WARWICK, RHODE ISLAND · 1900–1989

Leo Roy

A life in the Warwick newspapers

September 21, 2026 compiled by Claude AI, edited by Patty Roy

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The record of Leo R. Roy — market gardener, contractor, landowner and lifelong Democrat — as the Providence papers set it down between his wedding in 1926 and his death in 1989. Written for his descendants.



R. I. Turkey for the President

"Big Democrat," a 23-pound gobbler, which was shipped today from Hillsgrove for Warm Springs, Ga., by Roy Brothers. Said turkey will be given "new deal" by Mr. Roosevelt on Thanksgiving Day. The turkey is shown with Leo Roy of Roy Brothers and Miss Helen Roy, three years old.

Leo Roy, 33, with "Big Democrat" and his three-year-old niece Helen Roy, daughter of his brother Louis, on the front page of the Evening Bulletin, November 23, 1933. The turkey was on its way to President Roosevelt at Warm Springs.

About this document

Almost everything here comes from newspapers: the morning Providence Journal, the afternoon Evening Bulletin, the Providence Sunday Journal, and one item from the Evening Tribune. Roughly a hundred and fifty clippings, running from November 1926 to February 1989. Three later chapters — the club behind his house on Post Road, the drive-in movie theater on Post Road and the house at 3871 Post Road — are drawn from the three research documents already compiled by Claude AI, which rest on land records, city directories and a Rhode Island Supreme Court decision as well as newspapers. Where a record outside the newspapers settles something the newspapers left open, it is used and cited: three reported Supreme Court decisions, two Quebec baptismal registers, two Rhode Island death registrations, and the 1950 federal census.

Every article used is listed at the back, so that anything said here can be checked against the where it came from.

Two cautions. First, newspapers record a man on the days he makes news, and for about twenty years Leo Roy made news mostly when he was fighting with somebody. Long stretches of an ordinary life — six children, businesses, a parish — pass without a line. Second, a great deal of what was printed about him was said by political opponents in the middle of a campaign. Where that is so, this document says who was speaking.

This account stays with the record. It sets out what was printed, who said it, and where the accounts disagree, and it leaves the reader to draw conclusions about the man.

Beginnings: the farm and the first defeats, 1900–1932

Leo R. Roy was born in Warwick on June 16, 1900, in the village of Norwood, a son of Alfred P. and Amanda (Beaudoin) Roy. Warwick was then a town of farms and trolley lines; it would not become a city until he was thirty.

His parents: Rimouski, Saint-Lazare, and a death in 1910

Both of Leo's parents were born in Quebec, and both were baptized with first name representing a religious name. Most people in Quebec at that time went by their middle name.

Alfred P. Roy was born on June 16, 1865, at Rimouski, on the south shore of the St. Lawrence, and baptized Pierre Alfred Roy at the cathedral church of St-Germain. Amanda Beaudoin was born on October 20, 1869, at Saint-Lazare in Bellechasse county, south-east of Quebec City, and baptized Marie Amanda — the register spells the surname Bodouin.

One date is worth pausing over. Alfred was born on June 16 and Leo was born on June 16 — the same day of the year, thirty-five years apart.

Amanda did not live to Warwick grow. She died on December 21, 1910, at St. Joseph's Hospital in Providence, and the entry in the Providence register gives her age as forty-one and her residence as Warwick. The cause was an appendix abscess and general peritonitis: a burst

appendix, against which in 1910 there was nothing to be done. Under "Occupation" the clerk typed "wife of Alfred." Her parents are recorded as Stephen and Harriet Beaudoin — Etienne and Harriet, anglicized by a Providence city clerk — and her place of birth simply as "Canada." She was buried at St. Ann's.

Leo was ten years old.

His father did remarry, but not for another twenty-two years. On April 18, 1933 Alfred P. Roy married Adeliska M. Giroux. The Warwick city directories for 1938 and for 1940–41 show them living together at 25 Chestnut Street in Norwood. Seven months after the wedding came the photograph of Leo and the turkey.

The Giroux marriage matters for a reason that only shows up later in this document. Adeliska's brother Frank M. Giroux died in 1945, and his obituary names his sister as "Mrs. Adeliska Roy, of Norwood" and gives the house the funeral went from as that of "his niece, Melina A. Giroux, 54 Iona Avenue." Melina A. Giroux is the fifth name on the petition Leo took to the Supreme Court over the 1934 mayoral caucuses. She was his stepmother's niece.

Alfred lived another five years. He died in August 1938, and it was Leo who proved the will and settled the estate — the estate that was still pressing claims against the State of Rhode Island in 1952.

The will

Alfred P. Roy made his will on September 26, 1936, two years before he died, and it survives in the Warwick probate files as case number 3682.

He left his wife Adeliska a life estate in the homestead — "certain land, with a dwelling house and other improvements thereon, in which said house we now live, located in the Village of Norwood" — and on her death the house was to go to his four sons, "Louis, Leo, Napoleon and Eugene, or to the survivors of them, share and share alike, as tenants in common." Everything else, "all the rest, residue and remainder of my estate, of every kind and nature," went to the same four.

Then comes the clause that does the real work:

> *In making this will I have not forgotten my son Alfred, or my three daughters, Annie, Yvonne and Dora. I have omitted them from the will for the reason that Alfred is well provided for in the form of a military pension, Annie and Yvonne are married and Dora has considerable real estate.*
>
> — Will of Alfred P. Roy, September 26, 1936

Eight children, then: five sons — Alfred, Louis, Leo, Napoleon and Eugene — and three daughters, Annie, Yvonne and Dora. Annie and Yvonne appear nowhere else in these papers. And the farm went to four of the eight, which is why every land quarrel in this document from 1951 onward is a quarrel among the same four brothers.

The last clause names Leo:

> *I nominate and appoint my son, Leo R. Roy, sole executor of this will, and direct that he be not required to furnish any surety upon his bond as such executor.*
> — Will of Alfred P. Roy, September 26, 1936

Sole executor, and trusted with no bond behind him. This means Leo did not have to provide any money to insure that he would not steal any money or commit any fraud when it came to the inheritance. Leo was thirty-six.

Two names are written at the foot of the will as witnesses: “Ethel W. Harrison” and, above her, “Patrick H. Quinn, West Warwick.” That is Col. Patrick H. Quinn, who had argued Leo’s water-board case in the Supreme Court in 1927 and whose firm had carried the trolley suits. He came out to Norwood to watch a market gardener sign his will.

The estate took nine years to close. On July 31, 1947 Leo swore an affidavit in the Warwick probate court that all claims, “including funeral bill and inheritance taxes, have been paid,” that his father’s widow was “in full enjoyment of the real estate where she and my father lived at the time of his death, as provided for her in his will,” and that “the four residuary legatees are all alive and over age and are now the owners as tenants in common of the residuum of the estate.” The clerk recorded the decree on August 28, 1947. The tax notice pinned to the file gives the whole Rhode Island inheritance tax on the estate as $2.65, and addresses the executor care of Quinn & Quinn, Attorneys, 1911 Industrial Trust Building, Providence — the same firm, twenty years on.

The eldest brother

The Alfred of the fourth clause was Leo’s eldest brother. Alfred J. Roy was born in Providence on September 23, 1896 — three years and nine months before Leo — a son of Alfred P. Roy and Amanda (Beaudoin) Roy, both born in Canada. He served in the First World War, which is the pension his father meant. He was a carpenter in the construction trade and had worked at it twenty-five years; his death certificate gives the last year he worked as 1943. He married Christina A. Wolfe, and the Warwick directories of 1938 and 1940–41 put them on Broad Street; by the end they lived at 26 Majestic Avenue.

He died on February 4, 1957, aged sixty, at the State Mental Hospital in Cranston, where he had been for five years. The cause of death on the certificate is a vascular one and reads backwards through time: encephalopathy from arterial hypertension in the last day, before that an encephalomalacia of the midbrain from a thrombosis nine months old, and behind both a hypertensive vascular disease of more than three years’ standing. In plain words, a stroke deep in the brain, following years of high blood pressure. His wife was the informant. He was buried at St. Ann’s in Cranston on February 7.

The farm

The family were market gardeners. When Leo married on Thanksgiving day of 1926, the Evening Tribune introduced him as "son of Alfred Roy and one of the firm of Roy & Sons, market gardeners of this village." The wedding notice follows:

> *Leo R. Roy … was united in marriage to Miss Bertha A. Benson of Providence Thursday morning at St. Matthew's Roman Catholic Church, Auburn … The bride wore a gown of white satin trimmed with seed pearls and her veil was held in place by a crown of orange blossoms. She carried a shower bouquet of white rose buds. The bride was attended by Miss Dora M. Roy while Napoleon Roy was best man. Following a turkey dinner and reception held at the residence of the bridegroom on Apponaug road the couple left for a motor trip over the Mohawk Trail, to Niagara Falls, Washington and New York and upon their return will make their home with Alfred Roy.*
>
> — Evening Tribune, November 27, 1926

His sister Dora stood up for the bride and his brother Napoleon for him; thirty years later Dora was still living in his house, and Napoleon was still at the center of his quarrels. The Roys stayed close all their lives.

Two defeats, and a trip to the Supreme Court

He was already in politics. In 1955 he told a reporter that he had been at it since he was twenty-one, when he was "hooted out of a GOP controlled town council meeting in the days before Warwick was a city," and that he had run for the council president's seat as a young man and lost, then run for the water board four years later and lost again.

The second of those defeats is worth telling in full, because it is the earliest thing we know about him in any detail and it sets the pattern for everything that follows.

In January 1927 the General Assembly authorized Warwick to elect five members of a new water supply board and three water commissioners — eight seats, filled at a special election on Tuesday, April 12. Eight Democrats ran against eight Republicans, slate against slate. Leo Roy was twenty-six, newly married, and working on his father's farm.

The Republicans he was running against were not obscure men. Among them was Webster Knight, then seventy-two, a son of Robert Knight and a principal of B. B. & R. Knight, the cotton-mill firm that had dominated Warwick for two generations; he had sold the company in 1920 and was living at Natick Farm, where he died in 1933. The others were Arthur B. Lisle, Edward B. Aldrich, John L. Doyle, Louis D. Peirce, Granville A. Beals, George Crosston and John J. Quirk.

The result was a rout. The newspaper never printed the numbers, but the court record does: the lowest-polling Republican received 923 votes, and the highest-polling Democrat 148. Leo Roy therefore got no more than 148 votes, and probably fewer. When he said thirty years later that "in those days, the party had to go out hunting for candidates," this is the arithmetic he had in mind.

Sisson ex rel. Flynn v. Lisle

The eight defeated Democrats did not let it go. They petitioned the Rhode Island Supreme Court to throw the winners out. The Evening Bulletin named them: "John M. Flynn, Thomas Hart,

Peter J. Gunn, Leo Roy, Henry M. Spink, Martin E. Donnelly, George P. Sullivan and James P. Clark."

All eight of the defeated Democratic candidates brought it, Leo among them; in the language of the case they are the eight relators, and the eight elected Republicans are the respondents. The caption is a formality of the period: a quo warranto petition — the writ used to test whether a man lawfully holds an office — was brought in the name of the Attorney General "on the relation of" the private complainants who were really behind it, and Charles P. Sisson was Rhode Island's Attorney General from 1925 to 1929. So the case is reported as Sisson ex rel. Flynn v. Lisle. The opinion, by Justice John W. Sweeney, opens:

> *This petition in equity in the nature of quo warranto is brought to try the title of the respondents to certain offices in the town of Warwick.*
>
> — Sisson ex rel. Flynn v. Lisle, R.I. Supreme Court, May 25, 1927

The quarrel was about paperwork, and both sides had botched it — the Democrats worse than the Republicans. The Democrats' certificate of nomination, filed March 28, named an election to be held "on the Tuesday next after the first Monday in April, 1927," namely April 5. No election was held that day, and the court called the certificate a nullity. The Republicans' certificate, filed March 29, named the right date but was fourteen days out where the law required "at least fifteen days previous."

The town clerk ignored both defects and printed every candidate on the ballot. Nobody objected — until the day after the election, when the Democrats' attorney objected to the town council counting the Republican votes. As the Evening Bulletin quoted it:

> *Neither of the candidates objected to the action of the Town Clerk in placing the names of their opponents upon the official ballot until the day after the election, when an attorney for the relators objected to the counting by the Town Council of the ballots cast for the respondents.*
>
> — Evening Bulletin, May 25, 1927

That timing decided it. Sweeney held that objections to irregular nominations must be made before the polls open; afterwards, where the election has been fair and the voters' will is plain, such statutes are directory only. He quoted a Hawaii decision, Territory v. Kanealii — "The American authorities are almost unanimous in holding that objection to irregularities in the nomination of a person for office must be taken prior to the election" — and cited earlier Rhode Island and Massachusetts cases to the same effect. The Democrats had relied on a Montana case, Price v. Lush; the court pointed out that it had since been reversed. The passage the Evening Bulletin printed is the end of that reasoning:

> *The names of the relators and the respondents appeared on the official ballot and all electors of the town had opportunity to vote for the candidates of their choice. They did so by marking their ballot as required by law. They did this in good faith, supposing the names of the candidates were legally upon the ballots. The choice of the great majority of the electors should not be nullified on account of the irregularity in filing the respondents' certificate of nomination.*
>
> — Justice John W. Sweeney, Evening Bulletin, May 25, 1927

The opinion ends: "In our opinion the relators are not entitled to the relief prayed for, and their petition for ouster of the respondents is denied."

The lawyers

Also in the Evening Bulletin is information about the laywers.

> *De Ciantis of Quinn, Kernan and Quinn appeared as counsel for the petitioners and Peorce H. Brereton and Clifford A. Kingsley of Clason, Brereton and Kingsley for the respondents.*
>
> — Evening Bulletin, May 25, 1927 — the foot of the column

“Peorce” is the compositor’s slip for Peirce. The published report names only the two firms; the newspaper names the men who stood up, and one of them was Peirce H. Brereton himself.

That first name matters more than it looks. Quinn, Kernan & Quinn was one of the leading Democratic firms in the state, and it is the same firm — and the same Michael DeCiantis — that three years later won Leo his $5,000 jury verdict against United Electric Railways over the trolley crash. DeCiantis appears a third time in 1932, at the Firemen’s Hall caucus in Lakewood, watching the ballot count for Leo’s faction. Whatever else the twenty-six-year-old market gardener was in 1927, he was already inside that circle.

The name on the other side is worth marking too. Peirce H. Brereton became Warwick’s first mayor six years later, and his own election case appears later in this document. Leo Roy lost to him in 1927; in 1934 the same two sets of lawyers met again over the mayoralty, and that time Leo’s side won.

So at twenty-six he had lost an election six to one and then taken it to the state’s highest court. He did the same thing at thirty-four, over the Democratic mayoral caucuses of 1934, and again at fifty-one, over the junkyard. It was not the last time.

The following year the party made him secretary of the Warwick Democratic town convention. In 1932, at the largest Democratic caucus in the town’s history — 285 votes cast at Firemen’s Hall in Lakewood — he was nominated as a state convention delegate on the slate that lost, 179 to 106. He was living then at 461 Post Road.

The trolley case

At half past eight on the morning of Tuesday, April 3, 1928, the Roys were driving south on Post Road toward the family farm — Leo’s father Alfred and four of his grown sons: Leo, 27, Napoleon, 25, Louis, 23, and Eugene, 18. The truck had slowed behind a horse-drawn wagon it could not pass. A Providence–East Greenwich trolley of the United Electric Railways Company was coming up behind them at thirty to thirty-five miles an hour, and the motorman was looking away, toward some workmen taking down trees at the roadside.

Napoleon was riding facing backwards, and he was the one who saw it coming. He stood up in the moving truck and waved both arms to catch the motorman’s eye. It did not work. The car

struck the right rear of the truck and drove it across the road and into the woods, passing just in front of an oncoming automobile. Napoleon was thrown out.

All five of them sued, separately, and each case was tried on its own. By October 1930 four Kent County juries had already found for a Roy. The company appealed nearly every one of them, and won something on all but the first.

Napoleon C. Roy, 25	Law 2068. Tried April 1929. Verdict $4,415, affirmed in full by the Supreme Court on January 29, 1930 — the one appeal the company lost outright.
Eugene Roy, 18	Law 2063. Verdict $6,500, the largest in the family, and no appeal of it has been found. As a minor he sued through a next friend (usually a parent), which is what the "p. a." beside his name on the docket means.
Louis A. Roy, 23	Law 2064. Verdict $3,000, cut to $1,500 in February 1931 or a new trial. He was back on the trial calendar in April 1932, which suggests he refused the reduction.
Leo Roy, 27	Law 2066. Verdict $5,000, cut to $2,000 in December 1931 or a new trial.
Alfred Roy, the father	Law 2065. Verdict $10,000 against a $20,000 claim, set aside altogether on April 1, 1932. He had at least two further claims running in 1932.

The juries awarded the family $28,915 in all; after the appeals, something like $14,415 of it stood. Leo's share of that was the $2,000 his verdict was cut to, in a Supreme Court transcript:

> *The objective injuries to the plaintiff were not serious … They consisted of a small swelling about half the size of an English walnut on the back of his head and the laceration of one of the fingers on his left hand … The plaintiff's testimony that the injured finger is permanently injured and that he is suffering from nervous disorders, as a result of the accident is unsupported by medical testimony. The fact that the plaintiff wept while on the witness stand is not sufficient to warrant the statement of the trial justice that the plaintiff is "suffering from a shattered nervous system."*
>
> — Evening Bulletin, December 10, 1931

What the court would not let any of them recover was the thing that had actually hurt them most. The farm was a partnership between Alfred and his three adult sons, and each partner's share of the 1927 profits had been about $2,200; Louis testified his own share fell to $150 the year after the crash. The court held that a man may recover what he could have earned by his own labor but not the profits of a business — and since all four partners were hurt and all four were suing for the same lost profits, there was no way to say whose absence had cost what.

