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Nine o'clock Wednesday evening, January 11, 1967, at his Munster, Indiana home, in his seventy-eight year; marked the passing of the Calumet Region's most widely known and certainly its most colorful figure of the notorious prohibition era of the 1920's; during which period Harold E. "Doc" Miner had served in the United States Marshall's Office with such spectacular effectiveness that national attention had been directed to the more than six hundred raids and over one thousand arrests during one six months period of his hectic two year span of enforcement activity; together with numerous members of the vicious Al Capone Mob; and which had culminated in an unprecedented record of prohibition enforcement convictions anywhere in the nation, approximately ninety percent, and resulting in Miner being summoned to Washington to testify before a Senate Committee, studying enforcement legislation. Indeed, the prohibition era while constituting a highly sensational interlude in the varied and eventful career of the late "Doc" Miner, as he came to familiarly known for almost a half century; yet it was only a brief incident in a truly fantastic career, that was in many ways reminiscent of the wide range of bizarre activities that characterized the intriguing existence of the late "Mark Twain"; while interestingly, much of the same Mississippi river locale served as the early environmental setting for both men.

Born at Nelson, Nebraska, October 25<sup>th</sup>, 1889, the son of Daniel and Eva Ackerman Miner; the family moved to Peoria, Illinois, during the late nineties, where father Daniel Miner died in 1898 leaving his young family consisting of Wife Eva, son Harold and daughter Maude practically penniless. Following her husband's death, Eva Miner moved with her two children to a cottage in her girlhood home-town of Kirkwood, Illinois, where the mother was able to secure employment to support her family; however, before Harold could finish the common school, his mother's health declined to where she was compelled to cease working; thus causing Harold to leave school, before reaching the age of fourteen years, in order that he might assume the support of his mother and younger sister. It was at this time that he was able to secure employment as a helper to the local CB&Q Railway

station agent and found an opportunity to begin the study of telegraphy with the help and assistance of the station master; and with such success that within the incredible period of a few months he had acquired enough proficiency as an operator, that by advancing his age he was able to officially qualify as a telegrapher and was assigned by the CB&Q to be third-trick operator at the Prairie du Chien, Wisconsin station. In later years, he liked to recall an incident that occurred one blustery winter night when he was working alone in the Prairie du Chien station; which was also a junction station with the C&NW Railroad, and it so happened that a lone traveler alighted from the midnight Burlington passenger train and entered the station waiting room to await arrival of a Northwestern passenger train, scheduled for the same four hours later. The temperature being well below zero and the waiting-room being poorly heated; and whereas the traveler had the appearance of importance; Miner invited the stranger into the comfortable office area. The man readily accepted the invitation and proceeded to introduce himself as Governor Robert M. LaFollette, of Wisconsin; whom the teen aged telegrapher soon found to be the most interesting and informative individual that it would ever be his privilege to encounter; while the Governor, who like Miner had also been orphaned at an early age and forced to struggle for an education, urged the young-man to read and study to educate himself, as well as to learn as much as possible concerning his country's history and to become active in public affairs. Furthermore, some twenty years following, when Miner was making an appearance before a U.S. Senate Committee and was escorted into the Senate dining-room, at lunch time, by Senator James E. Watson who proceeded to introduce him to Senator Robert M. LaFollette, the Wisconsin Senator looked him steadily in the eye, for a moment, the exclaimed, - "Harold Miner the telegraph operator at Prairie du Chien."

Deprived of further formal schooling, Miner devoted all possible time to research and study; soon becoming well versed in electricity, chemistry and kindred subjects, it was also noteworthy, that like Abe Lincoln in his diligent research after knowledge, he acquired a versatile vocabulary together with an expertness in spelling that would have been highly creditable to a college trained person. He also became so authoritative in his study of chemistry, that while yet in his early thirties, this man who had not been privileged to graduate from the common school, was employed for two years as an instructor in chemistry at the Palmer College, of Davenport, and occasionally would mention that Pat Flannagin, later a famous sports announcer, as well as "Fibber McGee & Molly"; also of later radio fame, had been students in his Palmer chemistry classes; and it was also that while an instructor at Palmer school that he first met his wife to be, who was also a student there at that time.

