophe were thereby assisted.

In 1911 Con's wagon business relocated to 356 8th St. near Folsom.
Con's employees repaired buggies and wheels for clients such as bakeries and tea companies.

Prior to this, in 1909, personal disaster struck at the heart of the Courtney family.
Con's wife Julia, who had only been in America for a few years, died at age 30.
She passed away due to typhoid fever only three weeks after her youngest child, Edward, was born.
Con was left as a widower with three children to attend to: Leonard (born 1905), Marion (born Jan 27, 1907) and the aforementioned Edward. Feb. 5, 1909
Con decided to keep the three here in the states.
(Whereas Will Dwyer, a similar widower with three children as well, made the decision to send his three offspring back to the old country...with later regrets.)
Con's sister Mollie and brother Dennis helped raise the children.
And from Worcester, Massachusetts, young Jeremiah Shea stayed with them for a time as well.
A house-keeper was employed to attend to much of the work.

In 1917 Con married a second time, Margaret McMenamin. June 28 /
Together with her brother Frank she had been a foster child.
Her foster parents were a couple named Frank and Margaret Kelly.
Within a few years the Kellys were to contract tuberculosis.
Con and Maggie took them into the house at 355 Precita to care for them, but to little avail.
The couple passed away due to their common illness.

In 1918 Con and Maggie sired a stillborn boy.
Then on Sept. 19, 1919 Francis DeValera Courtney was born.
(The middle name, "DeValera," was in commemoration of Eamon DeValera, president of the Sinn Fein Government in Ireland.)
On Jan. 13, 1921 Cornelia M. Courtney was born.

On January 27 (the same birthdate as her older sister, Marion), 1922 Rose Marie Courtney was born.
Another sad event hit the family on March 7, 1922 when Con's youngest son from his previous marriage died of electrocution while trying to retrieve a kite from a power line.
On April 24, 1924 Jimmy (Cornelius) Courtney was born.

Like his older brother Jim, Con maintained a staunch posture with his children.
He maintained they were to be seen and not heard.
He would also chide his kids saying, "Don't be playing with those Dagos," referring to the Italian families which inhabited Bernal Heights.
(The Irish heavily populated the neighborhood around Precita... during that time at any rate.)
In those days the Irish "couldn't figure out who those people were," in considering folks who had come from European countries other than their own.

Next, Con and family moved to the Harder Hotel on 3rd St.
He rented the place.
The hotel had a goat which Frank, at two years old, chased down the street into a school yard!

Con was a beautiful dancer and used to win championships at step dancing.
Unfortunately, his wife wasn't much of a dancer.
In her place Con sometimes danced with Jerry Shea's wife, Helen.
In later years Con, like his brother Dennis, would contract rheumatism...this would severely dampen his dancing attempts.

On April 19, 1923 Con's hotel at 2516 3rd St. was raided by federal prohibition agents and $10,000 worth of illicit liquor was seized.
Ironically, Con was a member of the grand jury passing judgement on bootleggers at the time!
As a result of the raid, and the ensuing trial at which Con pleaded "guilty" he spent several months in jail.

At one time or another Marion Hannah and Hugh Dennis took Con to Court in attempt to have his childrem removed from him.
They feared for the children's health and safety and believed Con was behaving improperly as a father.
Con, in turn, suspected ~~Dennis~~ Hugh was trying to get hold of his apartment house and his other property as well.
The judgement was in Con's favor; so he maintained custody.

Cornelius Courtney passed away on August 24, 1944...leaving an estate worth somewhere in the neighborhood of $60,000.

His offspring held onto the Edgemont Apartments for a time then sold it and divided the profits.
In an earlier arrangement, Marion, Connie and Rose had bought out the interest of their brothers, Leonard, Frank and Jimmy.
Leonard and Jimmy used their share to set up a bar named "The Court Room" across the street from City Hall.
(The place was appropriately named on two counts...one in reference to the judiciary near at hand, and the other for the family surname.)