Alfred's verdict was set aside on a second ground as well. The Supreme Court found that the trial judge had been so openly hostile to the railway's counsel in front of the jury that the company had not received a fair trial. That decision is reported as Roy v. United Electric Railways Co., 52 R.I. 173, 159 A. 637 (1932). The Roys' lawyers throughout were Patrick H. Quinn and Michael De Ciantis, of Quinn, Kernan & Quinn — the same men who had acted for Leo in the water-board case the year before he married.

The full account of the crash and all five lawsuits is set out in a separate family research document, "Alfred Roy vs. United Electric Railways, 1928–1932," and only the outline is given here.

A turkey for the President

The best-known thing the Roy brothers ever did took two months to arrange and one day to happen. In the autumn of 1933 Leo, Louis and Eugene picked a 23-pound Narragansett gobbler out of a flock of five hundred at the Roy Farm on Strawberry Field Road, named it "Big Democrat," and wrote to the White House. Leo had met the President in Washington. The reply came back from the President's secretary, Mr. Howe: "Send him on."

On Thanksgiving morning the bird went south to Warm Springs, Georgia, and Leo went on the front page of the Evening Bulletin, holding it, with his three-year-old niece Helen — Louis's daughter — beside him. The caption promised that "said turkey will be given 'new deal' by Mr. Roosevelt on Thanksgiving Day."

The farm on Strawberry Field Road in the photograph's caption matters later. It is the same land that produced the junkyard fight of 1952, the airport compensation bill of 1951, and the rezoning of 1956.

City hall and three lost jobs, 1934–1942

Warwick became a city in 1931. In 1934 the Democrats won it for the first time, and Leo Roy was in the middle of the fight that produced the winner.

That October, five people went to the Supreme Court to stop delegates from two wards taking part in the Democratic mayoral convention, saying the caucuses there "were only pretences": eleven ballots cast in Ward Two, four in Ward Four, no caucus at all in Ward Three. "Signing the petition were John M. Flynn, Leo R. Roy, Joseph W. Grimes, Harold T. Parish and Melina A. Giroux."

The last of those five was family. Melina A. Giroux worked for the State Department of Agriculture and Conservation and lived at 54 Iona Avenue in Norwood, and she was the niece of Adeliska Giroux, whom Leo's father had married the year before. Her mother's obituary and her uncle Frank's supply the link between them; the Girouxs and the Roys were both at St. William's Church in Norwood. So of the five names on that petition, one was Leo, one was his stepmother's niece, and one — Joseph W. Grimes — would appear two months later as counsel for Mayor O'Brien in the Supreme Court, alongside Leo's own lawyer Patrick H. Quinn.

No decision on that petition appears in the Rhode Island Reports, and the volume covering those months contains no case under any of the five names. Emergency petitions filed days before a nominating convention were commonly disposed of from the bench without a written opinion. Whatever the court did, the convention went ahead, John A. O'Brien took the nomination, and in November he was elected — the city's second mayor and its first Democrat.

Twenty-one years later Leo would cite that election as the first proof that he was a power in Warwick. The newspaper clipping shows he was at least in the room. What the newspapers do not show is that the election he was claiming credit for came within seven votes of being taken away in court.

Seven votes: Brereton v. Board of Canvassers

O'Brien won the November 1934 election narrowly, and the man he beat did not accept it. Peirce H. Brereton — the outgoing Republican, and Warwick's first mayor under the 1931 charter — petitioned the Supreme Court for a writ of certiorari to review the disputed ballots.

On December 27, 1934, the court gave it to him. It quashed the records of the Warwick board of canvassers and declared Brereton elected by a plurality of seven votes, and a certificate of election was issued to him in place of the one the board had already given O'Brien.

Four days later the court granted the respondents leave to reargue. The second opinion came down on February 6, 1935, and it reversed the first. The court abandoned the strict rule it had been applying — under which a ballot could be thrown out for any pencil stroke beyond a clean cross — in favor of counting a ballot wherever the voter's intention was clear:

> *We therefore decide that the writ of certiorari in this case shall be quashed; that the original declaration by the board of canvassers that the respondent, John A. O'Brien, was elected mayor of the city of Warwick shall be affirmed and that said board shall issue a certificate of election to John A. O'Brien and recall the certificate which was issued in accordance with the previous opinion and order of the court to the petitioner, Peirce H. Brereton.*
>
> — Brereton v. Board of Canvassers, 55 R.I. 23 (Feb. 6, 1935)

So for six weeks over the winter of 1934 and 1935, the mayor Leo Roy spent the rest of his life claiming credit for electing was not the mayor, and his opponent was holding the certificate.

The lawyers are worth noting, because by now they are familiar. Appearing for O'Brien were Patrick H. Quinn and Joseph W. Grimes. Quinn was Leo's own counsel in the 1927 water-board case and in the trolley suit; Grimes was one of the five men who had signed the October caucus petition with him. Appearing for Brereton were Clifford A. Kingsley, Sigmund W. Fischer and Russell H. Hawkins — and Kingsley was the Kingsley of Clason, Brereton & Kingsley, the firm that had beaten Leo in 1927. Brereton was that firm's own partner, which is how we know the lawyer and the mayor were the same man.

Neither the December nor the February opinion mentions Leo Roy. He was not a party and not counsel. But the case was fought by the two sets of lawyers he had been on opposite sides of since he was twenty-six, over the office he had spent that autumn trying to secure for O'Brien, and this time his side won.

Highway commissioner — or not

What he got out of it was a job. The Providence Journal in 1936 reported it plainly:

> *Shortly after Mayor John A. O'Brien took office in Warwick he appointed Mr. Roy highway commissioner with the understanding that the appointment was of a temporary nature … Later Mr. Roy was given a job in the State Division of Public Utilities but left that office after a short time to join the Division of Roads and Bridges force at the Cherry Hill garage.*
>
> — Providence Journal, April 3, 1936

By the spring of 1936 all three were gone. The Evening Bulletin's headline on April 2 was "Leo R. Roy Loses Third Public Job"; the Journal followed the next day with "Public Works Division Drops Norwood Employe." The director of public works confirmed that Roy, a Democrat, had been dropped "several days ago" and "gave no reason for the action." Leo was thirty-five.

Here the record contradicts itself. In 1955 he told the Evening Bulletin that he had never actually held the title of highway commissioner, and that the quarrel over that very title was what broke his friendship with Mayor O'Brien. The 1936 newspapers say he held it. So does his own obituary in 1989, which records that "he was the Warwick highway commissioner in the early 1930s during the administration of former Mayor John O'Brien." Two of the three accounts, including the one his family gave the paper when he died, say he had the job.

Two years later, in August 1938, his father died, and the will he had signed in September 1936 made Leo sole executor of the estate of Alfred P. Roy. That estate — the land on Strawberry Field Road — was still being argued over fourteen years later, and was not formally closed until 1947.

The sand pit, 1942

On a Wednesday in April 1942 he was refueling a gasoline-powered shovel in his sand pit on Strawberry Field Road, with two of his sons on top of it, when the fuel ran down onto a welding torch his brother Louis was using in the cab.

> *Leo R. Roy, 41, of 1380 Post road, Lincoln Park, and his two young sons were severely burned and the father, in addition, suffered a broken ankle … The father was treated for first degree burns of the face, second degree burns of the left hand and a fractured right ankle. Leo, Jr., 14, received first degree burns of the face and second degree burns of both hands and legs and Edward, aged nine, sustained burns of the arms and legs … Leo Roy, the elder, received the broken ankle when he jumped from the shovel onto the ground.*
>
> — Evening Bulletin, April 23, 1942

All three were treated at Rhode Island Hospital and released the same day.

The club behind the house, 1934–1952

For about ten years one of the better-known night spots in Warwick stood in the lot behind Leo Roy's house on the Post Road in Norwood. He built it, he owned it, and for its first two years his family ran it. It went by several names, made the front page more than once, and burned in 1945. The full history of the place is set out in a separate research document, "The Restaurant on Post Road." What follows is Leo's part of it.

A license at the Wayside Inn

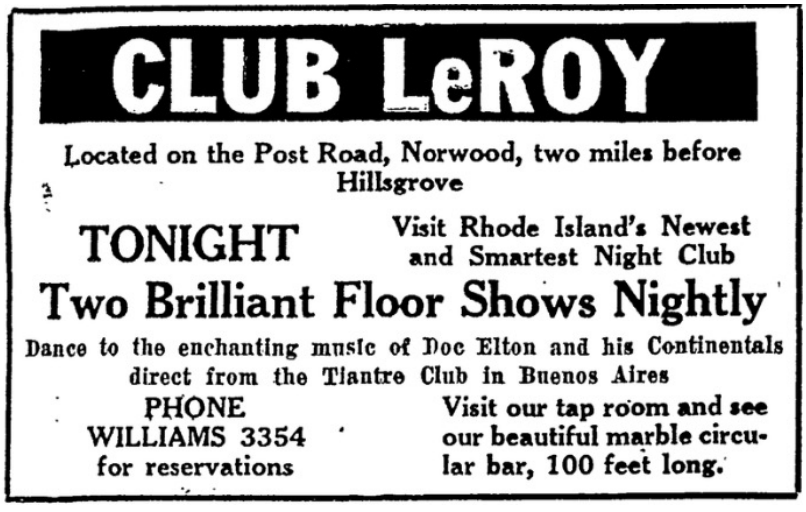
Leo's first appearance in the liquor-license lists comes in September 1934, when the Warwick Board of Police Commissioners recorded a "Class B – Transfer" from Alfred Roy to Leo Roy, 1406 Post Road, Lincoln Park. That was the address of the Wayside Inn, a short way south along the Post Road from the Roy home, and the license was passing from father to son. Prohibition had ended only the December before, and a Class B license let a restaurant serve beer, wine and liquor with meals. How the Roys came to hold a license at the inn, the papers do not say.

In July 1935 he asked the board to move that license to "rear of 970 Post road, Norwood," which was his own land. That year a three-story frame building went up well back from the road in the large lot behind his house. It was about 42 by 80 feet, with brick facing along the basement, and ten years later he would tell reporters that it represented "a large part of his life savings." The papers do not say who built it, but a family with a contractor, an electrician and a carpenter in it was well equipped for the job, and the Roys likely did much of the work themselves.

970 Post Road and 1380 Post Road are the same place. The 1938 Warwick directory lists Leo and Bertha, his sister Dora, his brother Napoleon and Club LeRoy all at 970 Post Road; the 1940–41 directory lists the same household at 1380. The street guides in the two directories show why: the Post Road house numbers had been changed to start at Narragansett Parkway in Pawtuxet instead of at Warwick Avenue, and the house had not moved. The Post Road through Norwood was also called the Apponaug Road, and the club sometimes gave its address that way.

Club LeRoy

The building's first name was the family's own, "LeRoy" being the French form of Roy. Advertisements in the Evening Bulletin in November 1935 invited readers to "Visit Rhode Island's Newest and Smartest Night Club," with "two brilliant floor shows nightly," dancing to Doc Elton and his Continentals, a private banquet hall, and a tap room with "our beautiful marble circular bar, 100 feet long."



Club LeRoy's opening-season advertisement. Evening Bulletin, November 1, 1935.

Thanksgiving week brought a roast turkey dinner “with all the fixin’s” for $1.25, and the advertisement said where the birds came from: “The Roy Farm, famous for its turkeys, supplies them fresh killed daily.” It was the same farm on Strawberry Field Road that had sent “Big Democrat” to President Roosevelt two years before. In 1936 the club advertised dancing to Foster Lasher’s Club LeRoy Orchestra (gentlemen 40 cents, ladies 25), Sunday baseball at “Club Le Roy Park” on the grounds, and a bonfire and fireworks for the Fourth of July.

It was a family business on Leo’s land. In May 1937 his brother Napoleon applied for the Class B license for Club LeRoy, and the 1938 city directory lists “Club LeRoy (Eugene E Roy)” at 970 Post Road. The name outlived the club in the city’s books: in February 1944 the Warwick tax collector won a judgment of $48.65 in Fourth District Court against “Dora Roy, Club LeRoy, Norwood,” which suggests that his sister had a stake in it as well.

By June 1937 the same building was advertising as the Alpine Village Hofbrau, with a “Genuine German Kitchen,” Munich beer on draught and Fred Mueller, “the Master Yodeler.” It closed in November. The papers never name who ran it; it may have been the Roys trying a new theme, or a tenant. On a Friday night in January 1938 a patrolman noticed about twenty cars around the closed building. The police waited outside in the snow until the door opened, and took 42 men to headquarters in Apponaug from what the Evening Bulletin called a “strip-tease” party. Every one of them said the show was run by “Jimmy,” whose last name nobody knew. The Police Commission revoked the license. The newspaper did not connect Leo to the party.

A tenant, and the fire

In May 1938 the Police Commission granted a Class B license “in the former Club LeRoy” to a new operator, Josef Wagner. From then until 1952 Leo owned the building and the land, and Wagner held the license and ran the business, as the Norwood Hofbrau until 1940 and after that as the Norwood Country Club. His story is told in the research document and is not repeated here.

The war brought stricter rules. After the Cocoanut Grove fire in Boston killed 492 people in November 1942, Warwick set occupancy limits for every night club in the city, and the Norwood Country Club was allowed 150 patrons at a time.

Early on Sunday, August 19, 1945, days after Japan’s surrender had been announced, a neighbor saw flames and called in the alarm at about 3:50 a.m. The fire had started in the kitchen ell and had probably been burning for two hours. It climbed two flights of stairs and a dumbwaiter shaft and ran through the banquet halls on the second and third floors. Five fire companies came with nine pieces of apparatus and laid about 6,000 feet of hose; Post Road traffic was detoured, and the smoke could be seen across northern Warwick. Several hundred neighbors stood watching, “scantily dressed.” Just before five the west wall began to buckle and part of the roof fell in.



Firemen Battle Fire at Norwood Country Club

THE WELL KNOWN WARWICK NIGHT SPOT was virtually burned out early yesterday, causing damage estimated by the owner to reach $36,000. The flames spread from an ell kitchen through the 3-story frame structure, causing heavy loss to fixtures, stock and building.

"Firemen Battle Fire at Norwood Country Club." Evening Bulletin, August 20, 1945.

For Leo the loss was heavy. He told reporters that the building represented a large part of his life savings, estimated that it was worth $20,000, and said that he carried no fire insurance on it. Estimates of the total loss ran from $15,000 to $36,000. It was Warwick's second major night-club fire in just over a year.

The "Leaning Tower of Warwick"

In April 1946, Joseph Wagner, 1380 Post Road, took out a building permit for a $20,000 dining room and bar to replace the burned club, and in July the zoning board granted Leo R. Roy, 1380 Post Road, an exception to add a 30-by-40-foot open-air terrace to "the present cafe at this address." What opened was smaller than what had burned. By late 1946 the license lists read "Joe's Tavern," rear 1380 Post Road, and the burned shell of the old club was never cleared away. It stood behind his house for years.

On May 27, 1952, a year after Bertha's death, a warranty deed was recorded from Leo R. Roy to Josef Wagner for "land, buildings and improvements, Post Road." The Providence Journal ran a photograph of the ruin under the headline "'Leaning Tower of Warwick' Seen About to Take the Plunge," and reported that the city had condemned it in the winter of 1950. By the tax stamps the price was about $4,000, for 1.72 acres to the south and east of Leo's house, including the tavern. The deed required the "tower" to be torn down to the first-floor level. Leo kept his house

and a 50-foot right of way along the whole southwest edge of the parcel and Josef Wagner owned his tavern.



Finally Coming Down is the charred remains of the old night club at the rear of the property of Leo Roy, 1380 Post Road, Norwood, which was destroyed by fire more than 10 years ago.
—State Staff Photo

The remains of the club behind Leo Roy's house. Providence Journal, May 29, 1952.

That ended Leo's part in the place. The sale came in the same spring the city was moving against the family junkyard on Strawberry Field Road, and ten weeks before the brothers sold the Hillsgrove tract. The small tavern behind the house carried on in other hands, as the Little Hofbrau, until 1976.

1948: the mayor, the charge, and the suit

A newspaper clipping from September 1948 has nothing to do with politics. Leo was in Fourth District Court at Apponaug suing a Warwick Neck homeowner for $276, the unpaid half of a $552 bill for loam. The defendant said the loam would not grow grass. Leo answered that it had come in forty-six truckloads, that the man could have stopped the order at any time, and that the City of Warwick had used the same loam to seed the lawns at Aldrich and Gorton High Schools "and there had been no complaints from that quarter." Judge Leighton reserved decision.

Six weeks later he was in a much larger fight.

Warwick's Republican mayor, Albert P. Ruerat, had held the office since 1937 and was fighting to keep it against Joseph Mills, a Republican who had lost the primary and was running as an Independent with Democratic backing. At a Republican ward rally on Friday, October 29, Ruerat turned on one of Mills's supporters by name:

> *This Mr. Roy who is now one of Mills' most ardent supporters is the same man who in 1935 and 1936 was on both the WPA and the city highway department payrolls at the same time. If you don't want to see men of this type put into positions of confidence, elect George Salter your next mayor.*
>
> — Mayor Albert P. Ruerat, Providence Journal, October 30, 1948

The next night, at the Norwood fire hall, Mills read Leo's answer aloud to the crowd:

> *Let me inform the people of Warwick that I never drew a WPA check in my life, and that the record will prove that statement. Let me also say that Ruerat asked for my support when he was running for his first term in 1936, and that he was glad to accept it at that time.*
>
> — Leo R. Roy, Providence Sunday Journal, October 31, 1948

On Monday morning, November 1 — the day before the election — his attorney filed a $100,000 slander suit against the sitting mayor in Kent County Superior Court. The declaration said Ruerat had meant to charge that Roy "had illegally accepted money from the United States government," had imputed to him "dishonesty and fraud," and had left him "shunned and avoided by divers persons" and injured "in his business as a general contractor." Ruerat filed demurrers in December, denying that the words charged any crime at all.