In his early twenties, Miner had become so adept in telegraphy, that he was made Wire Chief in the Burlington dispatcher's office at La Crosse, Wisconsin; while a few years later he was transferred to a like assignment at Ottumwa, Iowa. Furthermore, from near the time that he was eligible by age, he was inducted into Masonry at the Lincoln Masonic Lodge, of Kirkwood, in 1912; thereafter applying himself so assiduously to advancement in Masonic work, that within a few years, he not only became a 32<sup>nd</sup> Degree Scottish Rite Mason and a Shriner; but was made Master of the McKinley Lodge of Ottumwa in 1916; while in 1920 he founded and became the first Master of Roosevelt Masonic Lodge of Davenport; Furthermore, during such period of Masonic activity he served a term as Lecturing Knight for the Grand Lodge of Iowa.

Upon U.S. entry in World War I, April 6, 1917, a National Draft Lottery was conducted from Washington; whereby a series of numbers was drawn at random, to be applied across the nation by each individual Draft Board to its own numbered list of draft registrations to determine priority in the draft calls. Miner recalled that he had been at his desk in the Burlington's Davenport office, on the day of the National Lottery, when he was thrilled to hear his own local draft registration number, announced over the telegraph wires, as the first number drawn in the National Lottery; while singularly, the second number so drawn was that of one of his office associates. A few weeks later, on September 9<sup>th</sup>, 1917, Miner enlisted in the U.S. Army and due to his knowledge of electricity and telegraphy was assigned to the Signal Corps; while shortly thereafter he was placed in officer's training, and ninety days later was commissioned a First Lieutenant in the Signal Corps, despite his very limited scholastic training.

Following two years of military service, one year of which was in France, Miner was honorably discharged from service at Fort Dodge, June 28, 1919, with the rank of Captain; returning to Davenport where he became employed as Wire Chief of the local A.T. & T. System office. After only a very brief period of employment, Miner was chosen to be a member of a select committee of AT&T employees, drawn from across the nation, and delegated by the company to spend one month in the New York offices of the System, at Company expense; for the specific purpose of formulating a constitution and by-laws for the newly organized national association of AT&T employees. It was during that month as an employee delegate, in New York City, that Miner became personally acquainted with many of the top-flight officials of AT&T; resulting in lasting friendships that served him in good stead over a period of several decades.

Late in 1919 Miner was invited to teach chemistry at the Palmer College, at Davenport, and in accepting availed himself of the opportunity to take up the study of Chiropractic. Upon completing the course in Chiropractic, he was united in marriage, June 28, 1921, to Miss Stella Elizabeth Breyfogle, of Crown Point, Indiana, who had also just graduated from the Palmer School. Where upon the newly wed Doctors of Chiropractic decided to make their home in Hammond, Indiana; where they opened offices in the Ruff building. Stella soon found it necessary to devote her time and attention to her home, while husband "Doc" continued practice; however, with a growing interest in local civic and political events of that era; wherein the dire need for a local bus transit system was then widely discussed. Miner, then in his early thirties and a born leader was most vigorous in his participation in public matters; and was quick to grasp the idea that it would be a master stroke, on his part; should he be able to promote the granting of bus operation franchises from the local city councils of North Township, without the necessity of capital outlay for the establishing of a bus system. In the furtherance of such purpose, Miner was able to enlist the support of the Hertz Manufacturing Company, in a plan to furnish ten buses, without cash down payment; but under a contract whereby the Hertz Company would receive a fixed portion of each days operating cash receipts, in payment until the buses had been paid for. Thereby armed with his contract to assure buses, Miner was able to wangle the necessary operating franchises from the Cities; but was also able to secure a bank loan sufficient to provide the funds necessary to begin the operation of buses. The Calumet Motor Coach Company, as organized and directed by Miner, was so successful financially that repayment of the bank loan and the meeting of the terms of the Hertz Contract, was assured. The Hertz company also continued to supply additional buses as needed, under the same terms, and with the result that within two years seventy-eight buses were in operation on the streets of North Township cities and towns.