Eventually, Leonard died at age 70, having no children....Apr. 24, 1975
Marion married Hugh Maguire; the couple produced: Patricia, ~~Margaret~~ Marion, Gerald and Thomas.
Frank is married to Jacqueline, and their children are Daniel and Sheilagh.
Connie married Major Nelson H. Ahlstrom and produced: ~~Helen~~, Gretchen Barry, ~~and~~ Peggy, and Nelson
(Connie and Nels subsequently divorced.)
Rose married Norman Hawkins and had three children: John, Norma and Laura.
~~Jimmy Courtney never married.~~
Jim is best known as once having toured on stage with Mae West.

After Con serving his sentence the family moved up the street to a somewhat better hotel where they remained for some years.

Next, Con Purchased the Edgemont Apartments at 961 Pine St.
The year was 1926.

Early in the winter of 1932, Con's wife Margaret caught a slight chill.
Perhaps she should have been kept in bed.
Con decided he wanted to go out for the evening; so he packed up his wife and kids and headed out.
They ended up at the Sheas, where it was noted that Margaret looked noticeably ill.
A few days later, on January 5, 1932, she died of pnuemonia.
Con was once again a widower.

Con and family socialized with Jerry Shea and his growing family, but for the most part he avoided the company of his brothers, Jim and Dennis
There were personality differences between Con and Jim which, apparently, could not be overcome.
The schism between Con and ~~Dennis~~ Mollie came to a head during one particular Christmas season.

One circumstance or another had led Con and family to move in for a short time with ~~Dennis and his wife, Hanna Calahan~~ Mollie.
It is believed the location was on Ellis St.
~~Hanna~~ Mollie went about preparing the meal for Christmas Eve.
She decided upon a slight variation to the traditional meal and served up what she thought to ba a treat, sweet potatoes, "yams."
When the meal appeared at the table Con suddenly became enraged.
Evidently, he was expecting the old stand-by, boiled potatoes.
"What's the matter with Irish potatoes; aren't they good enough for you?"
That started a fight.
Con sent the potatoes sailing through the air.
~~Hanna~~ Mollie went after him with an iron.
On Christmas day Con took his children and moved out.
"I'd rather be sleeping on a mattress on a bare floor than putting up with that sort 'o thing!"

Cornelius Courtney ran a hotel at 3516 3rd St.
It was complete with a saloon on the lower level and a large dining room in back.
His whole family lived at the hotel.

The year was 1922, the peak of the Prohibition.

Additionally Con owned a house at 542 Girard.
Con's nephew, Jeremiah Shea, rented the place from his uncle.
Jerry lived there with his wife Helen and their young children, Bill, Robert and Ethel.
While living there the Sheas were having their own house built on the vacant lot next door, 536 Girard.
The house at 542 was a two story building with a large, peaked attic.
The yard possessed a vegetable garden which Helen Shea faithfully tended.
There was also a large chicken coop in back...and a dog in attendance which Jerry had nicknamed "Mutt."

Clandestinely, Jerry and Con set up a large still in the basement of 542 Girard.
They commenced to producing "whisky."
A trapdoor in the floor of the kitchen led down to the base of operations.
To enhance the product, "Kitchen Bouquet" was added for color and additional flavoring.
A bit of charcoal was also stirred in.
The resultant mixture was then poured into oak kegs which were in turn placed in the trunk of Jerry's large automobile.
The product was then chauffeured about town to give it an aged quality.
Considerable amounts of money were to be had through these endeavors.
→ Cornelius had been paying off the local law enforcement officials.
But a day of reckoning finally arrived.
Yet, in credit to the pay-offs, advance warning was leaked to Con.
He and Jerry proceeded to stash most of the essential ingredients up in the attic.