Nothing in the newspaper shows how the suit ended. It does show that Mills won the election the next day by 546 votes.

There is a small aftershock five years later, and it reaches the Roys through a son-in-law. In March 1953 the Warwick Jefferson-Jackson Club voted to ask the school committee why it was buying school buses from Ruerat, who by then was out of office and running the H. & R. Automotive Co. and the Diamond T Sales & Service Co. The charge — that Diamond T had neither a sales permit nor a motor vehicle dealer's license — was put by the club's secretary, Edward J. Vasconcellos, who was married to Leo's daughter Marie. Ruerat came back hard: the license was held by the other company, he had a perfect right to trade under any name he liked, "and the people who made this charge know it very well." The committee had already accepted the buses, after a delay, and only on extra guarantees.

The Potter war, 1949–1950

Having helped put a mayor in office, Leo Roy spent the next two years at war with the chairman of the mayor's own party.

In April 1949 he was the peacemaker. The Journal reported that a meeting between Mills and Democratic city chairman Lafayette N. Potter "is said to have been arranged by Leo Roy of Norwood, an active Independent and close friend of the mayor's." That same month he was in the State House chamber when the House passed the bill giving Mills stronger powers — the paper listed him among the spectators, by name, as "Leo R. Roy, friend of Mills."

By August the peace was over. A move to unseat Potter at the city committee meeting of August 22 failed, and Potter said publicly who was behind it:

> *Potter said that O'Neil is the spokesman for Roy, and that Roy is the confidant and advisor of Mayor Joseph Mills.*
>
> — Providence Journal, August 24, 1949

Councilman Francis J. O'Neill of Ward 3 was Leo's nephew — his sister Anna's son — and his employee. Leo himself belonged to no committee at all. The Journal put the awkwardness of that squarely:

> *It was the attempt of Roy, an outsider, to usurp control of the city committee, presumably in behalf of Mills, that fused the committee temporarily behind Potter Aug. 22 when resentment at interference flared.*
>
> — Providence Journal, September 1, 1949

On September 3 the Journal printed Potter's fullest charge: that Leo had telephoned the state Democratic chairman, Stephen A. Fanning, proposing that the deputy sheriff's job in Kent County be taken from one man and given to Potter in exchange for the chairmanship. Fanning, Potter said, "wouldn't even pay any attention to him." The deputy sheriff whose job was on the table, Charles E. Kenahan, said he had stood up at the meeting and "laid them out in lavender," and gave the reporters the line that has outlived everything else in the story:

> *Roy is the big wheel behind it all, but this time the spokes flew out and hit him in the head.*
>
> — Charles E. Kenahan, Providence Journal, September 3, 1949

That same summer the Providence Sunday Journal ran a feature on the shape of Warwick politics and placed him at the top of it. The city, it said, had been run by a Republican triumvirate for twelve years, and a second trio had just tried and failed to take the Democratic machine:

> *Outcast from the Democratic party last week were these three: Mayor Mills, Councilman Francis J. O'Neill, administration spokesman in the city committee, and Leo R. Roy, adviser and friend of the mayor.*
>
> — Providence Sunday Journal, August 28, 1949

1950: his name on the other side's advertising

In 1950 the quarrel became an election. Potter ran for mayor unendorsed; O'Neill took the endorsement as an acknowledged proxy for Mills and then stood aside so Mills could run unopposed. Five years later Leo took the credit without hesitating: "I got Francis to do it."

Potter said Leo had come to him with an offer. Leo answered, in a signed statement, that it was Potter who had come to him:

> *I asked him what he wanted when he came in, and I left when Potter started to get mad. There's nothing in this business of "a deal" as no such thing was mentioned.*
> — Leo R. Roy, Providence Journal, August 11, 1950

A week later he issued a statement, turning the charge round:

> *For the nearly two years that he has served as Democratic city chairman, he has failed to criticize, even once, the actions of the solid six in the city council who have consistently opposed economy in government. He has condoned by his silence the actions of department heads who forget they are "public servants" and act as "public masters." Is Mr. Potter interested in good government or patronage? Does he desire success for the Democratic Party or for himself? ... The answer is in his record.*
> — Leo R. Roy, Providence Journal, August 23, 1950

In the same statement he denied a charge that he had voted in the Republican primary in 1948, and added something a reader may find surprising in a man so deep in party politics: that he had never voted "in any primary."

Two charges made against him that summer are worth setting down, because both come back later. Carl A. Berg told the Providence Journal that Leo had visited his home the previous March and "promised him a police commission seat if he could dissuade Potter from running for mayor," and that Roy was "ordered from the house" afterwards. Berg also said Roy "has frequently expressed to him an interest in 'getting a dog track in Warwick.'" Both are the words of a political opponent. But in January 1950 Leo and his brother Eugene had in fact incorporated the Colonial Kennel Club, Inc., "for encouraging and improving the breeding of thoroughbred dogs"; and the seat he was said to be offering Berg in 1950 was the seat he wanted for himself in 1955.

By the autumn his name had become a campaign issue in its own right. The Republican city chairman demanded to know "What interest did Leo Roy have in that charter bill?" A state senator told a rally in Lakewood:

> *The real issue in this campaign is Thomas Casey Greene or Leo Roy.*
> — Sen. William B. Sweeney, Evening Bulletin, October 27, 1950

It is worth knowing who Leo Roy was being weighed against in that sentence. Thomas Casey Greene was the Republican city chairman of Warwick and its candidate for mayor in 1950, and he had been president of the Warwick city council from 1937 to 1948 — which is to say he had run the council chamber through the whole of Albert Ruerat's mayoralty. He was a Naval Reserve ensign in the First World War who served in London, he commanded the Kentish Guards as colonel from 1937 to 1951, and he later chaired the Rhode Island Republican state committee. He lived at the old Greene homestead at Potowomut, in the far south of Warwick, and he was a direct descendant of Christopher Greene, brother of Nathanael Greene of the Revolution. He was born in New Jersey in 1896, died at Potowomut in 1961, and is buried in the

Old Forge Burial Ground in Warwick. (These details come from public reference sources; the newspaper clippings give only the offices.)

That is the comparison Senator Sweeney was drawing. On one side of it stood a man whose family name was on the burial ground, who had presided over the council for eleven years and commanded the state's oldest militia company. On the other stood a market gardener's son from Norwood who had never been elected to anything and held no office at all. The senator put them on the same line as though they were two candidates.

And in the last week of the campaign the Warwick Republican Campaign Committee bought space in both Providence papers for an advertisement that began:

> *Joseph Mills, Leo Roy's candidate for mayor of Warwick, has based his bid for re-election solely on one argument…*
>
> — Paid political advertisement, Evening Bulletin, November 3, 1950

Leo Roy had never been elected to anything. His name was in a bought newspaper advertisement, in the possessive, four days before an election.

Strawberry Field Road: the junkyard, 1951–1956

The Roy brothers' inheritance was a long tract of land in Hillsgrove: 1,158 feet of frontage on Strawberry Field Road, running back as much as 1,900 feet toward the state airport and the city dump. It had been the family farm — the turkey farm of 1933 — and by the 1950s it was worth very little.

In March 1951 a Warwick representative, Rep. Chester A. Pierce, filed a resolution by request asking the state for $30,000 "for devaluation of Alfred P. Roy estate land on Strawberry Field Road bordering the new southerly extension of the state airport." Leo, "one of four brothers who own the land," told the paper that the Federal Housing Administration would not authorize a mortgage on the 60-acre tract because of the runway. Three weeks later Bertha died.

The legislature did not act on it. So the claim was put in again the following January, and this time the Evening Bulletin ran the whole day's list. On January 23, 1952 the paper reported that twenty-nine individuals and companies had asked the General Assembly for $60,117.70 between them, "most of whom claim damage from negligence of state employes." The claims ran from $24.50 upward, and the bulk of them were for cars struck by state trucks or wrecked in potholes. One was not:

> *The $30,000 claim comes from the Alfred P. Roy Estate in Warwick. The estate claims that the value of its property was depreciated when the state built Hillsgrove Airport.*
>
> — Evening Bulletin, January 23, 1952

It was the largest of the twenty-nine, and it stands out in that column like a different kind of document — everyone else wanted a fender paid for. There is no sign in the file that the state ever paid it. But it is worth holding on to, because it is the family's own valuation of the land:

seven months before they sold it, they were telling the General Assembly, in writing, that the airport had made it worth thirty thousand dollars less than it had been.

Asking permission

A junk business had run on that land for twelve years. In April 1952 Leo applied to the police commission for a junk gatherer's license — he meant to set his son Emil, then twenty, up in the trade — and by asking, lost everything. The city solicitor ruled that because the yard had never been licensed it was not a protected "non-conforming use," which meant Leo now needed a zoning exception he had never needed before. The Providence Journal's headline on April 3 was "Junk Yard Permit Requested by Roy — Warwick Solicitor Has Ruled Site in Question Illegally Used for 12 Years."

His plan was sensible. He would gather the junk lying in plain sight of the road and move it a fifth of a mile back into a worked-out gravel pit, three hundred feet from the nearest houses and hidden from passers-by. He argued the land was good for nothing else:

> *This land is fit only for industrial or business use and I want to clean it up and use it as such.*
>
> — Leo R. Roy, Providence Journal, Thursday, April 24, 1952

He also announced in advance what would happen if he lost:

> *I would be inclined to leave the junk right where it is and forget the whole thing.*
>
> — Leo R. Roy, Providence Journal, Thursday, April 24, 1952

The hearing on the night of April 28 lasted half an hour. Thirty-nine people stood against him, including two attorneys — one for the Corporation of St. Rose's Church of Greenwood, one claiming sixty-five objectors — and six neighbors speaking for themselves. When the chairman asked for a show of support, four people stood. The board denied him unanimously just after midnight.

He kept his word, and the junk stayed. The building inspector, Leroy K. Bartlett, was ordered to shut the yard down and admitted he did not know whom to serve: Leo owned part of the land, his brothers the rest, and a Providence man ran the business. Bartlett also admitted that his entire field staff was himself. By the end of May, Leo had filed a writ of certiorari in the Supreme Court arguing that the hearing was illegal because no sworn testimony had been taken, that the denial was arbitrary and took his property without due process, and that the yard predated the 1945 zoning ordinance.

The trailers

Alongside that ran a smaller and more domestic quarrel. Every spring two house trailers appeared on Leo's land off Post Road. One belonged to his brother Napoleon, a carpenter who wintered in Florida and who had been building himself a house at 407 Elm Street since 1949 — boarded up, exterior finished, permit expired. The other, the city decided, belonged to Leo's son Leo Jr. Napoleon, Eugene and young Leo had spent the winter in Florida in individual trailers and came back north.

Trailers were forbidden as dwellings on private property anywhere in Warwick, and at first the zoning board would not even accept an application about these. The building inspector, Leroy K. Bartlett — told by the city solicitor to stay off the Roy property — watched from the road and noted washing on the line. By the end of April, he had ordered both trailers gone by Friday or the police would be asked to act.

Then the city changed its mind. On the advice of City Solicitor Hailes L. Palmer — who held that no zoning petition could be refused a hearing at all — the board reversed itself and wrote to Leo saying it would accept an application after all. He was told to file by May 9 for a hearing on May 26; if he did not, Bartlett was to seek prosecution through the police to stop anyone living in a trailer on the Roy land. He filed, and the hearing was set.

What the board decided on May 26 is not found in the newspaper, and that is where the trailer story stops. Two things are worth keeping straight about it. Napoleon was not squatting: he was building a house at 407 Elm Street and had just renewed the building permit, and the trailer was where he lived while he built. And the carnival that set up nearby that April, with its own employees living in trailers, was a piece of irony by the reporter, not a permit the Roys sought — carnivals were licensed by the police, and the Roys never applied for anything of the kind. The wider question the quarrel raised did get an answer of sorts: the council's health and zoning committees and the zoning board met that May to work out a citywide policy on trailers, which the city had never had.

How junkyard actually ended

It ended the way most of Leo Roy's land quarrels ended: he sold.

On August 9, 1952, the Providence Journal reported that the whole 47-acre tract, junkyard included, had gone to Clifford E. Smiley, Inc., Warwick real estate developers. "Revenue stamps on three warranty deeds covering the junkyard and adjoining land owned by the brothers, Leo, Eugene, and Napoleon C. Roy, indicate a total sale price of $32,000." Three years later the Evening Bulletin would mention that same figure — $32,000 for 47 acres — as evidence that Leo Roy was "pretty well off."

Louis was not mentioned in this transaction since he had built a house on the land that he kept. That would have been his share of the land.

The last of the junk went the following spring. In May 1953 some sixty residents petitioned the new mayor about junk and cesspool dumping on "the so-called Roy estate," and the building inspector found old cars still being broken up in a gravel pit half a mile back. He went out with the police chief and the city engineer and spoke to Louis Roy, who lived on Strawberry Field Road; Louis promised the work would stop within two weeks. Smiley said he was going to clear the land with a bulldozer.

The brothers got what they had wanted all along, four years late. In December 1956 Leo, together with Louis and his wife Florence, petitioned to rezone about eleven acres near Strawberry Field and Cedar Swamp Roads from residential to industrial. Their advocate was A. Norman LaSalle — by then Judge LaSalle — who told the board that the airport made the land

worthless for houses and that banks would not finance building there. Asked by an abutter, Judge LaSalle "said the land would not be used as a car junking area." Louis Roy said he meant to put up a garage for his trucks and construction equipment. The petition passed with almost no comment.

The details about his land can be found in another document called The Land on Strawberry Field Road.

Yorktown Manor, 1952–1959

The sale of the junkyard has a second half, and the two are only two days apart.

On Saturday, August 9, 1952 the Providence Journal reported that the Roy brothers had sold the Hillsgrove tract to Clifford E. Smiley, Inc. On Monday, August 11, the Evening Bulletin printed the Warwick and North Kingstown records for the same week, and the warranty deeds ran the other way:

> *CLIFFORD E. SMILEY, INC. to Leo R. Roy, land, buildings and improvements, lots 26 and 27 A and B, Revised Plan of Yorktown Manor. CLIFFORD E. SMILEY, INC. to Eugene E. Roy et ux, land, buildings and improvements, lots 34A and B, Revised Plan of Yorktown Manor. CLIFFORD E. SMILEY, INC. to Napoleon E. Roy et ux, land, buildings and improvements, lots 25 A and B, Revised Plan of Yorktown Manor.*
>
> — Evening Bulletin, August 11, 1952

The brothers had not simply taken money for the junkyard. They had taken houses — and they had gone into the landlord business.

Why would anyone buy that land?

It is a fair question, and the file answers it better than one might expect. On the face of it Clifford E. Smiley, Inc. bought forty-seven acres on which almost nothing could be built: a junkyard in the middle of it, the city dump on one side, the airport on the other, no bank willing to write a mortgage, the FHA refusing to insure one, and the owners themselves telling the General Assembly the place was worth $30,000 less than it used to be. Four points are worth setting side by side.

- It was cheap, and it was cheap because the Roys had spent a year and a half saying so. $32,000 for forty-seven acres is about $680 an acre. Every argument the brothers had made since March 1951 — to the legislature, to the zoning board, to the newspapers — was an argument that the land had no residential value. A seller who has publicly proved his own land unbuildable has also publicly set his own price.
- Smiley was not paying in cash. Two days after the sale he deeded Yorktown Manor lots to all three brothers, and six and a half years later the North Kingstown records show Leo discharging a $47,000 mortgage held by Clifford E. Smiley, Inc. The Hillsgrove acreage was one leg of a trade: Smiley was moving a wartime housing project that had famously failed to

sell at auction; the Roys had raw land and wanted income. Each man took what the other could not use, and Smiley's real outlay for the farm was the difference between the two sides of the swap rather than $32,000 in money.

- Land beside an airport is not worthless. It is merely not residential. The Warwick planning board was already studying an industrial district in exactly that area, and in December 1956 the Roys' own remaining eleven acres next door were rezoned residential-to-industrial with hardly a word of objection — Judge LaSalle arguing, as Leo had in 1952, that the airport made houses impossible. A developer who could wait for zoning was buying the cheapest land in Warwick next to the fastest-growing thing in it.
- There was something on it that a developer wants. The tract held a sand pit and a worked-out gravel pit — the pit that blew up under Leo in 1942, and the pit he proposed to hide the junk in in 1952. A man putting up subdivisions needs fill and gravel by the truckload, and he would rather own a pit than buy from one. Smiley's first announced act was to clear the land with a bulldozer, which is what you do with a gravel property and not what you do with a house lot.

None of this was mentioned in the newspaper. Smiley never gave the papers a reason, and no interview with him survives here. What the record shows is the shape of the transaction — a cheap, unbuildable, gravel-bearing tract beside an airport, traded for unsold rental houses and a mortgage note — and each of the four explanations above is a reading of that shape rather than a quotation from anybody.