At the time that the Miner bus franchises were granted by the communities concerned; there did not exist in the State of Indiana a body authorized specifically to grant franchises and having the power to regulate and supervise bus transportation within the State. Consequently the Insull Unility Interests were attached by the outstanding success of the Calumet Motor Coach Company; and immediately acted to persuade the Indiana General Assembly to create what became known as the Indiana State Public Service Commission, and endowing the new Commission with full and complete authority in the matter of bus transportation within the State. Accordingly, as the new Public Service Commission came into being one of its first acts was to grant to the newly organized Shore Line Motor Bus Company (Insull) a full and unlimited franchise to operate motor buses

anywhere in the area of North Township; which it promptly proceeded to do by not only duplicating all of the existing Miner bus routes; but to do so by employing the ruinous practice of providing free transportation to all of its customers, so long as might be necessary to end all competition. Thereby was abruptly ended two successful years of operation by the Calumet Motor Coach Company. Miner petitioned the Federal District Court and was readily granted an injunction to halt the Insull bus operation. The Insull people appealed to and secured a reversal of the District Court from the U.S. Court of Appeals. Miner next appealed to the U.S. Supreme Court, bringing his legal expense to the \$40,000 total; and while after many months of agonizing delay, the High Court's action was to sustain the lower Court's injunction; relief arrived too late for Miner; since he had already been forced to sell out to his competitor at what represented a steal. Making use of his bus liquidation proceeds, Miner built-up a small subdivision of homes in time to be wiped out financially by the great economic depression.

It was at this juncture of his career that Miner asked for and received appointment to the United States Marshall's Office, for the Northern district of Indiana. It so happened, that as Miner began the serving of legal processes, his work often carried him into some of the illegally operating dives and brothels; where he was shocked and affronted to witness the serving of liquor across the bar, while completely ignoring his presence as a federal officer. Whereupon, Miner acted summarily to seize the tangible evidence and to make arrests in those instance of open and arrogant violation as were such as to challenge the fighting instincts of a man of Miner's caliber and integrity. Accordingly, upon his first appearance in Hammond Federal District Court, with a liquor violation case, Judge Thomas W. Slick proceeded, in open court, to admonish Miner that it was not his specific duty as a Federal Marshall to enforce the prohibition statutes; since there was a federal agency, the Prohibition Enforcement Unit, charged with that specific duty. Miner immediately addressed the Court with a request to confer with the Judge, in chambers, which was granted; and as soon as they were alone, Miner, as he later related, spoke to Judge in effect that, he Miner, as a matter of personal integrity enjoyed the same degree of respect in his community as would likewise be accorded to the Judge; and that he considered it to be both unfair and below the dignity the Court for the Judge to criticize an officer of his Court for upholding the laws of the United States, anywhere he might witness their violation. Judge Slick readily apologized and commended Miner for his forthright action in the upholding of the law. From that time forward Judge Slick and Miner became the closest of friends in a relationship that continued long after both had retired from public activity.

Having thus been aroused to the challenge posed by prohibition enforcement, Miner began, in a truly characteristic manner, to make a careful study and analysis as to the most effective methods to employ in aggressive prohibition enforcement. He became quickly aware that search warrants issued by the courts in northern Lake County were generally tipped-off to the suspected violators before the raiding officers could reach the site to be raided. Accordingly he arranged to secure search warrants from a south Lake county Justice of the Peace, who would remain neutral. He also learned by experience, that it was often possible to successfully raid the same location twice in one day or the succeeding day; since the violator usually assumed he would not be further molested until after court arraignment. As the Miner enforcement campaign gained headway, scores of stills, in cleverly concealed and devious places, were raided across the northern section of the State of Indiana.

Miner had often stated, that it was foolhardy for an officer to make an arrest or enter upon a raid with a drawn gun or in the act of drawing a gun; he had further remarked that the only time that he had ever found it necessary to make use of a gun, is his many hundreds of raids and arrests, was when he seized a Ft. Wayne brewery operated by a Capone mobster. He had gone to Ft. Wayne, accompanied by two deputies, they carefully cased the brewery property which resembled a walled fortress; having a central courtyard, reached through a large electrically controlled gate. He learned through reliable police sources that the brewery manager together with two of his aids resided within the brewery premises and sought to maintain guarded security, continuously around the clock, and that it was the custom of the operator to drive forth, in his car, about dinner time each evening, returning to the security of the brewery about midnight. Accordingly, Miner and his men observed the manager drive out of the brewery about sun-down, it being a bitterly cold winter night. Shortly thereafter, and by means of a clever ruse, Miner and his deputies seized the brewery, arrested the two inmates and proceeded to await the eventual return of its operator. Near midnight the brewery manager drove his Cadillac car up to the gate and sounded its horn to signal admittance; whereupon the gate opened as usual, and as the car entered the courtyard, the gate closed behind it and Miner rushed, from cover, to the car and opened the driver's door; whereupon the mobster hurriedly reached inside his heavy top-coat desperately drawing his gun from a shoulder holster; but as is right hand, grasping the gun, emerged from under his top-coat; Miner, alerted by the gangsters attempt to draw; had also gone for his gun, and grasping it by the barrel, used it as a club to strike a heavy blow across the wrist of the gangsters gun hand, thereby knocking the gun from his grasp; while at the same time fracturing and lacerating his wrist. Within the hour Miner arraigned the mobster before the U.S. Commissioner, at Fort Wayne; who denied