Then, sometime around two or three A.M. during a sunsequent night, the expected knock on the door was heard.
The "Prohis" (Prohibition Officers) came storming in.
A relatively large number of them, resplendent in black hats and matching uniforms.
They ceremoniously destroyed the still.
(It would never again be rebuilt.)
Helen was afterwards compelled to prepare breakfast for the storm troopers.
That made her furious, but she had no real choice other than to comply.

The actual "Whisky" which had been previously salvaged from the still, had been kegged in smaller casks.
The vacated barrels and still were surreptitiously filled with water.
Con Courtney's daughter Marion was called upon to help with these theatrical proceedures.
The actual kegs of "Whisky" were transported over to the dumps near Army St. and buried in the side of the large debris pile.
Con later returned to the stash.
Ironically, and to Con and Jerry's great dismay...the product of all their efforts had been stolen!

As a side note to this story, a friend of Con's also had a still.
His particular operations were housed up in the attic.
Due to some sort of malfunction in the whisky's preparation a major explosion insued.
The upper story of the building was destroyed!
(One is set to wondering what would have happened if the Courtney-Shea still had likewise erupted!?
Especially considering it was situated directly beneath the main living area of their house.)

Not to be easily dissuaded, Con maintained other liquor ~~another still~~ at his 3rd St. hotel.
The Rrohis were not to be led astray this time.
Con's daughter, Marion, recalls the incident.
When she was returning home from school one afternoon she saw a large drayage truck hauling away large wooden barrels from the hotel.

Official looking men were hauling away Con's stock in trade. Such a public exhibition was intended to dissuade other home brew entrepreneurs just as much as it was designed to punish those who were guilty outright.

It was a peculiar twist of fate that during that time Con was serving voluntarily as a member of the Grand Jury.
The evening paper played it up as big as they could, GRAND JUROR INDICTED.

Con received several months imprisonment...which he served in a jail located in San Francisco.
The rest of the family was led to believe Con was off on a vacation.

Con was "never the same after that...he was scared."
After he got out of prison he set up his second hotel on 3rd St.

Having given up on the stills he yet continued his seamy activities, at least for a time.
He would buy quantities of alcohol from other manufacturers and then distribute it himself for a profit.
But soon he was to give it all up.

It is recollected that at one of his previous still operations he would assign his young sons to keep watch...timing the drops to make sure everything was functioning regularly, thus properly.

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In relation to all this Marion, at age 15, was dispatched to deliver a bottle of bootleg from Con to his sister Molly.
Marion chauffeured the bottle on a streetcar across town to Molly's hotel at Post and Taylor.

It's also recollected that Con had assigned his son Leonard to keep watch on the proper operations of one of his stills.
The boy was held to account for timing the flow of alcoholic drops to make such everything functioned regularly.

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The Harder and Courtney "Hotels" on Third St. were, more accurately, boarding houses.
The tennants resided there for relatively long periods of time.
Many of them were workers employed at the nearby Union Iron Works.
(Coincidently, Bill Schwerin had served tenure at the same ship-building operations.)
The Courtney household attended to the essential needs of the laborers.
Meals were prepared and served.
Con learned a lot about buying meat and fresh produce in large quantities
His prime outlet for these food staples was the huge "Crystal Palace" at Eighth and Market Sts.
He'd make a trip there at least once a week to load up the car.
Back at the "Hotel" Con also tended bar.
In that capacity he adjusted to the habit of staying up late at night.
The Courtney children were assigned much of the task of washing sheets and changing the bedding for the boarding house clients.
"Everyone helped."

In further review of the household habits of the Courtney family Con firmly believed in the value of eating potatoes.
He'd purchase them a hundred pound sack at a time.
Almost religiously, potatoes were to be served each and every night.

During the period 1933-1934 the economy suffered a "general strike."
Just in advance of this Con evidenced the foresight of stockpiling a large quantity of meat products.
At the time his Edgemont Apt. building was in full swing.
The Courtneys had no freezer, but that technicality posed no setback to the ever-resourceful Con.
The meat was portioned off and stored away in the various refridgerators in a number of apartments at the Edgemont.
The Courtneys thus ate well during the strike...so long as the meat stayed fresh!

