

## CHAPTER 8

### TWO HOUSES OVER--G-PA

It Just So Happened that every other house on the block, on our side of the street, was incorrectly numbered. We were 3042, the house to the north was 3024. The house to the south was 3026. Why were the house numbers out of order? Who knows? Who cares? Who cared? Ah, that was different. People trying to find the Tremmels of 3042 So. Lincoln, Englewood, Colorado--they cared. Actually it was probably something of a beneficial ploy. Some people who got confused and gave up we probably didn't want to see anyhow.

However it was, there was a house two houses north (3020 South Lincoln) and it was worth finding and I found it often, especially during those first few years when we got back from Arizona. Three people of major importance lived there: Grandfather, Grandmother and Uncle Gene.

THAT OTHER THODE. We have already seen the tough Thode Calloley of the lead and silver mines of Potosi and Central City; now for the grandfather of Englewood and of more casual occupation. He was for many years a foreman at the Denver Bedding Company. And then, after he retired from the bedding company, he was for many more years a night watchman at the Davis Brothers Drug Company warehouse, way down in the lower part of Denver, a couple of blocks from the railway station.

He was still rough and gruff and all gentle inside.<sup>1</sup> He was also a passionate gardener and flower grower. All summer his back yard was loaded with things good for satisfying both physical and spiritual hunger.

Another thing I discovered through him was what it is like to get intrigued with books--story books. During his years at Davis Brothers Drug, after work he walked to a little shopping-market mall where he could catch an Englewood streetcar. In that mall there was a bookstore where there were all kinds of novels about the wild west. Week after week Grandpa bought one of those story books, and after he finished reading it, he gave it to me to read, and I certainly did. Now all I can say is that if you didn't do Zane Grey and Harold Bell Wright when you were 13 or 14 years old, you just did not grow up truly western.

A SIDELINE ON BOOKS. My father also intrigued my book reading. For some reason he gave me a little leather bound book entitled *Iblis in Paradise*: a book about The Devil in Paradise.<sup>2</sup> It is a Muslim story about the sin of Adam and Eve, and their ejection from Paradise. Why would my father, when I was 13 or 14 years old, give me such a book? I don't know, unless he was cluing me in to "the problem of women". The book does tell about that.

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<sup>1</sup>Right now I am suddenly shocked to realize that he was already 76 years old (born November 5, 1854) by the time the Tremmels got back to Englewood, two houses over, and I got really to know him.

<sup>2</sup>*Iblis in Paradise*, George Roe (Philadelphia: Henry Altemus Company, 1908.)

The world had been created and, as Second Genesis tells it, Adam was the only living animal creature in Paradise--no cats, dogs, chickens, anything. Adam was lonely. He never saw a fish jump, nor a coyote look back as it slipped off across the field. It was not good for Adam to be alone, so God made animals, one after the other, and brought each to Adam. Adam named each animal, but, perhaps not knowing when he was well off, Adam was still dissatisfied, until God made the woman. Then abruptly the world was full of joy--for a while. One day, in the cool of the morning, Adam sought out God and said to him:

"O, God [Kudah] Thou art indeed almighty, all-wise and all-bountiful...hear the prayer of thy servant...For lo, the woman whom Thou gavest me, her eyes were brighter than the stars and her voice was softer than the cooing of the wood-pigeon, but alas when I desire to think in silence, naught will stay the music of her tongue, and when I bring the fairest flowers and sweetest fruits of the garden as a love offering, behold they are other than she would have chosen, and I know not how to please her. Now, therefore, I pray Thee take her from me that my soul may have peace"

So God did as Adam desired...But ere many days, Adam again sought out God and said: "O Thou Mighty One, have patience with thy servant, for great is his woe; for behold, when I came to Thee and besought Thee to take away the woman, Thou didst grant my request and for a few hours I rejoiced to sit in peace. But after awhile, when I had wrested a secret from the stars, I turned and found none to whom I might speak my victory. And at night, when I lay down in my loneliness, I stretched out my hand but, instead of the soft nest of a warm bosom, naught felt I save the hardness of the cold ground. Now, therefore, I pray Thee, return to me the woman..."

And again God hearkened to the voice of the man and the woman returned to the garden.