What Yorktown Manor was

Yorktown Manor was not a subdivision of empty lots. It was a wartime housing project off Post Road in North Kingstown, built to house workers at the Quonset Point naval base, and in its day it was famous. The Providence Sunday Journal described it in February 1944:

> *The first sizable war housing project started in the State — in fact, the largest single housing development in Rhode Island ever financed up to that time with FHA mortgage insurance — was Yorktown Manor off Post road in North Kingstown. Sponsored by the Massasoit Housing Corporation and built by the Kelly Corporation of Arlington, Mass., this "million dollar development" consists of 100 semi-detached (duplex) houses — a total of 200 dwelling units.*
>
> — Providence Sunday Journal, February 20, 1944

After the war the Massasoit Corporation tried to sell the units off, and the attempt became a small local scandal of its own. At an auction in July 1946, 199 of the 200 dwelling units went unsold. The auctioneer sent up from Joseph P. Day, Inc. of New York — a firm that expected the houses "under the stimulus of a long extensive advertising campaign, would sell like nylons" — was, the Providence Sunday Journal reported, "flabbergasted at the absence of buyers." A four-room house there could have been bought by a veteran with $16.50 in his pocket for a down payment. Nothing like it had ever happened, he said, in the long history of the Day organization.

So by 1952 Yorktown Manor was a large block of six-year-old rental housing that nobody had wanted to buy, and Clifford E. Smiley, Inc. was selling it off in pairs of lots. That is what the Roy brothers bought into.

Roy & O'Neill

The 1955 profile mentions it in passing, and the wording is careful: Leo "still has an interest, he says, in Yorktown Manor in North Kingstown, a housing development, operated under the name of R & O Associates, Inc. It was purchased with his money, Roy says." His nephew Francis O'Neill was the company's secretary — the R and the O, presumably, being Roy and O'Neill. In the North Kingstown land records the name appears as R & O Realty Co., Inc.; Eugene's obituary in 1987 says he "formerly owned R & O Realty" there. The family used both forms — R & O Associates and R & O Realty.

In September 1954 the Evening Bulletin reported a small robbery at a rental office in North Kingstown, minded that lunchtime by Leo's seventeen-year-old daughter Monica, and noted in passing that the office was rented by "Leo Roy of Norwood, who last week purchased a section of Yorktown Manor." Two years in, he was still buying.

The scale of it shows up in the North Kingstown records for January 14, 1959. R & O Realty Co., Inc. mortgaged a long run of Yorktown Manor lots — 10-A through 14-B, 17A, 17B, 19A through 24B, 29A through 33B and 35A through 37B — to the Warwick Federal Savings & Loan Association for $170,000. Eugene mortgaged lots 1A and 1B for $12,500. And in the same column, under mortgages discharged:

> *LEO R ROY by Clifford E. Smiley, Inc., $47,000.*
> — Evening Bulletin, January 30, 1959

That one line is the only trace of the mortgage. It does not say when it was given, on which lots, or at what rate; a discharge only records that the lender has released it. What it does say is the direction of the debt — Leo was the borrower, Clifford E. Smiley, Inc. the lender — and that the security was in North Kingstown, which for the Roys means Yorktown Manor. Seller financing is the ordinary way a buyer with more land than cash acquires rental houses, and Eugene discharged a $6,200 mortgage to Clifford E. Smiley and his wife on the same day.

It is worth reading the whole column rather than the Roy line alone, because everything in it happened at one closing on January 14, 1959:

- Going on: $12,500 from Warwick Federal Savings & Loan to Eugene, and $170,000 from the same bank to R & O Realty Co., Inc.
- Coming off: Leo's $47,000 and Eugene's $6,200 to the Smileys — and forty-two of the Massasoit Housing Corporation's original $5,000 mortgages — the 1959 column spells it Massassoit — ten released by the Columbian National Life Insurance Co. and thirty-two by the Bank for Savings in the City of New York.

That is the wartime financing of 1943 being dismantled. The corporation that built Yorktown Manor cleared its old insurance-company and New York savings-bank debt; the Roys cleared the

paper they owed their seller; and a Rhode Island savings and loan took the place of all of it as lender to the Roy company. Leo did not so much pay Smiley off as replace him with a bank.

Emil's two lots, and a company called Cliff-Pat

The sons were in it too. The North Kingstown records for February 19, 1957 carry a warranty deed from "EMIL E. ROY to Napoleon C. Roy et al, land, buildings and improvements, Lots 9-A and 9-B, Yorktown Manor." Emil was twenty-four, three weeks short of twenty-five, and he was conveying a duplex to his uncle. Not five years earlier his father had gone to the police commission to ask for a junk gatherer's license to set him up in business; by 1957 he was an agent in his father's real estate firm, owned property in the family's housing development, and was treasurer of a political club. Whatever the junkyard had been meant to do for him, this is what he was actually doing.

Directly above Emil in that same column stands another Yorktown-area conveyance: "CLIFF-PAT, INC. to John W. Moon et ux, land, buildings and improvements, Lot 10, Greenmeadow No. 1." The name has come up once before. When Monica Roy was held up in September 1954 she was minding "the Cliff-Pat Inc. rental office" in North Kingstown, and the paper said the office was rented by her father. So Cliff-Pat, Inc. was a real corporation trading in North Kingstown land in the mid-1950s, and Leo rented space from or alongside it while running Yorktown Manor.

Whether Cliff-Pat was a Smiley company — the name would fit Clifford and his wife Patricia, and developers did name companies after husband and wife — it has not been established, and no source for it has been produced. It is set down as a name to chase, not as a fact.

Roy Realty, Inc., and a name worth noticing

In the spring of 1956, between the break with Mills and the O'Neill campaign, he incorporated a company of his own. The Providence Sunday Journal's list of new charters for April 15, 1956 reads:

> *ROY REALTY, INC., April 2, Warwick. Incorporators: Leo R. Roy, Hilton W. Howard Jr. and Marie A. DeJessus. General insurance agency and brokerage business and real estate business. 100 shares no par common.*
>
> — Providence Sunday Journal, April 15, 1956

The second name on that list is the one to stop at. Eleanor A. (Howard) Roy — the woman Leo married in December 1969, eighteen years after Bertha died — was a daughter of Hilton W. Howard Sr. and Anna A. (Peco) Howard, and Hilton W. Howard Jr. was her brother. The federal census settles it. In April 1950 the enumerator for Warwick, enumeration district 2-33, wrote down the household at 434 Lincoln Avenue:

Howard, Hilton	Head — 42 — shipping clerk, textile machine manufacturer
——, Anna A.	Wife — 41
——, Hilton Jr.	Son — 22 — bank teller

——, Eleanor A.	Daughter — 20 — office clerk, insurance
——, Jane E.	Daughter — 18 — sales clerk, artificial flower manufacturer
——, Richard A.	Son — 17 — bank teller
——, Raymond C.	Son — 16
——, Ann	Daughter — 14
——, Lois S.	Daughter — 12
——, Carolyn G.	Daughter — 11
——, Mary Lou	Daughter — 6
——, Meredith	Daughter — 2

Eleven children, all of them born in Rhode Island, all of the older ones working. Hilton Jr. was twenty-two and Eleanor twenty; she was a clerk in an insurance office. Bertha Roy was still alive, a year from her death, in the house on Post Road.

So Leo went into business with his future wife's brother in April 1956, thirteen years before the marriage. This could be how the two of them met.

Little girl Meredith, Eleanor's sister, would become the wife of Leo's son Leo Jr.

The real estate business outlived the politics. In September 1957 the Warwick records show a warranty deed from Leo R. Roy to his son Alfred P. Roy for land and buildings on Assessor's Plat 309 — the plat that held the Norwood bog. By the 1960s Leo is described in every public notice not as a politician but as a building contractor, which is what his obituary called him in 1989.

Bertha, 1905–1951

Bertha Albertina (Benson) Roy died on April 3, 1951, after what the paper called a brief illness. She was forty-five. They had been married twenty-four years, and had lived at 1380 Post Road in Norwood for all of them.

Her obituary in the Evening Bulletin the next day lists the whole family at once:

> *Born in Worcester, Mass., June 25, 1905, daughter of Mrs. Selma (Anderson) Benson and the late John Benson, she had lived in Warwick for the past 25 years. Surviving, besides her husband and mother, are four sons, Leo R. Roy Jr., Emil E. and Edward C. Roy, all of Warwick, and Alfred T. Roy, serving with the U.S. Army at Camp Pickett, Va.; two daughters, Marie D. and Maureen T. Roy, both of Warwick; a brother, John Benson of Springfield, Mass., and one grandchild.*
>
> — Evening Bulletin, April 4, 1951

Two of those names are wrong. **The son printed as "Alfred T. Roy" was Alfred P. Roy. The daughter printed as "Maureen T. Roy" was Monica T. Roy.** The correction is confirmed elsewhere in the record: in September 1954 the Evening Bulletin reported a small

robbery at an office in North Kingstown minded by "Miss Monica Roy, 17, of Post Road, Norwood," who telephoned her sister, Mrs. Edward Vasconcellos — Marie.

What the death certificate adds

The obituary says only "after a brief illness." Her death certificate, filed with the Rhode Island Division of Vital Statistics as state file number 2231, fills that in.

She did not die at home. She died at St. Joseph's Hospital in Providence at 12:55 in the afternoon of April 3, 1951, after a stay of five days; the physician certified that he had attended her from March 29 to April 3 and had last seen her alive that day. The cause given is congestive heart failure, due to hypertensive heart disease, due to diabetes. She was 45 years and nine months old.

The certificate gives her full name as Bertha Albertina (Benson) Roy, born June 25, 1905 at Worcester, Massachusetts, daughter of John Benson and Selma Anderson — and it records that both of her parents were born in Sweden. Her usual residence is 1380 Post Road, Warwick. Her occupation is entered as housewife, her kind of business as "own home," the last month she worked at it as March 1951, and the total time spent in that occupation as twenty-four years — which is exactly the length of the marriage, counted from the wedding at St. Matthew's in November 1926.

The informant, in the box asking who supplied the information, is Leo R. Roy of 1380 Post Road, Warwick, relationship to the deceased: husband. The undertaker was Peter J. Barrett; burial was at St. Ann's in Cranston on April 7, 1951, and the certificate was filed with the local registrar on April 5.

The funeral was from the Peter J. Barrett Funeral Home on Warwick Avenue, with a solemn requiem Mass at St. William's in Norwood. Thirty-eight years later Leo would be carried from the same funeral home and buried in the same ground.

Four and a half years later she is mentioned again, in a single passage of the 1955 profile:

> *For two years after his wife died … Roy just faded from the political scene in Warwick. One of his closest friends says that Roy, who is usually cheerful and good natured during the day, doesn't seem to know what to do with himself at night. It is then, the friend says, that the real loneliness of the man breaks through the surface into the open.*
>
> — Evening Bulletin, December 5, 1955

That article gives the year of her death as 1952. It is wrong; she died in 1951. The withdrawal the reporter describes therefore runs roughly from the spring of 1951 to the spring of 1953. It was not complete: in November 1951 his loudspeaker truck was still working a Warwick council campaign, "emblazoned with names of candidates who ran in last year's election," and one of the candidate's managers was reported to be "opposed vigorously to any association with Roy."

The bog on Post Road: W & W Associates, 1955–1959

Beside Leo's house at 1380 Post Road lay fifteen to twenty acres of low ground that everyone locally called the Peat Bog. Only a thin strip along the road was zoned for business. Nobody wanted to build houses on it.

On February 15, 1955 he organized a corporation called W & W Associates, Inc., and the next day deeded it the land. The deed carried no revenue stamps, which means no purchase price was recorded. The stockholders included his sister Dora, his brother Eugene and his son Alfred; the two outside partners, Christopher Williams and Nathan Winer, gave the company its name and its address.

The company asked the city to rezone the land for a drive-in movie theater. Asked about it, Leo said carefully that he "has no interest in the proposed project, other than he would like to see it allowed because the area isn't suitable for residential purposes." The Evening Bulletin noticed otherwise: "While Roy has said he has no interest, he has been very active in enlisting support for the proposal."

On the night of March 17, 1955, the council chamber overflowed into the balcony for the first time in years. Only two men spoke for the plan — the company's two outside partners, Christopher D. Williams, who with his brothers ran the concessions and rides at Roger Williams Park, and Nathan Winer, formerly of the Wayside Farm Dairy in Cranston, who did most of the talking. Seven spoke against it, carrying three petitions with more than 260 names. When a speaker asked everyone opposed to stand, the city clerk counted sixty-two people on their feet. After a five-minute recess the partners withdrew the petition.

Four months later the land was rezoned for industry instead, and on July 8 an option to sell it was signed — "Leo R. Roy, President." In November the Providence Sunday Journal carried the sale on its front page: a twenty-acre industrial center that its new owners hoped would employ between a thousand and fifteen hundred workers. Ground was broken on December 10, and the reception afterwards was held at Joe's Tavern, which stood at the rear of 1380 Post Road — Leo's own back yard.

The broker who had been hired years earlier to sell the land sued for his commission. Leo's defense was that he had not owned the land; the corporation had. In 1958 the Superior Court awarded the brokers $1,822.30, and on July 24, 1959 the Rhode Island Supreme Court upheld it in Judge v. Roy:

> *There is strong evidence that after defendant's conveyance of lot 62 to W & W Associates, Inc. he was still the real party in interest. There is no merit in defendant's contention that if a commission were due to plaintiffs it was not due from him.*
>
> — Justice Frost, Judge v. Roy, 90 R.I. 29 (1959)

In December 1955 the Evening Bulletin wrote, in a list of the ways Leo Roy had been rebuffed that year:

> *By Roy's own admission, his sale of land made with the understanding that the purchaser would get a permit for a drive-in theater boomeranged. The City Council not only turned down the permit application, but amended the ordinance to make it necessary for any future applicant for a drive-in to come before the Council for approval.*
> — Evening Bulletin, December 7, 1955

So the man who told reporters in March that he had "no interest" in the drive-in acknowledged nine months later that he had sold the land on the understanding that a drive-in permit would follow.

Details about W & W Associates and the drive-in can be found in another document called The Drive-In that Never was Leo R. Roy, W & W Associates Inc., and the Land on Post Road.

1955: King Maker or Myth?

In the first week of December 1955 the Evening Bulletin sent a reporter named Lawrence M. Howard to find out what Leo Roy actually was. The result ran on page five for three days. Howard interviewed, in his phrase, "a considerable number of persons," friendly and hostile, and then sat down with Leo himself.



Leo Roy, 55, photographed for the first installment, December 5, 1955.

Part one — Monday, December 5

The opening is a description:

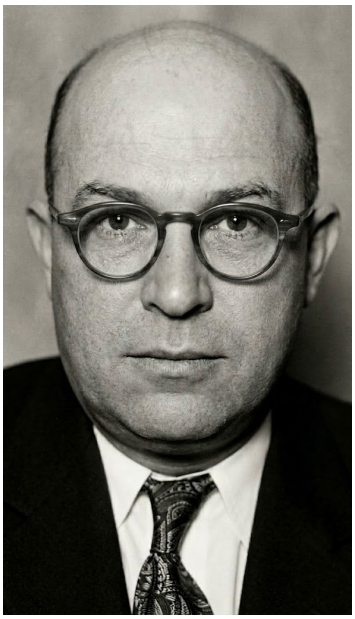
> *Roy is as easy to meet and talk with as a child. Hunched down in a big leather chair at the Gateway Building in Hoxsie, where he handles the real estate side of the Roy &*

> *Reading Real Estate and Insurance Co. business, the 210 pound Roy is friendly, talkative and likable. Sitting in a chair he seems taller than his five feet, ten and a half inches. His bulky frame is topped by a round head, mostly bald, and the eyes staring out from behind horn rim glasses appear larger through the lens than they actually are. His bulk is accentuated by huge fists that slap the desk top occasionally to emphasize a point he is trying to get across to the listener. Roy talks swiftly. The words tumble freely from his mouth and he often punctuates his sentences with a rasping grunt that ends on a high note as though he meant the growl as a question.*
>
> — Evening Bulletin, December 5, 1955

The rest of that installment is the plainest biography of him ever printed. He did not drink, smoke or gamble. He was not a joiner — "I keep away from them all," he said when asked about clubs — and he had long been active in the affairs of St. William's Church in Norwood. He had gone to Warwick schools and to high school in Cranston.

He lived in a nine-room house on Post Road with two of his four sons, Alfred and Emil, and his sister Dora. He drove to Hoxsie in a Cadillac with the license plate R-8000, a number the reporter said "can be spotted in almost any part of Warwick at any hour." He did much of his business from a desk in a den at home, "within yards of Post Road where he has only to look up from the table top to see where Warwick is going."

On money he was open to a point. He said he was "pretty well off" but would not say how much he made. He and his brothers had inherited large tracts in Warwick and had been selling them off; the paper cited the $32,000 for 47 acres off Strawberry Field Road and about $25,000 for land next to his own house, and noted his interest in Yorktown Manor in North Kingstown, run as R & O Associates, Inc.



The portrait the Evening Bulletin ran on December 6, 1955

Part two — Tuesday, December 6

The second installment is an interview, and the reporter kept pushing.

> *All the damn talk. Talk, talk, only talk.*
> — Leo Roy, on the stories about his influence

He laid out his claims: that he was instrumental in electing John O'Brien in 1934; that O'Brien lost the first election after Roy broke with him; that he guided Mills to victory in 1948; and that his own absence during mourning for his wife "had a lot to do with" Mills's defeat in 1952. Of his own power he said:

> *I have power to this extent. Most of the people know what I can do in an election. The Democrats admire and respect me. Most of the people feel I'm a leader.*
> — Leo Roy, December 6, 1955

Asked directly whether he thought he was a leader, he would not say it: "I don't know. Only the facts are there."

On the endless rumors that he dictated appointments he gave the answer the whole city quoted afterwards:

> *Mostly coincidence. I might say that so and so would make a good appointee, but I never said I was going to make him this or that.*
> — Leo Roy, December 6, 1955

He then named, unprompted, five men in office he had "mentioned" — the probate judge A. Norman LaSalle, City Solicitor Israel Moses, welfare director Francis Short, building inspector Frederick Guild, and City Clerk John J. McCabe — and added of the last, "John might not like these words."