Just like his older brother James, Con Courtney maintained a staunch posture with his childrem.
It was an old country Irish held belief children "should be seen and not heard."
He would also chide his kids saying, "Don't be playing with those Dagos," referring to the Italian families which inhabited Bernal Heights.
(The Irish heavily populated the neighborhood around Precita... during that time at any rate.)
In those days the Irish "couldn't figure out who those people were," in considering folks who had come from European countries other than their own.

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On April 19, 1923 Con's hotel at 2516 3rd St. was raided by federal prohibition agents and $10,000 worth of illicit liquor was seized.
Ironically, Con was a member of the grand jury passing judgement on bootleggers at the time!
As a result of the raid, and the ensuing trial at which Con pleaded "guilty" he spent several months in jail.

Among the interactions of our family's branch of the Courtney family there appeared another couple, also by the name of Courtne; This particular couple had no direct blood relation to the family from County Kerry.

17.

Jim Courtney and his wife Nora McCarthy were from Cork. ~~They produced three known children: Dan, Vince and Kathleen.~~ 2 daughters

Jim had a brother Dan who was also in San Francisco and employed as a bailiff at City Hall, in a like capacity with Jerry Shea.

Jim himself did fence work and performed a variety of related carpenter projects.

When Con Courtney vacated his house at 355 349 Precita he sold it to James and Nora.

Then later when Con left the first hotel which he had run on 3rd St., James and Nora were once again the recipients. ~~& moved there~~.

Actually, it was they who named it "The Courtney Hotel."

Jim and Nora were very nice to Con's children, but Con, being prejudiced in favor of Kerry folk, referred to Jim as "a god-damned Corkonian!" ~~and kept his family somewhat separated from theirs.~~

$10,000 RUM IN POTRERO RAID

Within a block of the Potrero police station more than $10,000 worth of illicit liquor including a large quantity of smuggled booze was seized by federal prohibition agents it was declared yesterday in a Volsted Act complaint sworn against C.D. Courtney, 2516 3rd St.

(Copied from the San Francisco Examiner, April 19, 1923, page 9)

BOOTLEGGER ON JURY PANEL FOR OWN TRIAL

Pity the poor bootlegger who has to serve on his own jury - taking it for granted, of course, that he has a conscience.
That is the trick that prohibition has played upon C.D. Courtney, hotelkeeper, 2516 Third St.
Yesterday Courtney's hotel was raided and liquor seized.
Courtney was absent and investigation showed he is serving as a juror in bootleg cases before the Federal courts.
His name so stands upon the jury panel that he will be one of those impaneled to try his own case.
The United States Attorney may be obliged to excuse him upon the ground of prejudice.

(Copied from the San Francisco Examiner, April 20, 1923, page 6)

CIVIC CENTER GARAGE

EDITOR:

Departing from our gorgeous House of Bamboodement via the Polk St. steps..

Bemoaning its loss of many fine bricks due to parking differences with certain men in blue I gazed upon a vacant park that looked lonely.

Save for a vast squad of pigeons and a few stray attendants, our civic gardens looked quite forlorn and I fell to wondering what an industrious Scotchman, with the aid of a few million dollars, might do there.

For the park was empty - and the streets beside were cluttered - with automobiles in vain search of that rare species, the parking space.

We're doing it at Union Square: why can't we do it here?

We need a vast underground Civic Center Garage!

This huge garage would be constructed under the Civic Gardens and the park adjoining the library.

Entrances, directly at Eighth and Market: from Seventh, across Market, up side Fulton and in: at Van Ness and Grove, Van Ness and McAllister, and so forth.

With a government loan, co-operation of city and state, and WPA work, we can give San Franciscans, quickly and inexpensively, a civic garage at 10c per parking space.