Some time later God, walking in the cool of the Garden, saw Adam sitting in dejection, his head in his hands. God asked why Adam was grieving, and Adam replied:

"O God, even though Thou art almighty, I wist not how even Thou canst succor, for behold the woman whom Thou gavest me, I cannot live with her and I cannot live without her."

**DON'T REPEAT YOURSELF.** One thing I did not learn from my grandfather, but nevertheless experienced and enjoyed, was his talent for swearing. He was a first-class swearer. He never swore at people, but he did swear at things. I remember one day he was chopping wood and the axe handle broke. He swore (I swear) for at least a solid minute without once repeating a swear word. Of course, swear words were not permitted in the Tremmel house, nor were they permitted inside Grandmother Calloley's house. Outside...well... "But Thode, you really shouldn't swear in front of

Junior." To this reprimand Junior did not say a thing, but he was giggling inside.

Then one day the swearing stopped. No, Grandpa didn't die. He got religion. I mean, real religion. Not just that Mayflower Congregational Church kind of religion. He got Harvey Springer religion:<sup>3</sup> born again religion. Grandpa never preached his religion around the house, but he did stop swearing. Zane Grey and H.B. Wright seemed to lose out, too--lose out to whomever it was who really wrote all that stuff from Genesis to Revelation.

THE SILVER TRUMPET. When I finally got out of junior high school and into high school, Grandpa once again became a dominant dimension in my life. The powers that were were starting a new music program at Englewood High. I wanted very much to have a horn so I could play in the new band. Then all of a sudden, I had a horn: Grandpa and, of course, Grandma too; and not only a horn but a year's worth of private trumpet lessons with Professor Ed. C. Blackburn, a trumpet player in the Denver City Park Saturday Night Summer Concert Band. Some of the really genuine times in my young life were the summer evenings when Professor Blackburn took me with him to City Park and I got to sit and listen to the band, and watch the water display, and be for a while not far from Heaven.

Remember I said that it was Beikirch money that got me into college. Well, it was Calloley trumpet that kept me there. By the time I graduated from high school, and got initially through that door into the University of Denver, I was given a music scholarship because somebody had loved me enough to give me a horn.

BEST SERMON EVER HEARD. As I said, Grandpa got religion, but he did not bug anybody with it. It was his quiet, private possession--Bible reading and all. He remained a loyal "born again Christian," and loyal also to both his Springer evangelist and his Mayflower Congregational Church.

I had graduated from the University of Denver, had gotten lost in Eastern Colorado for a year, had returned to graduate school at The Iliff School of Theology and was about to preach, at Christ Methodist Church, my first sermon. To my surprise, on that Sunday morning, through the church door walked my Aunt Myrtle, my Cousin Myrtle Ruth Finn (Mickey Finn)<sup>4</sup> and Grandfather--right down to the front row. I was in shock for a while, but I recovered and at the appropriate time delivered myself of my first sermon. It wasn't exactly a "come-to-Jesus" evangelical job as I am sure Grandfather had been getting. Not even was the text of my sermon properly scriptural. It was

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<sup>3</sup>Harvey Springer was a Baptist evangelist who moved to Englewood. He was a rough-neck Billy Graham. How he caught up with Grandpa I'll never know, but he did and that "swearing artist" gave up his natural talent and went Bible. Actually Grandpa never really left his old Mayflower Congregational Church. He just added a born again flavor to it.

<sup>4</sup>Today Myrtle Ruth (Finn) Lee lives in Carbondale, Illinois.

from Hamlet:

"To thine own self be true, and it must follow as the night the day, thou can not then be false to any man."

I began to preach. Grandfather listened and smiled. Then as I proceeded with my "twenty-minutes on Sunday morning," I saw something happening. His head was beginning to slump toward his chest. His eyes were having trouble staying open. And then they were not open at all. He obviously needed a bit more preaching enthusiasm to keep him tuned in. After service at the church door, he shook my hand and said, "That's the best sermon I ever heard." And he meant it. No matter what I said--it was the best.

Then he gave me another gift: a Bible. I have it to this very day: One of my most treasured possessions, in the very box it came in. I keep it in a small book case right next to my bed. He is where I am.<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>5</sup>See obituary statement Appendix #1.