

Red's Candy Store 3/1/2022



My father worked in the Brooklyn Navy yard as a pipe fitter, fixing ships. Some time in the early forties he bought a small candy store from a Mr. Whitaker(?). It was a small store in a building on Pitken Ave, next to an abandoned building on Pitkin Ave. and Christopher Ave. in Brooklyn, NY. We lived in an apartment on Christopher Ave, ½ block from the store.

I once remembered city sanitation workers with shelves in their hand going into the abandoned building and chasing out big rats.

The store sold candy, newspapers, comic books, cigarettes, ice cream and soda to people in the neighborhood. Later on, my father started selling food for breakfast and lunch to people who worked in the area. My mother, Dora, would cook food and bring it to the store to sell and work in the store. Many years later, he put up some shelves and started to sell boxed toys to his customers.

Some of the customers I remember. A few stores down Pitkin Ave was a store that sold used sewing machines. Many of the machines were kept on the street during the day. I used to love to look thru the draws to see what trinket I could find. On the corner of Christopher Ave was a second



floor shop that rebuilt motors (Prusacks?). Many of the workers would come into the store for their breaks and my mother's lunch specials. I remember my father selling during the summer, a quarter of a watermelon for \$0.25 cent. Also remember a bank on the corner of Stone Ave. and Pitkin Ave. whose employees would come to our store. For many years my father sold cigarettes loose at \$.01 each.

About me & the store.

Favorite foods to eat. The candies were right in front as you entered the store. I loved the loose candies and the loose pretzels. Sometimes I would



make an egg cream (chocolate syrup, soda water and milk) to have with a pretzel. Mounds were my favorite candy bar (coconut covered in thick dark chocolate). I loved reading the comic books and newspapers. During the Korean War (1950-1953?) I always looked to see the results of the dog-fights in the sky.

I had to do all the odd jobs around the store like sweeping the floor inside as well as on the street, bring supplies from the back room and worst of all cleaning Ice chest where the bottle sodas were kept cold. No refrigerant but Ice. Had to empty the water, clean the inside, find any labels that came off the bottles and put fresh ice back in the box. I also worked behind the counter at times when my father needed help. I also had to go to the grocery store to buy food for the store. I especially like getting the coffee as the smell when it was grinded was so nice.

Store layout:

