

CHAPTER 7

BACK TO GOD'S COUNTRY AND THE MARKET CRASH

It Just So Happened that Arizona was not destined to be a long haul. By summer of 1929, it was all over and we were on our way back to God's country: Colorado, and particularly, Englewood. Why we left cactus country I am not really sure. I know what I heard. It had to do with (1) my father discovering some financial dishonesty going on in the Arizona branch of the Company, and/or (2) a dislike for Catholics resident in the upper management of the Arizona branch of Ma Bell. Whatever it was, we packed up and left.

Father was relatively sure he would be reemployed by the Denver headquarters, and he was offered work, but he held out for a better deal. While he held out, September came and I was enrolled in Rosedale Elementary School in South Denver for my sixth grade year.

MARKET CRASH. September passed. Father still dickered. Then came October 29, 1929, and all dickering ended abruptly. Wall Street blew everything away. A pretty squeaky time started for all kinds of people, including us but, with the quiet openhandedness of Grandpa Calloley and Uncle Gene, we made it. And before long Father went back to work not at the telephone company, but at The May Company. This time, however, he was not a middle of the night delivery wagon driver. He was in charge of payroll: he was the timekeeper. Also, before long, hard times handed him an opportunity to buy the Englewood agency of the Westchester Fire Insurance Company. So he had two jobs: timekeeping during the day; insurance selling evenings and Saturdays. Some years later he left The May Company and became a salesman for Mutual of Omaha and Hartford Life Insurance companies. His insurance interests furnished income for the rest of his life. They also funded the Englewood house that was soon on the planning board, and soon finished: 3042 So. Lincoln, Englewood, Colorado¹--wherein I ate and slept from 7th grade through college graduation; i.e. from 1930 to 1940.

A HOUSE ON LINCOLN STREET. It was an attractive house, certainly for those days in that neighborhood: the best house on the block. But that might have been part of what was wrong with it: a rather excessive demand on my mother's part to keep it meticulously in order. Everything had its place, and it damned well better be in that place. What else was wrong with it was something missing, something apparently left back there in Arizona: spontaneous, smiling freedom. It was as if returning into the territory of the Calloley Clan shut out freedom.

But it was not really the Calloley Clan, because it was to that Clan (or at

¹Information from the deed to the Englewood property: Grandfather, Theodore A. Calloley, bought lots 11 and 12, block 7, Stayers Broadway Heights, June 8, 1905, for \$200. Those lots became my mother's property on April 3, 1930. Changed to joint tenancy with William A., November 5, 1945.

least part of that Clan) that I escaped to freedom. Freedom was always just two houses away because just two houses away was that front bedroom where I was born. Yes, the new Tremmel house was built just two houses south of my grandparents' house. I certainly do not want to be excessively critical of 3042 South Lincoln. It was a good house/home. There was affection there, and pride, and good food, and care if you got sick. But it was all so damned orderly.

In one way the house itself defended me from orderliness. It had a full basement with a kitchen and a bedroom downstairs. The foundation was high enough that on one side of the bedroom there were big windows where plenty of light could flood in. It was light and warm--and rather safe from order. The order was mostly upstairs. And *most of the time* that basement bedroom was *my room*.

"Most of the time...my room" needs translation. It was my room except on occasions when my father, for a period of time, would join me as my roommate. Why? I never asked. I don't know. He just did. I don't recall resenting it, except, of course, I couldn't break curfew quite as easily with him sleeping there. On the positive side, I recall that on cold winter nights a little extra heat in the bed was welcome. At our house, at night, summer and winter, the bedroom windows were open. Remember, my father had spent a few years in a sanitarium at Saranac Lake. For him (and us) that therapy of fresh air never ended.

THE WRONG WORLD. As I said above, Father's final career was in insurance. Financially he did all right. But I must have sensed that it wasn't exactly a fulfilling way to make a living. I must have sensed this because I remember quite vividly one night as we settled down for sleep, I asked him, "Dad if you could do what you might really want to do to make a living, what would it be?" He didn't say anything for a few seconds. Then he said quietly, "I'd spend my life growing beautiful flowers."

Yes. That made sense. That was my father. He could also have written poetry in the evening after his flowers had gone to sleep.