The reporter went through the stories one by one. Had he descended on a highway crew and ordered it onto another job? He laughed: "Fantastic." Had he got a fired city worker reinstated? "No. I wouldn't know him if I saw him." Had he predicted a patrolman's transfer? "I was just as surprised about that as he was." Was he out to get a policeman who had arrested a member of his family? "I never told anyone that. If I was out to get his job I would have done it long ago. Only damn fools do things like that." Had he once tried to bring a dog track into Warwick? "Talk, all the damn talk. Don't they know there has to be a referendum on a dog track, huh?"

And then his own summary:

> *I may have a few enemies — political enemies — but I never went out to hurt anyone. That's my hobby, politics.*
> — Leo Roy, December 6, 1955

Part three — Wednesday, December 7

The third installment, is the one that answers the headline's question, and the answer is not the one the first two parts led a reader to expect.

> *Leo Roy of Warwick, political hobbyist, is already engaged in a test of strength with the city administration over the extent of his influence in Warwick political control. The chips are down. Does he have enough power to play a major role in any possible upheaval resulting from the long anticipated showdown? The signs are that he does not.*
> — Evening Bulletin, December 7, 1955

Here the paper finally set out what the quarrel was about. On November 11, 1955, Leo had told Mayor Mills he wanted the seat on the police commission left vacant by the death of its chairman, Albert George. He had been a bearer at George's funeral six weeks earlier. Mills had decided not to give it to him, and was making no move to heal the rift — even after a warning from a third party that Roy would "break him overnight."

Leo explained why the appointment mattered so much:

> *There's a principle involved. It would stop the criticism that I have never gotten anything after all my hard work. It would give me standing in the party.*
> — Leo Roy, December 7, 1955

He said he had never asked Mills for any other office, but admitted frankly that he had expected to be offered one.

The reporter then listed, in three short paragraphs each beginning the same way, what a year of trying had actually produced. By Roy's own admission the drive-in land sale had boomeranged. By his own admission a $300 bill he had presented to the Democratic City Committee for printing expenses in support of Mills had been returned unpaid — it had since been paid, he said, but he would not say by whom. By his own admission he had no official standing in the party: he did not belong to the city committee and did not attend party meetings. And, a close friend admitted and a high official confirmed, he did not have a single appointee in the administration.

So where did the reputation come from? The paper let his critics answer:

> *"He starts the rumors himself," a high administration official says scornfully ... "The people are intrigued by his talk," another party bigwig says, "but he doesn't control any votes."*
> — Evening Bulletin, December 7, 1955

The passage that follows is the most vivid writing about him anywhere:

> *For months Roy has cruised the corridors of the Warwick City Hall like a battlewagon in command of the seas. He has become as much a part of the building on Post Road as the pigeons who occupy a favorite niche beneath the eaves without fear of ever being tossed out. He has used the office of City Solicitor Israel Moses as a second headquarters and has been able to pass through the door into the office of Mayor Mills almost at will.*
> — Evening Bulletin, December 7, 1955

The series ends by putting the two versions of him side by side. Asked what he had expected to gain from his hobby, Leo said: a "fair deal" for the people. "I have fought to this day for a

principle so that people could speak up." Not so, his critics answered; he wanted political power. "He would like to be another Thomas P. McCoy" — the boss of Pawtucket — "but he isn't."

The break, 1955–1956

Everything the third installment predicted happened within six weeks.

On Saturday, December 10, four Democratic councilmen met privately to agree a common front against the mayor's habit of springing appointments on them minutes before a vote. They met in Leo Roy's office. Leo, by all accounts, was not there. His nephew Francis O'Neill, who had suggested the venue, "wouldn't deny he was there" and said he often used his uncle's office. The reporter noted drily that whether the choice of location "was an attempt to embarrass the mayor by deliberately involving Roy was not clear."

Two and a half weeks later O'Neill, who chaired the council's semi-autonomous highway committee, hired Leo's brother Napoleon as a highway foreman. Napoleon turned up on the Tuesday morning, signed the papers and began work. That afternoon the mayor refused to sign the forms that would have put him on the payroll. By Wednesday he was not at work. Everyone in Warwick understood it; the Evening Bulletin called it "a showdown between the mayor and Leo Roy, working through Mr. O'Neill," and the Journal, in its account, called Leo "self-styled king-maker" for the first time.

In January the feud turned ugly in a way nobody controlled. Anonymous telephone calls began reaching both camps. Officials in the administration got threats; so did Leo. A woman's voice told him, "We are going to get you." Other times the phone rang and no one spoke; once there was the sound of hysterical laughter. He complained to the police chief, said he thought it was the work of "some crank" rather than politics, and added that whoever was doing it "shouldn't try to scare women and children." He also suggested that the mayor appoint City Solicitor Israel Moses — his own attorney, friend and business associate — to chair a committee investigating the calls.

On January 16 the feud exploded at a council caucus that veteran councilmen called the hottest in memory. Mills said out loud that he had refused to sign Napoleon Roy's voucher to express his dissatisfaction, and accused O'Neill of using the highway committee to embarrass him: "I know you have used this power at times to your own advantage." O'Neill denied it; the mayor refused the denial. The Providence Journal wrote that Leo Roy — not in the room, and holding no office — "was obviously a motivating force in the debate."

What it cost him

The police commission seat went, on April 17, 1956, to Adolph W. Alsfeld Jr. About thirteen names had been submitted; Leo's was among them, as was Lafayette Potter's. Alsfeld was the man who, seven years earlier, had begun the move to oust Potter that the newspapers had attributed to Roy.

Two weeks later came the most pointed snub. His nephew, as district chairman, named him an alternate delegate to the Democratic state convention — "the only one of six delegates or alternates from Warwick's three districts who was not a member of the city committee or an elected official." Mayor Mills was offered a place on the same list and turned it down:

> *The mayor on Sunday refused appointment as delegate to the party's state convention from Warwick's first district because he would not have his name "bracketed" with Leo Roy, who has broken with the mayor.*
>
> — Evening Bulletin, May 2, 1956

He did not stop. In September 1956 he was reported as "one of the prime movers" behind O'Neill's unendorsed run for mayor against O'Neill's own father-in-law, the party chairman John J. McCabe — one of the five men Leo had said he "mentioned" for office the previous December. Asked about it, Leo said the "biggest fault with McCabe is his age," that he was "interested in Mr. O'Neill's campaign," and denied having any official part in it.

The pattern of those years was summed up by the Providence Journal in a single sentence, in January 1956, about the councilmen who kept meeting at his office:

> *Mr. Roy ... has long been an issue in local politics. Critics say he creates situations or pushes himself into them.*
>
> — Providence Journal, January 5, 1956

Two members of the Roy family

There is one more thread in the break, and it runs through the youngest part of the party. It starts three years earlier than the quarrel does.

On the night of November 6, 1952 — two days after the election that put Mayor Mills out of office — about a dozen people met at the Norwood fire hall to start a new organization. The Evening Bulletin gave it four lines under the heading "Young Democrats Elect." Frank Elmer was made temporary chairman of the Warwick Young People's Democratic League; William Izzi vice chairman; Marian Elmer treasurer; John Coutcher membership. The secretary was Edward Vasconcellos, who had married Leo's daughter Marie.

Two things about that are worth holding on to. The hall was the Norwood fire hall, where four years earlier Joseph Mills had stood up and read Leo's answer to Mayor Ruerat aloud to a crowd. And the family was inside the organization from its first night — which is the background to everything that follows.

The first public sign that the Roys had turned on Mayor Mills did not come from Leo at all. It came on Sunday, November 27, 1955 — eight days before the King Maker series began, and sixteen days after Leo asked the mayor for the police commission seat — in a Providence Sunday Journal story by Raymond N. Nelson headed "Young Democrats Seen Defiant." The Warwick Young Democrats had just endorsed Mrs. Rita McKeever for state vice-president over the mayor's own secretary, twenty-nine votes to twenty-two. Nelson listed who had voted for her: the anti-Mills members, the state president, Public Welfare Director Frank Short, Council President Joseph P. McKeever —

> *and two members of the Roy family, relatives of Leo Roy who has been long a staunch Mills supporter and fund raiser. What is significant in the voting, according to some insiders, is the Roys switching from Mills. Leo Roy badly wants to be police commissioner and feels that Mills owes it to him, it is reported. But the mayor is not expected to give it to him.*
>
> — Providence Sunday Journal, November 27, 1955

Two young Roys, unnamed, voting against the mayor's secretary in a room full of twenty-somethings, were read by the Sunday Journal as the family's declaration of war. Everything in this chapter followed.

Seven months later the same organization met again, and the Evening Bulletin of June 26, 1956 reported the result under the headline "Young Democrats Elect At Harmonious Meeting." The seven top officers went in unopposed; members said the fight had been settled in the May nominating session and that the slate "represents a victory for the anti-Mills faction," which the mayor's secretary publicly denied. And one name on that slate belongs in this document:

> *The new vice president, Mrs. C. Millicent Manzi, is a known opponent of the mayor, and the new treasurer, Emil E. Roy, is a relative of Leo Roy, a longstanding political power in Warwick who has parted ways with Mayor Mills.*
>
> — Evening Bulletin, June 26, 1956

Emil was Leo's son — the son for whom, four years earlier, Leo had gone to the police commission to ask for a junk gatherer's license. He had turned twenty-four fifteen weeks before the vote, and he was holding the money of the organization that had fired the first shot at the mayor. By then he was also a licensed agent in his father's firm: the Roy & Reading advertisement in the Sunday Journal of September 11, 1955 lists the three of them across the foot of a full-page spread for King Philip Acres at Cowesett — "Cleo R. Roy—Clifton I. Reading—Emil Roy, Agent." The "Cleo" is a compositor's error for Leo.



Advertisement The Providence Sunday Journal, September 11, 1955, page 136

So: was Emil one of the two Roys who voted in November 1955? The honest answer is that it is likely and not provable, and the reasons are worth laying out.

- For. He was the right age — the Young Democrats were a young people's organization, and Emil was twenty-three that November. He is the only Roy the newspapers ever place inside that organization by name. The November voters and the June officers are the same faction in the same quarrel: both stories are about Roys lining up against Mayor Mills, seven months apart. And the two papers describe the family in the same careful words — "relatives of Leo Roy" in November, "a relative of Leo Roy" in June.
- Against. Neither paper ever says so. The Sunday Journal said two and named neither. The Evening Bulletin, which plainly knew who Leo Roy was — it called him "a longstanding political power in Warwick" in the same sentence — still wrote "a relative," not "his son," which suggests the political desk either did not know or did not care exactly how the young Roys were related to the old one. And there was no shortage of candidates. Leo had four sons; his brothers Louis, Napoleon and Eugene had children of their own; his nephew Francis O'Neill was already a councilman. Warwick in 1955 had a great many young Roys.

The balance of it: Emil is the best documented Roy in that room and the most likely of the two.

The Sewer Authority, 1962–1970

In 1962 the General Assembly authorized Warwick — then the only city in Rhode Island with no sewer system at all — to set up a sewer authority. Twenty names went to the mayor: ten from the Democratic chairman, Joseph P. McKeever, and ten from the Republican. One of McKeever's ten was Leo R. Roy.

On May 14, 1962 the Evening Bulletin printed four lines under the heading "Warwick":

> *Mayor Horace E. Hobbs of Warwick has appointed five persons to the Warwick Sewer Authority and will present their names to the city council for confirmation tonight. The men are Raymond M. MacDonald, Leo R. Roy, Manuel F. Cooney, Charles A. Schurman and Urgo Garganese.*
>
> — Evening Bulletin, May 14, 1962

He was sixty-one years old, and it was the first public office he had ever held. He was sworn in on May 29.

The authority chose a forty-acre site on the Pawtuxet River in Hillsgrove for the treatment plant; it sent an eight-page brochure to every household; Leo and other members traveled to Hartford to ask the Metropolitan District Commission there what sewers actually cost to run, and later to New York to ask two federal agencies to let Warwick move money between parts of an eight-million-dollar program. On December 4, 1962 the voters approved a four-million-dollar bond by a wide margin. The next day's Evening Bulletin carried a photograph of four men at a city map.



All right, let's get started. With a green light from the voters, members of Warwick's Sewer Authority consider their project with the aid of a city map. They are (l-r) Ugo S. Garganese, Charles A. Schurman, chairman; Leo R. Roy, and Raymond M. MacDonald. The chairman is pointing out the spot to begin work.
—Journal-Bulletin Photo

The Warwick Sewer Authority the day after the referendum passed: Ugo S. Garganese, chairman Charles A. Schurman, Leo R. Roy and Raymond M. MacDonald. Evening Bulletin, December 5, 1962.

Leo Roy had been in and around Warwick politics for forty years.

When fifteen sewer inspectors were hired at $115 a week in the spring of 1963, out of about fifty applicants, in meetings held behind closed doors, the Sunday Journal ran a column on sewer authority patronage:

> *Another inspector named was Francis O'Neill, not only a former Democratic councilman and co-chairman of a 1960 Pell for Senator Committee, but also a nephew of Leo Roy, a member of the sewer authority. Mr. O'Neill has been a welder.*
>
> — Providence Sunday Journal, April 14, 1963

When the sewer tax rate was set at $7.40 a foot in 1964 — well above the six-dollar figure the public had been given — Leo voted against it on the ground that a lower rate had been promised.

His two-year term ended in 1965 and McKeever replaced him on the authority. He was appointed instead to the sewer assessment board of review, which heard the grievances of householders and businesses over what they were charged to connect. By the end of 1965 he was its chairman, at $450 a year, and in February 1967 the board "unanimously reelected Leo Roy as its chairman." In May 1970 he was replaced by William Caron of Drybrook Road. He was sixty-nine.

When Leo Roy died, the paragraph his family gave the newspaper mentioned only two things he had ever done in public life: that he had been highway commissioner under Mayor O'Brien, and that he "served as a member of the original Warwick Sewer Commission."

More information about the sewers in Warwick and Leo's role can be found in the document Bringing Sewers to Warwick: Leo Roy and the Warwick Sewer Authority.

The last house, 1962–1989

The full history of 3871 Post Road can be found in another document called 3871 Post Road: Leo Roy's Home. In brief:

On August 10, 1962, at sixty-one and a widower of eleven years, Leo bought an empty lot in Cowesett from Eldridge and Lillian Randall, and over 1963 and 1964 he built a house on it — a large ranch, four bedrooms, two and a half baths, on two-thirds of an acre. The earliest newspaper mention of the address is a police item of September 1, 1964: "3871 Post Rd. — Leo Roy reported power saw, tools and 100 pounds of flashing copper stolen from a house under construction at this address."

The move was part of a larger shift. By 1962 the Nyanza discount store that stood on his old bog wanted to expand, and the petition to the zoning board proposed taking down "a house at the corner of the street" for parking. The house at 1380 Post Road, by then in the name of his son Alfred, went. In 1963 father and son both built again — Leo down the road at 3871, Alfred at 12 Westcott Road in Scituate.

In September 1968, at sixty-eight, he made his last appearance in a political story. He resigned from the Thomas Jefferson Club, calling it "vindictive," and attacked the independent candidate for mayor whom the club was backing for attacking the Democratic Party. That candidate was Horace E. Hobbs — the same man who, as mayor in May 1962, had appointed Leo to the Warwick Sewer Authority and given him the only public office he ever held. Hobbs, by then a former three-term Democratic mayor running as an independent, felt obliged to reply in print that he had "never attacked the Democratic Party."

He retired from contracting about 1969. In December of that year he married Eleanor A. Howard and brought her to the house. They shared it for nineteen years. Money was often short; the house was mortgaged to his brother Eugene and his wife Ruth in 1969 and again in 1970, and those loans, transferred to Eugene's daughter Debra in 1985, ended in a family lawsuit in 1987 that was still unresolved when Eugene died that September.

Leo R. Roy died at home on February 25, 1989, aged eighty-eight. The Mass was at St. Gregory the Great on Cowesett Road; the burial was at St. Ann's in Cranston, where Bertha had lain for thirty-eight years. He left his wife Eleanor; four sons, Leo Jr., Alfred, Emil and Edward; a daughter, Marie Vasconcellos; his brother Napoleon; twenty-six grandchildren and eight great-grandchildren.

How the house left the family

The borrowing described above is what eventually took the house out of Leo's line, and it is worth following to the end, because the family that appears in the Warwick land records after 1989 is the same family that appears all through this document.

The money came from his brother. On July 1, 1969, still a widower and covenanting that he was "unmarried," Leo gave Eugene and Ruth Roy a $10,000 mortgage on the house at six per cent. On September 23, 1970, now married, Leo and Eleanor signed a second mortgage to the same couple for $20,000 at eight and a half. In April 1973 Leo deeded the house to himself and Eleanor as tenants by the entirety, so that whichever of them lived longer would own the whole of it. Through the later 1970s and into the 1980s a string of small judgments — a credit union, five stores — attached to the property.

In August 1985 Eugene and Ruth, by then living in Florida, assigned both mortgages and a 1967 note to their daughter, Debra Kay Roy of Laurel, Maryland, for ten dollars. She was now Leo's creditor. On May 21, 1987 the Providence Journal carried notice of a mortgagee's auction of the house for May 29, by order of the holder of the mortgage. Two days before the sale Leo and Eleanor borrowed $10,000 from a Providence law partnership, and that mortgage was recorded at 12:20 on the afternoon of the 29th — less than two hours before the auction was due to begin. The sale did not go forward.

