Howard Robard “Sonny” Hughes Jr. 5CY *1906-1976* Our subject W5CY born on Christmas Eve, 1906 Huston, Texas. Howard was commonly known as Sonny, or Little Howard, despite the fact that he was six foot three by the age of 16. He would become an aviator, engineer, industrialist and film maker. Of his time W5CY may have been one of the wealthiest men in the world.

Hughes was a student of (7) seven different schools, of which he graduated from none, excelling only in mathematics. As a young man, Hughes had a penchant for all things mechanical and was known to spend hours tinkering on different devices. Little Howard had few friends but enjoyed the company of the son of his fathers business partner, Dudley Sharp.

At the age of 6, Howard Hughes Sr. presented his son with the gift of a workshop, where his son could always be found playing with various bits of wires and pieces of metal. At the age of 11, Little Howard built his own ham radio and at the age of 13, when he refused the gift of a motorcycle. Hughes built one for himself, taking parts from his father’s steam car. Our subject at an early age was quite deaf and could not hear conversations around him, yet he told few people of his disability. Consequently he conducted much of his business over the phone because he could hear much better. Here is the 1920 Hughes Jr Houston TX 5CY call book listing. (FRC)

As a graduate of Harvard, Big Howard sought his son to have the same education and sent Sonny to a boarding school in Massachusetts in the fall of 1919. After one year had passed it became apparent that Sonny was not going to succeed in grooming school. Big Howard traveled across the country to collect his son and they attended a boat race on the way home. After losing a bet to his son on the outcome of the race, Big Howard was forced to grant Sonny one wish. That summer, Sonny took flying lessons with various crop dusters against the wishes of both of his parents. It was here that Hughes would develop his love of aviation. He earned his ham license 5CY that year.

In 1921 oil drilling and prospecting took off in California and Hughes Sr., relocated to Hollywood and took his son with him. After a generous donation to the California Institute of Technology, Sonny was able to attend mathematics and engineering courses. In the fall of 1923, Mrs. Hughes passed away and little over a year later in January of 1924, Big Howard passed on as well. Continued on page two.
At the age of 17, it would seem that Hughes was not prepared to enter the world of adulthood, but he would quickly prove otherwise. Sonny was the inheritor of 75% of Hughes Tool, of which he would be granted control at the age of 21.

Eager to be responsible of his own affairs, Hughes appeared before a Texas judge to appeal the legal guidelines set forth in dad's will. Against the advice of Little Howard's remaining family, the judge granted Hughes his wish and a great deal of wealth and power were put into a young man's hands. Howard took the helm of Hughes Tool and Die. Incapable of managing a multi-million dollar firm, he set out to find solid management. Noah Dietrich was that man.

Partially scripted from goldenessays.com Hughes W5CY being congratulated by FDR on his round-the-world flight in the late 30's to pass over places of interest in the coming war with Germany and Japan.