him bail bond due to the fact that he had drawn a gun and he was ordered confined in the Allen County jail; which was undergoing structural remodeling and was extremely drafty in the then below zero temperature prevailing without. The case of the brewery manager was abruptly ended when he was stricken with pneumonia and died in the jail. Early in Miner's career as a federal officer, he was presented with a warrant for service on a man at LaFayette, Indiana. Upon reaching LaFayette, he visited the city police station and requested that an officer be assigned to accompany him; but the police said that they had no officer available; so he proceeded to the Sheriff's office where he made a like request and received the same answer. Thereupon he inquired his way to the given address and was directed down a remote road along the Wabash River. It was then after nightfall, when his car reached what proved to be a notorious dive in an obscure location, housed in an old frame type store building, with heavily blinded windows. Miner, halted his car directly in front, stepped out and rapped on what appeared to be the entrance door; whereupon a small wicket opened and a man inquired what he wanted? Miner replied that he was a federal officer with a warrant. The next question asked was, are you alone? Miner responded yes, and it then became apparent that someone was peering from first one then another window, seeking to verify the fact that he was actually alone. Next the door opened and he was admitted to a poorly equipped bar-room where some ten questionable looking characters were lounging about. Miner then read the warrant and the wanted man declared that he did not intend to go with him; to which Miner replied forcefully, - "Brother you are going," the subject hesitated for what seemed to be a long moment, and then stated to the effect, - alright I will go with you because you had the guts to come after me alone; and that despite the fact that it is well known in these parts that I have often vowed to shoot it out with any posse of lawman who might try to arrest me; whereupon, he extended his arms to be shackled; but Miner shook his head and said hand-cuffs are unnecessary, you have given me your word.

There was also an incident, when Miner and his deputies seized 5000 gallons of grain alcohol, in 5 gallon cans, and proceeded to empty the same down the sewer drain. The owner as he watched became mentally distraught, begging first that Miner accept \$500 and then \$1000 to spare its destruction. Miner warned him to shut-up and desist; but when the sorely distracted owner raised his offer to \$5000, Miner decided it was time to make an example of him, to deter others; so he placed an additional charge against him, of attempted bribery, and it has been said that the would be briber was the first to be convicted and serve prison time, for attempted bribery, in the history of the courts of northern Indiana.

As the great financial depression, which began in 1929, deepened and continued to spread its economic devastation across the nation; the beginning of the year 1932 found Harold E. "Doc" Miner completely liquidated in so far as his economic resources were then concerned. However a man of reasonably good health, having a wife and two young children looking to him for support, does not accept defeat without a further struggle. Such was then the lot of Doc Miner (as he was henceforth known and called by all who knew him) who had only recently been forced out of a lucrative transit business by a powerful monopoly; then to be liquidated as a subdivider and builder through the financial debacle precipitated by dire economic depression; only to be forced out of the Marshall's office by the intrigue generated by the political backfire, which resulted from the arrest and conviction of the mayors of both Gary and East Chicago together with many of their henchmen; through the prohibition enforcement crack-down instituted by action of Marshall Miner; whereby the expense accounts having to do with the transport, care and feeding of federal prisoners were tied up in Washington by politically motivated red-tape.