Leo and Eleanor then sued Eugene, Ruth and Debra in Kent County Superior Court. The defendants counterclaimed in June 1987, saying they had paid the taxes, insurance and upkeep out of their own pockets and had been blocked from foreclosing. Eugene died in Florida that September with the case unresolved, and Leo died at home in February 1989 with it still unresolved. Seven weeks after his death Debra's attorney recorded notice of the lawsuit against the house.

It was settled in a single week in April 1991, two years after Leo's death, and Eleanor gave up the house to settle it. Debra's lawsuit notice was discharged on March 26; Eleanor signed a deed to Debra on April 9, with no tax stamps attached, meaning little or no money changed hands; and on April 15 the credit union and the law firm both marked their mortgages paid. Eleanor had been trying to sell in the meantime — an open-house advertisement in the Providence Sunday Journal that January read "Super large ranch, 4 beds, 2½ baths, ½ acre. Low $100's. Must sell. 3871 Post Rd."

So the house passed from Leo's children's line to his brother's. Debra held it for ten years and rented it out the whole time from Laurel, Maryland; the one piece of that arrangement that reached the land records is a Designation of Agent for Nonresident Landlord, recorded on June 29, 1999, by which she named Barbara Burke of United Realty in East Greenwich as her agent in Rhode Island — a form the law requires of a landlord living out of state, not the start of the renting. She sold the house in December 2001. Since then it has belonged to Chabad of West Bay, a Jewish community center. Eleanor moved to North Kingstown and died there on February 12, 2015, aged eighty-five.

Chronology

June 16, 1865	His father, Alfred P. Roy, is born at Rimouski, Quebec, and baptized Pierre Alfred Roy.
Oct. 20, 1869	His mother, Amanda Beaudoin, is born at Saint-Lazare, Bellechasse, Quebec, and baptized Marie Amanda.
June 16, 1900	Born in Warwick, in the village of Norwood, a son of Alfred P. and Amanda (Beaudoin) Roy.
Dec. 21, 1910	His mother dies at St. Joseph's Hospital, Providence, aged 41, of an appendix abscess and general peritonitis. Leo is ten.
c. 1921–23	Runs for the town council as a Democrat at 21 and is defeated. By his own later account he was "hooted out of" a Republican-controlled town council meeting.
Nov. 25, 1926	Marries Bertha Benson of Providence at St. Matthew's Church, Auburn. He is described in the notice as "one of the firm of Roy & Sons, market gardeners."
April 12, 1927	Defeated as a Democratic candidate for Warwick's new water supply board and board of water commissioners. The Republicans take all eight seats; the lowest of them polls 923 votes to the best Democrat's 148.
May 25, 1927	He and the seven other defeated Democrats lose their petition to oust the winners: Sisson ex rel. Flynn v. Lisle, opinion by Justice John W. Sweeney.
April 3, 1928	Injured when the family truck collides with a trolley car on Post Road. He, his father Alfred and his brothers Eugene, Louis and Napoleon all sue United Electric Railways.
Oct. 1928	Elected secretary of the Warwick Democratic town convention.
Nov. 20, 1930	A jury awards him $5,000 from the trolley accident. The Supreme Court cuts it to $2,000 in December 1931.
April 21, 1931	Warwick is incorporated as a city.
April 1932	Nominated as a state convention delegate on the losing slate at the largest Democratic caucus in Warwick's history.
April 18, 1933	His father marries Adeliska M. Giroux at Providence.
Nov. 1933	He and his brothers Louis and Eugene ship a 23-pound turkey, "Big Democrat," from the Roy Farm on Strawberry Field Road to President Roosevelt at Warm Springs. Leo appears on the Evening Bulletin's front page holding it.
Sept. 1934	A Class B liquor license at the Wayside Inn, 1406 Post Road, Lincoln Park, is transferred from his father to him.
Oct. 9, 1934	One of five petitioners who ask the Supreme Court to void two ward caucuses in the fight over the Democratic mayoral nomination. No decision on the petition is reported. John A. O'Brien takes the nomination and wins in November.

Dec. 27, 1934	The Supreme Court quashes the Warwick canvassers' records and declares O'Brien's Republican opponent, Peirce H. Brereton, elected mayor by seven votes.
Feb. 6, 1935	On reargument the court reverses itself, affirms O'Brien's election and orders Brereton's certificate recalled.
1935–36	Serves as Warwick highway commissioner under Mayor O'Brien, then loses that job and two state ones in turn.
July 1935	Moves his license to the rear of his own property at 970 Post Road, Norwood. The three-story club building goes up behind his house that year.
Nov. 1935	Club LeRoy advertises as "Rhode Island's Newest and Smartest Night Club," serving Roy Farm turkeys at Thanksgiving.
April 1936	Loses his third public job in a row when he is dropped from the State Department of Public Works.
Sept. 26, 1936	His father signs a will naming him sole executor, without surety. Col. Patrick H. Quinn witnesses it.
May–June 1937	His brother Napoleon applies for the Club LeRoy license. By June the building has reopened as the Alpine Village Hofbrau, which closes in November.
May 1938	The club building is licensed to a new operator, Josef Wagner, who runs it as the Norwood Hofbrau and, from 1940, the Norwood Country Club. Leo remains the owner.
Nov. 1938	His father dies; Leo proves the will as sole executor.
c. 1940	The Post Road is renumbered; 970 Post Road becomes 1380.
April 22, 1942	He and his sons Leo Jr., 14, and Edward, 9, are burned when a gasoline shovel explodes in his sand pit on Strawberry Field Road. He breaks an ankle jumping clear.
Aug. 19, 1945	Fire destroys the club behind his house. He values the building at $20,000 and has no insurance on it.
July 1946	Granted a zoning exception to add an open-air terrace to the café behind his house, which reopens on a smaller scale as Joe's Tavern.
July 31 – Aug. 28, 1947	The estate of Alfred P. Roy is closed. Total Rhode Island inheritance tax: $2.65.
Oct. 29, 1948	Mayor Albert P. Ruerat tells a Republican rally that Roy drew both WPA and city pay in 1935–36.
Nov. 1, 1948	Files a $100,000 slander suit against the sitting mayor. Joseph Mills wins the election the next day by 546 votes.
Aug.–Sept. 1949	Open warfare with Democratic city chairman Lafayette N. Potter. The Providence Sunday Journal names Roy as one third of a "triumvirate" cast out of the party, with Mills and Councilman Francis J. O'Neill, Roy's nephew.
Jan. 30, 1950	Incorporates the Colonial Kennel Club, Inc. with his brother Eugene.

Oct.–Nov. 1950	A state senator calls the mayoral election a choice between "Thomas Casey Greene or Leo Roy." A paid Republican advertisement opens: "Joseph Mills, Leo Roy's candidate for mayor of Warwick…"
March 15, 1951	A bill is filed seeking $30,000 from the state for the loss of value to the Roy brothers' 60 acres beside the new airport runway.
April 3, 1951	Bertha dies at St. Joseph's Hospital, Providence, aged 45, of congestive heart failure after a five-day stay. Buried at St. Ann's, Cranston, on April 7.
Jan. 22, 1952	The $30,000 airport claim is put in again — the largest of twenty-nine claims laid before the General Assembly that day. It is not paid.
April–May 1952	The city moves against the family junkyard on Strawberry Field Road and against house trailers at his home. The zoning board denies him unanimously; he appeals to the Supreme Court.
May 27, 1952	Sells 1.72 acres behind his house, with the burned shell of the club and the tavern, to Josef Wagner, keeping his home and a right of way.
Aug. 9, 1952	The brothers sell the 47-acre Hillsgrove tract, junkyard and all, for $32,000, to Clifford E. Smiley, Inc.
Aug. 11, 1952	Two days later the same company deeds Yorktown Manor lots in North Kingstown to Leo, Eugene and Napoleon. The brothers become landlords.
Nov. 6, 1952	The Warwick Young People's Democratic League is organized at the Norwood fire hall. Leo's son-in-law Edward Vasconcellos is its first secretary.
Nov. 1952	Mills is defeated. Roy later says his own absence during mourning "had a lot to do with" it.
March 25, 1953	The Warwick Jefferson-Jackson Club, through its secretary Edward J. Vasconcellos — Leo's son-in-law — challenges former mayor Ruerat's school-bus sale. Ruerat answers the next day.
Feb. 15–16, 1955	Organizes W & W Associates, Inc. and deeds it his Post Road bog the next day.
March 17, 1955	A packed council chamber and more than 260 signatures kill the drive-in theater plan. Roy tells reporters he has "no interest" in it.
July 8, 1955	Signs the option to sell the bog, as "Leo R. Roy, President" of W & W Associates.
Nov. 11, 1955	Asks Mayor Mills for the vacant seat on the police commission.
Nov. 27, 1955	The Providence Sunday Journal reports the sale of his land for an industrial park — and, on another page, that "Leo Roy badly wants to be police commissioner."
Dec. 5–7, 1955	The Evening Bulletin runs "Leo Roy: Warwick King Maker or Myth?" in three parts.
Dec. 1955 – Jan. 1956	The break with Mills. Four councilmen meet in Roy's office; the mayor blocks the hiring of Roy's brother Napoleon; anonymous telephone calls plague both camps.

April 2, 1956	Incorporates Roy Realty, Inc. with Hilton W. Howard Jr. — the brother of Eleanor Howard, whom he would marry in 1969.
April 17, 1956	The police commission seat goes to Adolph W. Alsfeld Jr.
May 2, 1956	Mills refuses appointment as a convention delegate rather than have his name "bracketed" with Leo Roy's.
June 25, 1956	Son Emil E. Roy is elected treasurer of the Warwick Young Democrats on a slate the Evening Bulletin calls a victory for the anti-Mills faction.
Dec. 22, 1956	Leo, with Louis and his wife Florence, wins the industrial rezoning of eleven acres near Strawberry Field Road.
Feb. 19, 1957	Emil E. Roy deeds Yorktown Manor lots 9-A and 9-B to his uncle Napoleon.
Jan. 14, 1959	Yorktown Manor is refinanced in one closing: Warwick Federal lends $182,500 to Eugene and to R & O Realty, while the Smileys discharge Leo's $47,000 and Eugene's $6,200 and Massassoit Housing Corp clears forty-two wartime mortgages.
July 24, 1959	The Rhode Island Supreme Court rules against him in Judge v. Roy, finding he was "still the real party in interest" behind W & W Associates.
May 14, 1962	Appointed to the new Warwick Sewer Authority — his first public office, at 61.
Aug. 10, 1962	Buys the lot at 3871 Post Road in Cowesett.
Dec. 4, 1962	Warwick votes a $4,000,000 sewer bond. He appears in a Journal-Bulletin photograph at the city map.
1963–64	Builds the house at 3871 Post Road, where he will live the rest of his life.
1965–1970	Chairman of the Warwick Sewer Assessment Board of Review, unanimously re-elected in 1967 and replaced in 1970.
Sept. 1968	Resigns from the Thomas Jefferson Club, calling it "vindictive," and attacks its candidate for mayor — Horace E. Hobbs, the mayor who had appointed him to the Sewer Authority in 1962.
c. 1969	Retires as a building contractor.
Dec. 1969	Marries Eleanor A. Howard.
Feb. 25, 1989	Dies at home at 3871 Post Road, aged 88. Buried at St. Ann's Cemetery, Cranston, where Bertha lay.
April 9, 1991	Eleanor deeds the house to Eugene's daughter Debra Kay Roy, settling the family lawsuit. It leaves Leo's line for good.

The family, as the record has them and mentioned in this document

Alfred P. Roy (the father)	Leo's father. b. Rimouski, Quebec, June 16, 1865, and baptized Pierre Alfred Roy at the cathedral of St-Germain — the same day of the year as Leo, thirty-five years earlier. Market gardener; the firm was Roy & Sons. Head of the farm partnership on Strawberry Field Road and lead plaintiff in the trolley suits of 1928–1932. Married (2) Adeliska M. Giroux at Providence, April 18, 1933; by 1938 they were living at 25 Chestnut Street, Norwood. Made his will Sept. 26, 1936, naming Leo sole executor; died August 1938. Eight children are named or referred to in the will. Not to be confused with his grandson Alfred P. Roy, Leo's son, who was named after him. Transferred a Class B liquor license at the Wayside Inn, 1406 Post Road, to Leo in 1934.
Amanda (Beaudoin) Roy	Leo's mother. b. Saint-Lazare, Bellechasse, Quebec, Oct. 20, 1869, and baptized Marie Amanda — the register spells the surname Bodouin. Daughter of Stephen (Etienne) and Harriet Beaudoin. d. Dec. 21, 1910 at St. Joseph's Hospital, Providence, aged 41, of an appendix abscess and general peritonitis; her residence given as Warwick and her occupation as "wife of Alfred." Buried from St. Ann's. Leo was ten. She is named in his 1989 obituary.
Adeliska M. (Giroux) Roy	Leo's stepmother. Married Alfred P. Roy at Providence, April 18, 1933, and lived with him at 25 Chestnut Street, Norwood. Alfred's will gave her a life estate in the homestead. Sister of Frank M. Giroux (d. 1945) and aunt of Melina A. Giroux, who signed the 1934 caucus petition with Leo. Still living and "in full enjoyment" of the house in July 1947.
Alfred J. Roy	Leo's eldest brother. b. Providence, Sept. 23, 1896. Served in the First World War; a carpenter in construction for twenty-five years, last working in 1943. m. Christina A. Wolfe. Lived on Broad Street in 1938–41 and later at 26 Majestic Avenue, Warwick. His father's will left him nothing, saying he was "well provided for in the form of a military pension." d. Feb. 4, 1957, aged 60, at the State Mental Hospital, Cranston, of a hypertensive brain illness; buried St. Ann's, Cranston.
Annie and Yvonne Roy	Two of Leo's sisters, named only in their father's will of 1936, which omitted them because they "are married." Annie (Anna) was the mother of Francis J. O'Neill.
Leo R. Roy	b. Warwick, June 16, 1900; d. at home, 3871 Post Road, Feb. 25, 1989, aged 88. Son of Alfred P. and Amanda (Beaudoin) Roy. Market gardener, contractor, gravel and loam, real estate. Addresses: 461 Post Road (1932); 970 Post Road (1938), the same house renumbered 1380 about 1940; 1380 Post Road (to c.1963); 3871 Post Road (1963–89). Built the club behind his house in 1935 and sold that part of the lot, with the ruins, in 1952.
Bertha Albertina (Benson) Roy	b. Worcester, Mass., June 25, 1905, daughter of John Benson and Selma Anderson, both born in Sweden. m. Leo Nov. 25, 1926. d. April 3, 1951 at St. Joseph's Hospital, Providence, aged 45, of congestive heart failure; her usual residence 1380 Post Road. Buried St. Ann's, Cranston, April 7, 1951.

Eleanor A. (Howard) Roy	Leo's second wife; daughter of Hilton W. Howard Sr. and Anna A. (Peco) Howard. b. Rhode Island c. 1929–30; in the 1950 census she was 20, single, an office clerk for an insurance company, and one of eleven children living at 434 Lincoln Avenue, Warwick. Married Leo December 1969. Deeded the house to Debra Kay Roy in 1991. d. Feb. 12, 2015, aged 85, in North Kingstown.
Hilton W. Howard Jr.	Eleanor's older brother, confirmed by the 1950 census, where he is 22 and a bank teller. Co-incorporator with Leo of Roy Realty, Inc., April 2, 1956 — thirteen years before Leo and Eleanor married.
Leo R. Roy Jr.	Son. Burned in the 1942 sand-pit explosion at 14. Of North Kingstown in 1989.
Emil E. Roy	Son living at 1380 Post Road in 1955. The junkyard license of 1952 was sought to set him up in business. An agent of Roy & Reading Real Estate by September 1955, when the firm's advertisement listed him beside his father. Held Yorktown Manor lots 9-A and 9-B in his own name and deeded them to his uncle Napoleon in February 1957. Elected treasurer of the Warwick Young Democrats on the anti-Mills slate of June 26, 1956; the Evening Bulletin identified him only as "a relative of Leo Roy."
Edward C. Roy	Son. Burned in the 1942 explosion at nine years old.
Alfred P. Roy (the son)	Son, b. Sept. 28, 1928 — five months after the trolley crash, and named for his grandfather, who died when he was ten. d. Providence, Nov. 10, 2003. With the U.S. Army at Camp Pickett, Va. in 1951. A stockholder in W & W Associates at 26. Hoisting engineer, Laborers' Local 57. Built at 12 Westcott Road, Scituate, in 1963.
Marie D. Roy	Daughter. By 1954 Mrs. Edward Vasconcellos; of Riverdale, N.J. in 1989. Her husband Edward J. Vasconcellos was the first secretary of the Warwick Young People's Democratic League, founded at the Norwood fire hall on Nov. 6, 1952, and secretary of the Warwick Jefferson-Jackson Club in March 1953, when it challenged former mayor Albert P. Ruerat's school-bus contract.
Monica T. Roy	Daughter, b. c. 1937. Aged 17 when three masked men robbed the rental office she was minding for her father in September 1954.
Dora M. Roy	Leo's sister, b. Superior, Wisconsin, July 20, 1895; d. Palmetto, Florida, Sept. 13, 1978. Never married; living in the Post Road house in 1955. A stockholder in W & W Associates. Lived with Leo and Bertha at 970, later 1380, Post Road in 1938–41, and is marked in both directories as a home owner. Named in a 1944 tax judgment as "Dora Roy, Club LeRoy, Norwood."
Louis A. Roy	Brother, b. Aug. 14, 1904. Of 317 Strawberry Field Road; husband of Florence; father of Helen. Co-owner of the Hillsgrove tract; his welding torch set off the 1942 explosion; petitioner with Leo and Florence for the 1956 rezoning.
Florence Roy	Louis's wife. Joined Leo and Louis in the December 1956 petition to rezone the Strawberry Field Road land.

