

for 20 to 25 bananas. However, Pop was not satisfied with only 25 bananas for that price. He had to always get 10 or 15 more for a quarter. The Banana Man would not give in but neither would Pop until he got his bargain. Yes, maybe 40 bananas for 25 cents!

The Helleck Coffee Man came around every week. Ma always bought one or two pounds to have with her family, friends, and neighbors. I remember the man as being very tall and thin and always neatly dressed.

The Ice Man, Mr. Policeo, came around at least twice a week. He was a tall man and very pleasant. All the kids waited for his him during the hot summer to get a piece of ice. Mr. Policeo would deftly chip off small pieces from a huge ice block and give them to the kids.

The Linen Man had nice things and Ma always bought from him. Muslin sheets and pillow cases were mainstays in the olden days. Ma purchased many and then she would crochet yards of doilies and sew them to the sheets and pillow cases. In later years, percale material replaced the muslin. My cedar chest still has many things Ma made for me, just as she did for the rest of her children.

The Fruit Man was a weekly visitor on the street. He would make several stops along the road and the neighbors would gather and wait their turn to be waited on. There was never a time Ma didn't buy anything. Often she would tell the Fruit Man that his produce was too expensive and wind up with some bargains.

The Fish Man also came around and Ma always bought filet fish and smelts.

The Milkman delivered our milk. He would leave the milk on the back porch but after the porch was gone, he had to leave the milk bottles on the front porch. In the winter, I just loved getting the milk bottles because the heavy cream always burst the cardboard lid and the cream overflowed the top. Whoever got to the cream first got a treat.

The Shopping

On Thursday nights, all the stores were open. The family's big grocery shopping was the at the A&P store in Plainfield. Maybe one or two children joined Pop and Ma for the weekly event. One thing that was purchased every week was a big almond chocolate bar for the family to enjoy. Everyone got a small square of chocolate a couple of times a week.