And if Hitler comes with his Stukas let him try and find us!

- C.D. Courtney

(Apparently written and sent to the editor of a San Francisco newspaper sometime in the early 1940s.)

Little Edward Courtney was born Feb. 5, 1909
His parents were Con Courtney and Julia Spillane.
At age three weeks Eddie lost his mother to typhoid fever.
She was only 30 years of age at the time.

Some years prior to all of this Con had purchased a buggy from his sister Mollie's husband.
The wagon had been brought all the way down from Portland, Oregon.

Eddie's ill fortune would continue to plague him.
One particular 4th of July, while the boy was yet a child, he had been placed alone in the buggy near his father's house at 349 Precita.
Being the 4th it wasn't surprising that a volley of fireworks would be set off, but as a package of firecrackers was set to exploding the horse on the carriage bolted.
The frightened animal sped down the street.
It raced down Folsom, dragging the hapless buggy along behind.
Little Edward held on for his life.
Finally, at the bottom of the hill, near Army, the animal was brought under control.
Eddie had managed to hang on, and luckily the buggy didn't flip over!

Ed had a sister, Marion (two years older) and a brother Leonard (four years older).

It wasn't easy for the three of them being brought up without a mother.
Their Aunt Mollie and Uncle Denny had helped in taking care of them, and eventually a house maid was hired to assume some of the burden.
After about eight years, on June 28, 1917, Con married once again... to Margaret McMenamin.

The family moved to 2516 Third St. where Con ran a hotel.
Both school and family pressures began to weigh on Ed's older brother Leonard; so early in 1922 the boy ran away from home.
(Unbeknownst to the rest of the family, Leonard had falsified his age and had joined the military.)

The newly-marrieds conceived four more children to add to the growing Courtney household.
The first of the four, William, was stillborn.

By late 1921 or very early 1922 the family relocated from their Precita home to a rental arrangement at the Harder Hotel on Third St., address, 2516.
Con still held the deed to the Precita House.
Another man named Jim Courtney, unrelated to Con and his siblings, took up residency.
This was the Prohibition Period in American history and there was profit to be made selling home-made liquor under the counter.
The Courtneys found it commercially advantageous to take advantage of the situation.
With that in mind "home brew" was soon being manufactured in the Precita house.
Con's eldest son, Leonard, was assigned the duty of keeping the product properly stirred and blended in the bathtub of his old home.
The task kept him up late night after night.
That chore combined with the stresses of school studies and homework swelled up to take their toll.
Leonard was sixteen at the time.
With the extended hours of effort forced into his life Leonard began dozing off, both during school and while maintaining his post with the bootleg operations.
And for the dozing the child received beatings from his father.
With these pressures set against him the boy ran away from home.
He falsified papers in declaring his age to be 18 and enlisted with the U.S. Navy.
(Jerry Shea, who once shared the same household with Leonard, had just recently completed his own tour of duty in the same service.)

1939

It was springtime, and March was the traditional month for young San Franciscans to assemble their kites and take them up on the nearest hill to catch the awaiting breezes.

Or, if there were no hills close at hand, it was at least a passable second to let out your string on the city streets...so long as traffic was sparse.

These were the conditions which prevaled on Tuesday, March 7, 1922. The following pages will spotlight the conclusion of little Eddie Courtney's story:

WIRES HURL BOY TO DEATH

While playmates applauded the daring of Edward Courtney, 13, as he climbed to the top of a 75-foot pole at Twenty-third and Illinois Streets late yesterday to recover his kite, which had caught in the high tension wires of the P. G. & E., the lad received the full electric voltage, his body became enveloped in flames, and he fell to the ground.

Terribly burned, and with many bones broken by the fall, the boy was carried by his young companions to the home of his father, Cornelius Courtney, 2516 Third Street, and then was hurried to St. Luke's hospital, where he died.

(Copied from the San Francisco Examiner, March 8, 1922.)