Napoleon C. Roy	Brother, b. May 8, 1902; carpenter. Riding backwards in the truck in April 1928, he stood up and waved to warn the trolley motorman, and was thrown out in the collision; his was the only one of the family's five verdicts the railway failed to get reduced on appeal. Wintered in Florida; building a house at 407 Elm Street, Norwood, from 1949. Hired and then blocked as a Warwick highway foreman in December 1955. Living with Leo at 970 Post Road in 1938; applied for the Club LeRoy liquor license in May 1937.
Debra Kay Roy	Eugene and Ruth's daughter, of Laurel, Maryland. Took assignment of her parents' mortgages on Leo's house in 1985, received the house from Eleanor in 1991, and sold it in 2001.
Eugene E. Roy	Brother, b. June 27, 1909; d. Florida, Sept. 12, 1987. Carpenter, then real estate broker and developer; Yorktown Realty and R & O Realty. Co-incorporator of the Colonial Kennel Club (1950) and a stockholder in W & W Associates. Listed as running Club LeRoy at 970 Post Road in the 1938 city directory.
Francis J. O'Neill	Nephew, and Leo's employee. Democratic councilman for Ward 3; chairman of the council highway committee; secretary of R & O Associates. Endorsed Democratic candidate for mayor in 1950, who stepped aside for Mills; ran unendorsed for mayor in 1956 against his own father-in-law. Hired as a sewer inspector in 1963.
Helen Roy	Leo's niece, daughter of his brother Louis. Aged three when she appeared beside Leo in the 1933 front-page photograph with the turkey.

Where the record disagrees with itself, and what is still missing

- Bertha's obituary names a son "Alfred T. Roy" and a daughter "Maureen T. Roy." The family correction is that these were Alfred P. Roy and Monica T. Roy. The 1989 obituary and the 1954 robbery story both support the correction.
- The Evening Bulletin of December 5, 1955 says Leo's wife died in 1952. She died April 3, 1951.
- Leo told the Evening Bulletin in December 1955 that he never actually held the title of highway commissioner. The newspapers of 1936 say he did, and so does his own obituary in 1989.
- The Providence Journal of August 23, 1950 prints his name as "Leo P. Roy. "
- Who won the 1948 loam case is unknown — Judge Leighton said he would announce his verdict "one week and several legal tomes later."
- Two men in this document share a name. Alfred P. Roy the father is Leo's father, the lead plaintiff in the trolley suits and the man whose estate Leo administered from 1938. Alfred P. Roy the son is Leo's son, born five months after the crash, a stockholder in W & W

Associates at 26, and the Alfred who built at 12 Westcott Road in 1963. Where the document says simply "Alfred" it means whichever of them the sentence is about, and it says "his father" or "his son" wherever there is any doubt.

- The 1927 record does not say which of the two boards Leo was a candidate for. Eight Democrats ran for eight seats across the water supply board and the board of water commissioners, and neither the newspaper nor the court opinion separates them.
- How the Roys came to hold a liquor license at the Wayside Inn, 1406 Post Road, in 1934 is not explained in the papers. The inn's owner in December 1933 was named as Louis Bouchard. Amanda (Beaudoin) Roy's sister was Delphine (Beaudoin) Bouchard who lived in Warwick and had a son Louis. This could have been Alfred and Amanda's nephew.
- Who ran the Alpine Village Hofbrau in the club building in the summer of 1937 is not named in any newspaper clipping. It may have been the Roys under a new theme, or a tenant.
- The 1934 caucus petition signed by Leo Roy and four others has no reported decision, and the volume of the Rhode Island Reports covering those months holds no case under any of the five names. It was most likely denied from the bench, or withdrawn once the convention had met.
- The 1952 junkyard appeal has no reported decision either. He filed the writ of certiorari at the end of May 1952 and sold the whole tract on August 9, which would have left the appeal with nothing to decide.
- No reported decision has been found in the $100,000 slander suit against Mayor Ruerat. Ruerat demurred in December 1948 and the case was set for assignment on January 24, 1949; nothing after that survives here. The absence of a reported judgment is consistent with a settlement or an abandonment.
- Apart from the 1945 fire at the club behind his house, there is nothing between 1942 and 1948, and very little between 1957 and 1962. Those gaps are in the newspaper clipping collection, not in his life.
- The child in the 1933 photograph is identified as Helen Roy, daughter of Leo's brother Louis. The "two members of the Roy family" who voted against the mayor's candidate at the Young Democrats in November 1955 are still unnamed. Emil E. Roy, elected treasurer of the same organization in June 1956, is the likeliest of the two, but no paper says so.
- The Providence Journal of November 11, 1938 reports Leo as appointed "administrator" of his father's estate. The will and the 1947 affidavit both say executor, which is the correct word where there is a will. The newspaper's probate column was using the looser term.
- Cliff-Pat, Inc. appears twice: as the rental office Leo rented in North Kingstown in 1954 and as a grantor of North Kingstown land in 1957. Who was behind it is not established here. The suggestion that it was Clifford E. Smiley's company, named for himself and his wife, is plausible from the name alone.

- Leo resigned from the "Thomas Jefferson Club" in September 1968. The club his son-in-law was secretary of in 1953 was the "Warwick Jefferson-Jackson Club." Whether these were the same body under a changed name is not established.
- Whether the General Assembly ever acted on the Alfred P. Roy Estate's $30,000 airport claim is not in the file. It was introduced in March 1951, not acted on, and reintroduced in January 1952; the sale to Clifford E. Smiley, Inc. seven months later suggests it was never paid.
- What the zoning board decided about the trailers at the hearing set for May 26, 1952 is not known. Nor is the citywide trailer policy the council committees met that month to work out.
- The Yorktown Manor company appears as R & O Associates, Inc. in the 1955 newspaper profile and as R & O Realty Co., Inc. in the North Kingstown land records. Which was the corporate name, and whether both existed, is not settled here.

Sources

Every article used in this document, in the order it was published.

Evening Tribune Nov. 27, 1926	Marriage notice: Leo R. Roy and Bertha B. Benson, St. Matthew's Church, Auburn.
Evening Bulletin Wed. May 25, 1927, p. 26	"Supreme Court Upholds Warwick Victory of G.O.P." — the water board petition.
Providence Journal Thurs. Oct. 11, 1928, p. 4	"Warwick Democrats Pick Kernan for State Senate" — Roy elected convention secretary.
Providence Journal Wed. March 5, 1930, p. 24	Kent County court docket: four Roy suits against United Electric Railways.
Evening Bulletin Tues. Nov. 18, 1930, p. 13	Jury trial notice, Roy v. United Electric Railways.
Providence Journal Fri. Nov. 21, 1930, p. 29	Verdict for the plaintiff, $5,000.
Evening Bulletin Sat. Oct. 24, 1931, p. 18	Supreme Court hears the company's exceptions.
Providence Journal Thurs. Dec. 10, 1931, p. 23	New trial ordered unless the award is reduced.
Research document Compiled Sept. 17, 2026	"Alfred Roy vs. United Electric Railways, 1928–1932" — the full account of the crash and all five lawsuits, built on the Kent County dockets, the newspaper reports and the reported Supreme Court decisions.
Evening Bulletin Thurs. Dec. 10, 1931, p. 35	"Court Reduces Award to Trolley Crash Victim."
Providence Journal Tues. April 26, 1932, p. 14	"Gerry Adherents Warwick Victors" — Roy on the losing delegate slate.
Evening Bulletin Thurs. Nov. 23, 1933, p. 1	Photograph: "R. I. Turkey for the President."
Providence Journal Thurs. Nov. 23, 1933, p. 3	"Narragansett Turkey Going to Roosevelt for Holiday Dinner."
Research document Compiled Oct. 2026	"The Restaurant on Post Road" — the full history of the club behind Leo Roy's house, 1934–1977, and the source for the chapter on it here.
Providence Journal Sat. Sept. 22, 1934, p. 17	Class B license transfer, Alfred Roy to Leo Roy, 1406 Post Road, Lincoln Park.
Providence Journal Wed. Oct. 10, 1934, p. 15	"Warwick Dispute Up Before Court" — the caucus petition.
Providence Journal Sat. July 6, 1935, p. 19	Leo Roy's license moved from 1406 Post Road to "rear of 970 Post road, Norwood."
Evening Bulletin Fri. Nov. 1, 1935, p. 31	Club LeRoy advertisement: "Rhode Island's Newest and Smartest Night Club."
Evening Bulletin Wed. Nov. 27, 1935, p. 21	Club LeRoy turkey dinner advertisement: "The Roy Farm, famous for its turkeys."
Evening Bulletin Sat. Feb. 8, 1936, p. 3	"Outside Democratic Workers" — Roy, former highway commissioner, working an election in Richmond.
Evening Bulletin	"Leo R. Roy Loses Third Public Job."

Thurs. April 2, 1936, p. 12	
Providence Journal Fri. April 3, 1936, p. 23	"Public Works Division Drops Norwood Employe."
Evening Bulletin Sat. May 2, 1936, p. 8	Club LeRoy advertisement: Foster Lasher's orchestra and baseball at Club Le Roy Park.
Evening Bulletin Fri. July 3, 1936, p. 20	Club LeRoy advertisement: Fourth of July bonfire and fireworks.
Providence Journal Mon. May 17, 1937, p. 17	License application: Napoleon Roy, Club LeRoy.
Evening Bulletin Wed. June 30, 1937, p. 27	Alpine Village Hofbrau "Grand Opening" advertisement.
Evening Bulletin Sat. Jan. 15, 1938, pp. 1–2	"'Strip-Tease' Girls Perform as Warwick Police Cool Off" — the raid on the closed building.
Providence Sunday Journal Sun. Jan. 16, 1938, p. 19	"License Revoked" — Alpine Village Hofbrau.
Evening Bulletin Wed. May 11, 1938, p. 3	Class B license granted "in the former Club LeRoy."
Providence Journal Fri. Nov. 11, 1938, p. 2	Probate: the paper says Leo R. Roy was appointed "administrator" of the estate of Alfred P. Roy; the will itself makes him sole executor.
Evening Bulletin Thurs. April 23, 1942, pp. 3 and 43	"Father, Two Sons Burned in Blast."
Evening Bulletin Sat. Dec. 19, 1942, pp. 3 and 20	"Over-Crowding Stopped at Warwick's Night Spots" — capacity limits after the Cocoanut Grove fire.
Evening Bulletin Wed. Feb. 16, 1944, p. 3	Fourth District Court: Warwick tax collector vs. Dora Roy, Club LeRoy.
Providence Sunday Journal Sun. Feb. 20, 1944, p. 49	"Yorktown Manor Was First" — the wartime housing project off Post Road, North Kingstown.
Providence Journal Mon. Aug. 20, 1945, pp. 1 and 7	"Club in Norwood Damaged by Fire."
Evening Bulletin Mon. Aug. 20, 1945	"Norwood Country Club Is Destroyed by Blaze," with photograph, and "Blaze Damages Norwood Club."
Providence Sunday Journal Sun. April 14, 1946, p. 62	"38 New Dwellings Swell Volume of Building Work" — $20,000 dining room and bar to replace the club.
Evening Bulletin Thurs. July 11, 1946, p. 3	"Stone Crusher Petition Is Denied in Warwick" — Leo R. Roy's open-air terrace granted.
Providence Sunday Journal Sun. July 28, 1946, p. 56	"Homes at Auction" — 199 of 200 Yorktown Manor units go unsold.
Evening Bulletin Tues. Oct. 29, 1946, p. 3	License list: "Joe's Tavern," rear 1380 Post Road.
Providence Journal Sat. July 24, 1948, p. 2	"Warwick Democrats Score Ruerat's Administration."

Providence Journal Tues. Sept. 21, 1948, p. 30	"Judge Leighton Reserves Decision On Whether Bill Was Paid in Full" — the loam suit.
Providence Journal Sat. Oct. 30, 1948, p. 2	"Says Mills Will Remove Sprague" — Ruerat's WPA charge in full.
Providence Sunday Journal Sun. Oct. 31, 1948, p. 9	"Mills Is Heard by Independents" — Roy's denial read aloud at the Norwood fire hall. Two scans.
Evening Bulletin Mon. Nov. 1, 1948, p. 22	"Suit Against Ruerat: Leo R. Roy Charges Slander by Warwick Mayor."
Providence Journal Tues. Nov. 2, 1948, p. 18	The same suit, reported in the morning paper.
Evening Bulletin Sat. Dec. 18, 1948, p. 3	"Ruerat Files Demurrers In $100,000 Slander Suit." Two scans.
Providence Journal Fri. April 15, 1949, p. 2	"Warwick Democrat Tells Right Hand of Left Hand" — Roy arranges the Mills–Potter peace meeting.
Providence Journal Fri. April 22, 1949, pp. 1 and 17	"Warwick Charter Bill Passes House" — Roy in the State House chamber.
Evening Bulletin Thurs. Aug. 25, 1949, p. 3	Warwick water and party affairs.
Providence Journal Wed. Aug. 24, 1949, p. 2	"Warwick Democratic Chairman Sees Rank, File Backing Him."
Providence Journal Sat. Aug. 27, 1949, p. 2	"'Bake Tomorrow Stirs Interest in Democrat Ranks."
Providence Sunday Journal Sun. Aug. 28, 1949, p. 4	"Another Combination Looms in Warwick" — the two triumvirates.
Providence Journal Thurs. Sept. 1, 1949, p. 3	"Parties Eye Low for Water Board" — Roy as "an outsider."
Evening Bulletin Thurs. Sept. 1, 1949, p. 5	The same story in the afternoon paper.
Providence Journal Sat. Sept. 3, 1949, pp. 2 and 9	"Potter Declares Roy Contacted Fanning to Oust Him as Chairman."
Providence Journal Mon. Jan. 30, 1950, p. 14	Corporate charters filed: Colonial Kennel Club, Inc.
Evening Bulletin Tues. Aug. 2, 1950, p. 41	"Potter Held Aiding G.O.P."
Providence Journal Thurs. Aug. 10, 1950, p. 4	"Potter Claims Opposition Asked Him 'to Make Deal.'" Two scans.
Providence Journal Fri. Aug. 11, 1950, p. 2	"Leo Roy Denies Requesting Deal." Two scans.
Evening Bulletin Tues. Aug. 22, 1950, p. 41	"Potter Held Aiding G.O.P."
Providence Journal Wed. Aug. 23, 1950, p. 3	"Roy Makes Reply to Potter Barbs" — Roy's own signed statement.

Providence Journal Thurs. Aug. 31, 1950, p. 2	"Mayor's Methods Called Evasion" — Carl Berg on the police-commission offer and the dog track.
Evening Bulletin Fri. Sept. 15, 1950, p. 1	"Potter Scores Mills' Excuses."
Providence Journal Sat. Sept. 16, 1950, p. 28	"Support Is Made Issue in Warwick."
Evening Bulletin Wed. Oct. 18, 1950, p. 1	"Greene Cites School Record" — "What interest did Leo Roy have in that charter bill?"
Providence Journal Thurs. Oct. 26, 1950, p. 3	Warwick campaign coverage.
Evening Bulletin Thurs. Oct. 26, 1950, p. 5	Warwick campaign coverage.
Providence Journal Fri. Oct. 27, 1950, p. 3	Mills against Greene. (The file name reads 1905; the year is 1950.)
Evening Bulletin Fri. Oct. 27, 1950, p. 5	"Greene or Roy Called Issue."
Evening Bulletin Fri. Nov. 3, 1950, p. 8	Paid political advertisement: "Who's Lying Mr. Mills?"
Providence Journal Sat. Nov. 4, 1950, p. 11	The same advertisement in the morning paper.
Evening Bulletin Thurs. March 15, 1951, p. 5	"Bill Seeks $30,000" — devaluation of the Alfred P. Roy estate land beside the airport.
Evening Bulletin Wed. April 4, 1951, p. 5	Obituary of Mrs. Leo R. Roy (Bertha).
Providence Journal Thurs. Nov. 1, 1951, p. 2	"Carney Backers Reported Split" — Roy's loudspeaker truck.
Evening Bulletin Wed. Jan. 23, 1952, p. 28	"Claims Against State Total $60,117.70" — the Alfred P. Roy Estate asks $30,000 for the devaluation caused by Hillsgrove Airport, the largest of twenty-nine claims.
Providence Journal Thurs. April 3, 1952, p. 2	"Junk Yard Permit Requested by Roy."
Evening Bulletin Thurs. April 3, 1952, pp. 2 and 6	The same story, afternoon paper.
Evening Bulletin Fri. April 4, 1952, p. 5	"Warwick Zoning Rule Explained by Bartlett."
Providence Journal Fri. April 4, 1952, p. 2	The same, morning paper.
Evening Bulletin / Providence Journal Mon. April 7, 1952, p. 2	Follow-up items.
Providence Journal Sat. April 12, 1952, p. 2	"Leo Roy Requests Zoning Exception."
Evening Bulletin Sat. April 12, 1952, p. 3	The same, afternoon paper.
Providence Journal Thurs. April 17, 1952, p. 2	"Officials Eyeing Two Trailers."