It was at this dark hour, back in those discouraging days of the great depression, that Doc Miner and his neighbor and friend Ralph M. (Rip) Dunn; both victims of and sorely battered by economic circumstance; decided to pool their meager resources, totaling next to nothing. Accordingly, Messer's Miner & Dunn opened their first hamburger shop on May 19, 1932, at 5440 Calumet Avenue, Hammond, Indiana, and at a time when there was not one bank operating within a city that had boasted seven banks only a few years previously. Their newly acquired emporium was an old residence the front of which had been remodeled into a retail shop and which they rented for \$25 per month. This snack shop was meagerly fitted with used fixtures; consisting of a counter having six stools, a gas fired griddle, a two door wooden refrigerator that could accommodate a 50# block of ice, and a small sink. This small shop so equipped, was newly and freshly papered and painted, having a cheap print but new linoleum on the counter room floor; it having been thus fitted and equipped by two brothers, the unemployed; but who had just been called back to their resumed jobs and had put up their newly prepared snack-shop for sale, at the asking sum of \$100. Upon carefully assessing their cash holdings that might be considered available for investment, Miner and Dunn came up with the sum of \$80 cash capital; and thereupon made a firm offer of \$50 as is, for the snack shop and to include two weeks, unused but prepaid rental. This offer was readily accepted by the sellers, which left the buyers with \$30 cash working capital. It is further notable that such cash capital outlay represented all the capital investment ever to be made in a business that was to eventually gross annual sales in excess of \$2,000,000.00; however, the gross sales for the opening day of May 19, 1932 totaled \$7.85; while it was tragically remarkable that



jobless persons seeking to exchange labor for only a bite to eat, all but outnumbered the paying customers.

It was almost two years later, February 1934, that Miner-Dunn opened their second shop at 1732 East 79<sup>th</sup> Street, Chicago, Illinois. In September 1935, the third Miner-Dunn shop was opened at the Northwest Corner of 53<sup>rd</sup> & Blackstone Avenue, Chicago, and which was later moved to what became the fourth hamburger shop location, in July 1936, at 80<sup>th</sup> & Ashland Avenue, Chicago. In January 1937 Miner-Dunn acquired their fifth shop location, when they purchased the restaurant in the Tivoli Theatre building on Fifth Avenue, Gary, Indiana; while later that year, during the summer, the original Miner-Dunn shop was moved a few doors south in the same block to 5452 Calumet Avenue, Hammond. In July 1938, shop number six was opened at 5319 Homan Avenue, Hammond; while shop number seven was opened at 119<sup>th</sup> & Oliver Streets, in Whiting, in June 1940. During the Fall of 1941, Albert Pick & Co. sought to interest Miner-Dunn in a finely equipped restaurant located in the first storeroom East of the Northeast Corner storeroom at 43<sup>rd</sup> & Lake Pare Avenue, Chicago; which they had been obliged to foreclose for resale. Following negotiations, Miner-Dunn proposed a deal to purchase, based upon a six months optional trial lease, which was agreed to by Picks. Thereby Miner-Dunn opened at their eighth location in September 1941; while World War II became a reality in December 1941 and Miner-Dunn deemed it wise to exercise its option to cancel its lease, when faced by the uncertainties of War.

With its rationing of both food and supplies together with its priorities and shortages of man-power; War presented miner-Dunn, Inc with a new widening variety of operational problems. A few months following U.S. entry in the War, Miner felt a compunction to offer his services to the Army Signal Corps for the training of telegraphers and communications personnel, a field in which he was expertly familiar. His offer was readily accepted and Miner was assigned, as a civilian, to conduct training classes of Army Corpsmen at the Armour (Illinois) Institute of Technology, in Chicago, being so engaged for a little more than a year; at which time he was offered and accepted Commission as a Major, but for which he was unable to qualify physically; whereupon he resumed his business association.

In March 1943, Miner-Dunn was invited by the Inland Steel Company to provide a food service within their total Indiana Harbor Works; in order to enable their workers to secure rationed food on their job locations, thereby making it unnecessary to provide their lunches from their home supply of rationed food. During the ensuing seventeen years that Miner-Dunn served the Inland employees; the services grew and expanded to the point and to such an extent that the sales volume for the final year of the Miner-Dunn food service, 1960, totaled

\$2,038,000.00. It also began the furnishing of over-time lunches, alone, to the Whiting Refinery of the Standard Oil Company, bought and paid for by the Company. Early, during the period of its industrial catering Miner-Dunn had closed or sold all of its hamburger shops; due first of all to the problems of supply and employment it time of War; and secondly due to the high volume of in-plant food service, Miner-Dunn had at various times also conducted in-plant feeding in the plants of General-American, Continental Foundry, Sinclair Refinery and the Hammond Brass Works. It was during the industrial feeding era that Miner-Dunn's offices were located in Indiana Harbor, and that Doc Miner became a charter member and served as the third President of the East Chicago Rotary Club. It was also during the War period and for several years thereafter that Miner was very active in his participation in Republican political affairs; both at the local and State levels; having served at one time as the First District Chairman and a member of the Republican State Central Committee. It was in 1943 that Miner upon returning home for a Republican State Committee meeting, in Indianapolis. That he remarked to his partner Dunn that he thought that Homer Capehart, who was then also a member of the State committee, would make a splendid candidate for the United States Senate and Dunn remarked "Why not urge him to become a candidate?"; whereupon Miner dictated a letter to Capehart so urging his candidacy. The next day Miner received a telephone call from Capehart asking Miner to have lunch with him the following day at the Union League Club, in Chicago. When Miner returned from the Chicago conference with Capehart, he stated that Homer was now a candidate for the United States Senate. Miner was a delegate to the 1940 Republican National Convention at Philadelphia, that nominated Wendell Wilkie as its presidential candidate. However, Miner was an ardent supporter of Thomas E. Dewey for the nomination as the party standard bearer; while the Indiana delegation, previously partial to Dewey, was sorely divided and actually embarrassed by the eleventh-hour candidacy of Wilkie, a native son of Indiana. On the convention night that the nominating speeches were in progress, and as congressman Halleck finished his speech placing Wilkie in nomination and the Wilkie demonstration parade was forming; the radio announcer stated that there was a pitched battle raging in the Indiana delegation for possession of its standard, in what appeared to be an attempt to prevent the Indiana standard from being carried in the Wilkie parade demonstrations; next morning's Chicago Tribune, in its front page account of convention proceedings, stated, that Harold E. Miner of Hammond, Indiana, had prevented the Indiana standard from being displayed in the Wilkie parade.

Doc Miner was a man of good morals and high integrity, and although the Miner family were Presbyterians, Doc was not known as a deeply religious man; but was often wont to remark, that his religion was

based on "The laws of compensation and the Golden Rule." An incident that occurred at the Chicago 79<sup>th</sup> Street, Miner-Dunn shop, in about 1938, was truly typical of the doc Miner philosophy, quick thinking and picturesque manner of expression. Miner was struggling with a piece of equipment, in what proved to be an exasperating attempt to make some form of repair or adjustment; while supplementing his effort with some choice profanity; whereas a young male employee who was both listening to and observing the hassle, spoke up to say, "Mr. Miner, don't you want to go to heaven?", "Not if all the S-O-Bs are there who think they are going," flashed back the Miner reply.

In July 1948, Miner withdrew from the Miner-Dunn Organization to join with his son John Holton (Jack) Miner, in the establishment of an electronics firm, in Hammond; the Miner Electronics, Inc. with offices, laboratory and warehouse situated at 7331 Calumet Avenue; and secured from the Motorola Corporation a franchise for the installations, maintenance and servicing of their public address and communications systems, now in operation in the major industrial plants, refineries, business, police, fire and numerous other business and governmental agencies of the Calumet Region; and which business has grown and developed into a sizable and highly important as well as lucrative business. The business is now under the direction and control of son Jack, who is a graduate of Purdue University in electrical engineering; and resides with his wife Helen Kuhn Miner, at 238 Belmont Avenue, Munster; together with their four children, Janice, Jeffery, Joel and John.

Mrs. Stella Breyfogle Miner continues to reside in the family home at 8254 Northcote Avenue, Munster; while daughter, Mrs. Lois Mary Scroggs, a graduate of Indiana University in business administrations; resides with her husband LeRoy Russell Scroggs, at Lake Mohawk, Sparta, New Jersey; together with their three children, Carol, Kenton and Claudia. Mr. Scroggs is an airline Captain with the Untied Airlines.

Most respectfully submitted,

By a long time business partner, friend and admirer

Ralph Miller Dunn

SOURCE: Transcribed from photocopy of original document