Providence Journal Sat. April 19, 1952, p. 2	Trailers follow-up.
Providence Journal Wed. April 23, 1952, p. 2	"Warwick Board Is Seen Refusing Trailer Action."
Evening Bulletin Wed. April 23, 1952, p. 5	"Two Trailers" — the afternoon account.
Providence Journal Thurs. April 24, 1952, p. 2	"Leo Roy Plans To Move Junk." Two scans.
Evening Bulletin Thurs. April 24, 1952, p. 5	The same, afternoon paper.
Providence Journal Tues. April 29, 1952, p. 3	"Junk Yard Permit Denied Leo Roy By Zoning Board." Two scans.
Evening Bulletin Tues. April 29, 1952, p. 2	The same, afternoon paper.
Providence Journal Wed. April 30, 1952, p. 2	Trailers: the removal order.
Providence Journal Thurs. May 1, 1952, p. 2	"Ordered to Halt Junk Business." Two scans.
Evening Bulletin Thurs. May 1, 1952, p. 5	The same, afternoon paper.
Providence Journal Thurs. May 8, 1952, p. 3	"Inspector Will Issue Order." Two scans.
Evening Bulletin Thurs. May 8, 1952, p. 5	The same, afternoon paper.
Evening Bulletin Wed. May 28, 1952, p. 2	Warranty deeds: Leo R. Roy to Josef Wagner.
Providence Journal Thurs. May 29, 1952, p. 3	"'Leaning Tower of Warwick' Seen About to Take the Plunge," with photograph.
Providence Journal Fri. May 30, 1952, p. 3	"Roy Files Appeal Against Ruling." Two scans.
Providence Journal Sat. Aug. 9, 1952, p. 3	"Roy Sells Land And Junkyard" — 47 acres for $32,000.
Providence Journal Fri. May 8, 1953, p. 4	"Dumping Protest Goes to Mayor."
Evening Bulletin Tues. May 12, 1953, p. 5	"Junking Activities Will Stop In 2 Weeks, Louis Roy Says."
Evening Bulletin Mon. Aug. 11, 1952, p. 6	"Warranty Deeds" — Clifford E. Smiley, Inc. to Leo, Eugene and Napoleon Roy, Yorktown Manor.
Evening Bulletin Mon. July 26, 1954, p. 5	"Phillips Gains New Support In Warwick."
Evening Bulletin Fri. Nov. 7, 1952, p. 5	"Young Democrats Elect" — the Warwick Young People's Democratic League is organized at the Norwood fire hall; Edward Vasconcellos secretary.
Providence Journal Thurs. March 26, 1953, p. 2	"Ruerat Says Bus Business Legal" — the Warwick Jefferson-Jackson Club, through its secretary Edward J. Vasconcellos, challenges the former mayor's school-bus sale.
Providence Journal Sat. July 31, 1954, p. 2	"Mills in Democratic Run But Endorsement Hazy" — "the Mills-Roy element."

Evening Bulletin Thurs. Sept. 30, 1954, p. 6	"Girl, 17, Reports $5 Office Holdup" — Monica Roy.
Evening Bulletin Mon. Jan. 17, 1955, p. 5	Emil Roy released on bail.
Providence Journal Wed. Jan. 19, 1955, p. 3	The Emil Roy release and the city solicitor.
Evening Bulletin Thurs. Feb. 17, 1955, p. 5	Mills for mayor.
Providence Journal Fri. Feb. 4, 1955, pp. 3 and 5	Emil Roy found guilty on one count, innocent of the second. Three articles.
Evening Bulletin Fri. Feb. 4, 1955, p. 3	The same verdict, afternoon paper.
Providence Journal Sat. Feb. 5, 1955, p. 3	Court follow-up
Providence Sunday Journal Sun. June 5, 1955, p. 31	"Mills 'Freeze'? Democrats Call Showdown Talk On Appointees."
Providence Sunday Journal Sun. Sept. 11, 1955, p. 136	Roy & Reading advertisement for King Philip Acres at Cowesett — "Cleo R. Roy—Clifton I. Reading—Emil Roy, Agent." The forename is a misprint for Leo.
Evening Bulletin Thurs. Sept. 29, 1955, p. 6	Death of police commission chairman Albert W. George; Roy a bearer.
Evening Bulletin Thurs. Oct. 4, 1955, p. 5	"Police Board Vacancy Poses Warwick Problem" — Roy's account of his two defeats.
Providence Sunday Journal Sun. Nov. 27, 1955, p. 50	"Young Democrats Seen Defiant" — "Leo Roy badly wants to be police commissioner."
Evening Bulletin Mon. Dec. 5, 1955, p. 5	"Leo Roy: Warwick King Maker or Myth?" — part one, by Lawrence M. Howard.
Evening Bulletin Tues. Dec. 6, 1955, p. 5	"Politics His Hobby But Leo Roy Doesn't Claim to Run Warwick" — part two.
Evening Bulletin Wed. Dec. 7, 1955, p. 5	"Chips Are Down in Leo Roy's Test of Strength in Warwick" — part three.
Providence Journal Mon. Dec. 12, 1955, p. 2	"4 Councilmen Seen Forging Bloc to Get Say in Appointments."
Evening Bulletin Thurs. Dec. 29, 1955, p. 6	"Mills Blocks Hiring of Roy's Brother."
Providence Journal Thurs. Dec. 29, 1955, p. 2	The same story, morning paper.
Providence Journal Mon. Jan. 2, 1956, p. 2	"O'Neill Pledges To Tilt With Mills."
Providence Journal Thurs. Jan. 5, 1956, p. 2	"Anti-Mills Sessions With Roy Denied by Councilor Donovan."
Evening Bulletin Thurs. Jan. 5, 1956, p. 2	The same, afternoon paper.
Providence Journal Wed. Jan. 11, 1956, p. 2	"Crank Expands: Roy, Other Democrat Plagued by Calls, Too."

Evening Bulletin Thurs. Jan. 12, 1956, p. 5	"Councilmen Clash Over Delayed Highway and Drainage Program."
Providence Journal Tues. Jan. 17, 1956, p. 2	"Mills-O'Neill Feud At Council Caucus Over Street Work." Two scans.
Evening Bulletin Tues. April 17, 1956, p. 6	"Democrats Pick Alsfeld For Police Board Post."
Evening Bulletin Wed. May 2, 1956, p. 5	"Three Democrats Eye Mayor's Office" — Mills refuses to be "bracketed" with Roy.
Evening Bulletin Tues. June 26, 1956, p. 9	"Young Democrats Elect At Harmonious Meeting" — Emil E. Roy elected treasurer, "a relative of Leo Roy."
Evening Bulletin Tues. Sept. 4, 1956, p. 3	"O'Neill Backers Seek Support Among Endorsed."
Evening Bulletin Sat. Dec. 22, 1956, p. 2	Zoning: the Roy brothers win industrial zoning near Strawberry Field Road.
Providence Sunday Journal Sun. April 15, 1956, p. 115	New corporate charters: Roy Realty, Inc., April 2, Warwick — Leo R. Roy, Hilton W. Howard Jr. and Marie A. DeJessus.
Evening Bulletin Mon. April 8, 1957, p. 3	North Kingstown records for Feb. 19, 1957: Emil E. Roy deeds Yorktown Manor lots 9-A and 9-B to Napoleon C. Roy, and Cliff-Pat, Inc. conveys in Greenmeadow No. 1.
Evening Bulletin Wed. Sept. 25, 1957, p. 3	"Warwick Records" — warranty deed, Leo R. Roy to Alfred P. Roy, Assessor's Plat 309.
Evening Bulletin Fri. Jan. 30, 1959, p. 3	"North Kingstown Records" for Jan. 14, 1959 — Warwick Federal lends $182,500 to Eugene Roy and R & O Realty; the Smileys discharge Leo's $47,000 and Eugene's $6,200; Massassoit Housing Corp clears 42 wartime mortgages. Two scans of the same column.
Evening Bulletin Thurs. Sept. 26, 1957, p. 3	"Injunction Plea Denied by Court" — Campanella & Cardi judgments.
Evening Bulletin Wed. May 14, 1958, p. 44	Court decisions: Whalen & Judge v. Leo R. Roy, $1,822.30.
Evening Bulletin Mon. Sept. 23, 1968, p. 2	"Hobbs Sees Shades of..." — Roy resigns from the Thomas Jefferson Club.
Providence Sunday Journal Sun. Feb. 26, 1989, p. 42	Obituary of Leo R. Roy, with photograph.

The Sewer Authority newspaper clippings

Evening Bulletin Tues. April 24, 1962, p. 2	"Warwick Authorized To Set Up Sewer Board." Cited in RoyLeoSewer.rtf; the scan is not among the files in the folder.
Evening Bulletin Tues. May 8, 1962, p. 2	Twenty names submitted for the sewer authority.
Evening Bulletin Mon. May 14, 1962, p. 4	"Mayor Appoints Five For Sewer Board" — Leo R. Roy among them.
Providence Journal Tues. May 15, 1962, p. 2	Council confirmation.
Evening Bulletin	"Council Approves Five Sewer Board Members."

Fri. May 18, 1962, p. 2	
Evening Bulletin Tues. May 29, 1962, p. 2	Sworn in to the Warwick Sewer Authority, with photograph.
Evening Bulletin Tues. July 10, 1962, p. 2	"Sewer Board Advised On Alternate Plans."
Evening Bulletin Tues. July 17, 1962, p. 2	"Authority Selects Pawtuxet River Site for Sewage Plant."
Evening Bulletin Sat. Aug. 4, 1962, p. 18	"Hobbs Cancels Sewer Bond Vote."
Providence Journal Tues. Oct. 8, 1963, p. 2	"More Money For Sewers Seen Possible." (RoyLeoSewer.rtf gives the year as 1962; the scan in the folder is 1963.)
Evening Bulletin Wed. Dec. 5, 1962, p. 6	Photograph of the Sewer Authority at the city map after the referendum.
Providence Sunday Journal Sun. April 14, 1963, p. 81	"Sewer Authority Patronage" — Francis O'Neill hired as an inspector.
Providence Journal Mon. April 15, 1963, p. 4	Photograph: signing the first sewer contract.
Evening Bulletin Tues. Aug. 4, 1964, p. 2	"Sewer Rate Is $7.40."
Evening Bulletin Tues. Jan. 12, 1965, p. 3	"To Reorganize Again" — the end of his term on the authority.
Evening Bulletin Tues. Nov. 23, 1965, p. 2	"Sewer Bd. Study Asked."
Evening Bulletin Wed. Jan. 26, 1966, p. 2	"Review Board Abates Sewer Assessment."
Evening Bulletin Tues. Feb. 21, 1967, p. 2	"Sewer Tax Bd. Reelects Roy."
Evening Bulletin Tues. May 26, 1970, p. 2	"16 Vacancies Filled" — William Caron replaces Leo Roy.

Court decisions

- Sisson ex rel. Flynn v. Lisle, Rhode Island Supreme Court, opinion by Sweeney, J., May 25, 1927 — the petition by Leo Roy and seven other defeated Democrats to oust the Republicans elected to Warwick's water supply board and board of water commissioners. The opinion supplies the vote totals, the names of counsel, and the reasoning that the Evening Bulletin only summarized. Consulted online at CourtListener; the Evening Bulletin report.
- Roy v. United Electric Railways Co., 52 R.I. 173, 159 A. 637, decided April 1, 1932 — Alfred Roy's $10,000 verdict set aside, on the farm-profits point and on the trial judge's conduct toward the railway's counsel. The last of four Supreme Court decisions arising from the one collision; the others were Napoleon's (Jan. 29, 1930), Louis's (Feb. 4, 1931) and Leo's (Dec. 9, 1931). All four are set out in the family research document named in the sources.

- Brereton v. Board of Canvassers, 55 R.I. 5 (December 27, 1934) and, on reargument, 55 R.I. 23 (February 6, 1935), both reported at 177 A. 147 — Peirce H. Brereton's challenge to John A. O'Brien's election as mayor of Warwick. Leo Roy is not a party, but the case decides the office he had spent that autumn working to secure, and it names the lawyers on both sides. Consulted online at CourtListener.
- Judge v. Roy, 90 R.I. 29, 153 A.2d 522, decided July 24, 1959 — the brokers' commission on the Post Road land, in which the court found Leo Roy "still the real party in interest" behind W & W Associates, Inc.
- Searched without result: a reported decision on the October 1934 caucus petition, on the 1952 junkyard certiorari, and on the Ruerat slander suit. See the notes above on where the case files would be.

Vital records and census

- Baptism of Pierre Alfred Roy, Rimouski, June 16, 1865. Ancestry.com. Quebec Vital and Church Records (Drouin Collection), 1621-1967 [database on-line]. Provo, UT, USA: The Generations Network, Inc., 2008. Original data: Gabriel Drouin, comp. Drouin Collection. Montreal, Quebec, Canada: Institut Généalogique Drouin., Rimouski (cathedrele St-Germain) 1865 image 18 of 39, baptism Pierre Alfred Roy.
- Baptism of Marie Amanda Beaudoin, Saint-Lazare, Bellechasse, October 20, 1869. Ancestry.com. Quebec Vital and Church Records (Drouin Collection), 1621-1967 [database on-line]. Provo, UT, USA: The Generations Network, Inc., 2008. Original data: Gabriel Drouin, comp. Drouin Collection. Montreal, Quebec, Canada: Institut Généalogique Drouin., Saint, St-Lazare, Bellechasse, 1869, image 20 of 28, baptism Marie Amanda Bodouin.
- Death of Amanda Roy, December 1910. Rhode Island State Archives, Death Registrations, 1853-1975, Death Registrations, 1910, Deaths, 1910_000, image 309 of 385, https://sosri.access.preservica.com/uncategorized/IO_1244b527-7e26-4e32-8b4e-b046df1ce131/, death Amanda Roy.
- Marriage of Alfred P. Roy and Adeliska M. Giroux, April 18, 1933. Providence, RI: Alphabetical Index of Births, Marrriages and Deaths, 1931-1940. (Online database. AmericanAncestors.org, New England Historic Genealogical Society, 2011. Originally published as: Alphabetical Index of the Births, Marriages and Deaths Recorded in Providence, Rhode Island 31 vols. City of Providence, 1879–1945. Volume Marriages 1931 - 1935, page 390 of 485, 38:226, marriage Alfred P Roy and Adeliska M Giroux.
- Will and estate of Alfred P. Roy, 1936–1947. Warwick, Rhode Island, "Probate Estate Files," case no. 3682, Will of Alfred P Roy, 1938; Probate Court, Warwick City Hall, Warwick, Rhode Island.
- Death certificate of Alfred J. Roy, February 4, 1957, State of Rhode Island, Division of Vital Statistics, state file no. 1143, city no. 57-142.

- Birth date of Emil E. Roy, March 10, 1932. “Rhode Island, State Census, 1935”, FamilySearch (https://www.familysearch.org/ark:/61903/1:1:MPRP-X2Q), Entry for Emil Roy, 1935.
- Designation of Agent for Nonresident Landlord, Debra K. Roy, recorded Warwick Land Evidence Book 3179, Page 222, June 29, 1999.
- The Howard household, 1950. 1950 United States Federal Census, Seventeenth Census of the United States, 1950; Year: 1950; Census Place: Warwick, Kent, Rhode Island; Roll: 5047; Page: 80; Enumeration District: 2-33, Ancestry.com, Rhode Island, Kent, Warwick, 2-33, image 52 of 56, Hilton Howard Head.
- Death certificate of Bertha Albertina Roy, state file no. 2231. Rhode Island State Archives, Death Registrations, 1853–1975, Death Registrations, 1951, Providence Deaths (07 of 20), April 1–15, 1951, image 47 of 304, https://sosri.access.preservica.com/uncategorized/IO_e2c0f05e-ddd8-42c0-970a-7ad7e578ee32/.
- Armstrong’s Warwick and East Greenwich, Rhode Island, Directory, 1938 (J. H. Armstrong Co., Cranston), pp. 302–303 — the Roy household and Club LeRoy at 970 Post Road, Norwood; street directory pp. 46–47.
- Armstrong’s Warwick City Directory, Rhode Island, including East Greenwich, 1940–41 (J. H. Armstrong Co., Cranston), p. 346 — the same household at 1380 Post Road; street directory pp. 79–80, showing the renumbering of the Post Road.

The Giroux obituaries

- “Frank M. Giroux,” Evening Bulletin, Friday, June 8, 1945, p. 4 — names his sister as “Mrs. Adeliska Roy, of Norwood” and his niece as Melina A. Giroux of 54 Iona Avenue
- “Mrs. Lodina Giroux,” Providence Sunday Journal, August 16, 1942, p. 3 — the mother of Melina A. Giroux, and the source for Melina’s work at the State Department of Agriculture and Conservation

Research documents compiled by Claude AI

- "3871 Post Road: The Roy Family Home." Built on the City of Warwick Records of Land Evidence 1969–2002, the obituaries of Bertha, Eugene, Leo and Eleanor, the September 1964 theft item, and mortgagee’s sale notices of 1981, 1987 and 1991.
- "The Drive-In That Never Was: Leo R. Roy, W & W Associates, Inc., and the Land on Post Road." Built on about thirty newspaper clippings of 1955–1962, six obituaries, and Judge v. Roy, 90 R.I. 29, 153 A.2d 522 (1959).
- “The Restaurant on Post Road.” Built on 104 newspaper clippings from 1933 – 2005, Warwick City Directories of 1938 and 1940-41, World War II Draft Card, Passengers Lists, and Naturalization record. Also various websites were consulted.

Background

- Warwick was incorporated as a city on April 21, 1931. Its mayors in Leo Roy's political lifetime were Peirce H. Brereton (1933–34), John A. O'Brien (1935–36), Albert P. Ruerat (1937–48), Joseph Mills (1949–52 and 1955–56), Darius L. Goff (1953–54), Raymond E. Stone (1957–60) and Horace E. Hobbs (1961–66), who was followed by Philip W. Noel. These dates come from public reference sources and agree with the clippings.
- Charles P. Sisson was Attorney General of Rhode Island from 1925 to 1929, which is why his name heads the 1927 case. Webster Knight (1854–1933) was a son of the industrialist Robert Knight and a principal of B. B. & R. Knight; he sold the firm in 1920 and lived at Natick Farm in Warwick until his death. Both from public reference sources.