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SOME HOMES

"There is no place like home". John Howard Paine

by G. W. Hinckley

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SOME HOMES

BY

G. W. HINCKLEY

ILLUSTRATIONS BY

CHARLES D. HUBBARD

1945

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Foreword

I am writing of homes built with hands. In the heart of each stalwart builder there was a plan, a purpose, a hope. Each structure was to be a factor in providing home life. Each structure was to be headquarters for manhood, womanhood, motherhood, boyhood, girlhood, babyhood—for they were to be more than that—they were built for homes and home life. These houses were hand made. They were not built even in the horse and buggy days, but at an earlier date, in the days when the tallow dip was the universally accepted luminant after sunset in homes. The most modern and up-to-date is the house my father built in 1853—the year in which I was born—and compared with the others it is quite modern. The others date back far into the past. In my boyhood days, I often played around the old quarry, where the granite was blasted for the "Stone House." It is the oldest house in Guilford, Connecticut; it is the oldest house in New England; it is the oldest house in the United States. It was built in 1639.

CHAPTER I

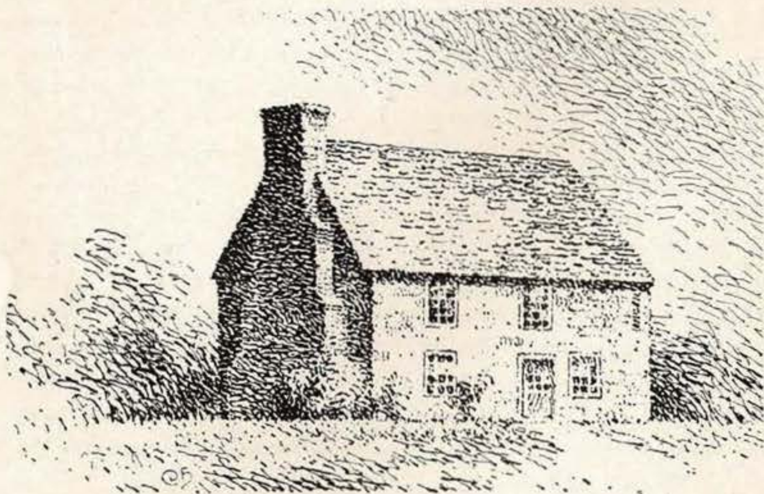
THE OLD STONE HOUSE

Aside from one evening in the "oldest house" and two or three brief visits after it became a state museum, there are two incidents related to it which live in my memory. No doubt there were many funerals held within the walls of the "Stone House"; there were scenes of merriment; and the first marriage ceremony in the town was performed there, and history says that the wedding feast consisted of "baked pork and pease." And it is stated, too, that Rev. Henry Whitefield had eleven children, and even in those primitive days there must have been merry hours under the hospitable roof—the first, or anyway the most important residence, the nearest, probably, to a perfect home in the settlement.

There were religious services, too, in the "Stone House"—sermons, and prayers, and exhortations and conferences, and there were funerals—there can be no doubt of this last statement though I have no knowledge of more than one, and that one I never would have heard about, aside from an unfortunate incident on a sorrowful occasion, which resulted in an absurd prophecy which was followed, in the process of time, by literal fulfillment.

For two years, when I was between fifteen and seventeen, the class of boys of my age in the Sunday School was taught by a man of admirable character, high principles, and a devout spirit. We had profound respect for him, and we prized his friendship and his undying interest in our welfare. He belonged in a family in which the heads of three generations were named "Eli," and was the youngest of the trio. So there were in our town three men, each a blond, and they were known as "Eli First," "Eli Second," and "Eli Third." If anyone had offered an unfriendly criticism of Eli Third, we boys would have taken up the cudgle in his defense, and yet

we knew—and for that matter, anybody around town knew—that he had one lamentable fault which often proved to be an annoyance to his best friends. There was a saying that all men are in one of three classes — some men are right handed, and some are left handed, and some are a little behind handed. And it was agreed that if there were enough of the "little behind handed" to form an organization, Eli Third was in line for the presidency of it. He was late to breakfast, late to supper, late to church Sunday morning, and late again Sunday evening; late to the mid-week prayer meeting; late to the annual picnic; if a clamming trip to the



THE OLD STONE HOUSE

shores of Long Island Sound were planned, and we included him in the party we could reckon that we would be so late in starting after waiting for him, that before we could get to the clam flats, the tide would have turned and would be rising, and our trip would be clamless, or nearly so — yes, always the behind hand—always late.

Now it came to pass that one day there was to be a funeral in the "Stone House"; I do not know the name of the owner of the land or the caretaker at the time. The service was to be held at two o'clock, and all arrangements had been at-

tended to in detail. The pall bearers had been chosen and notified, and they had promised to be present to perform their duties when the hour for the funeral at the "Old Stone House" arrived, and everything was as it should be, aside from one item. One of the appointed pall bearers—Eli Third—who had promised to serve, had not arrived. It was thought best not to delay the service by waiting for him, and when the officiating clergyman had performed his part, it was necessary to find someone in the assemblage who could take Eli's place—he had not arrived. And this was done. As the four bearers were carrying the coffin from the "Old Stone House" to the hearse, one of the bearers glanced to the north and said:

"There comes Eli."

Yes, Eli had kept his promise. He was doing as he agreed, but he was too late to serve as a bearer. One of the pall bearers, in response to the half whispered announcement, "There comes Eli," said, also in a whisper or undertone:

"Yes, that man will be late to his own funeral some day. See if he isn't."

It was an uncanny prophecy, and so absurd—how could a man be late to his own funeral? If one is going to talk, why not talk sense? If he is going to utter a prophecy, why not keep within the limits of possibility?

Later Eli Third journeyed across the continent, was won by the climate and charm of the Pacific coast, and spent the last years of his life in the climate of his choice. In the process of time, he grew old and died. It had been understood that in the event of his death, all that was mortal of him was to be buried in the vicinity of Eli First and Eli Second. The necessary arrangements in his native town were made by wire. The casket would arrive on the eleven-forty A.M. train from the west; the service would be in the Congregational Church where he had worshipped in his earlier years and taught his class of youth. On the day of the funeral service, the eleven-forty train arrived on time; the undertaker was at the station, and the hearse was conveniently located, but there was no casket on the eleven-forty that day. Somewhere en route from California, a connection of trains

was missed, and the funeral must needs be postponed until the following day in the Congregational Church at two P.M., and it came to pass that the prophecy uttered in derision at the "Old Stone House" was fulfilled, and Eli was at last late at his own funeral.

All these details, interesting or otherwise, lamentable or otherwise, believable or otherwise, were related to me by the pastor who conducted the belated funeral service. There is another incident connected with the "Old Stone House," though quite different in character.

At one time the historic building and the farm on which it stands were owned by a native of Guilford, whose home in later years was in Stockbridge, Massachusetts. This owner decided that the historic structure should be repaired, and to some extent remodelled. In the weeks that followed, it was discovered that one beam in the framework was partially decayed and should be replaced by new material. The defective piece of lumber, after more than two centuries of service in the position in which it was originally placed, was taken to a furniture factory nearby to be sawed into such pieces of sound wood as could be sawed, and these were to be fashioned into mantel ornaments, watch charms, and other souvenirs of the old building. My father was running the saw in the factory in those days, and one night he placed in my hands a piece of oak, which he told me was the largest piece of the original frame of the oldest house in the United States anywhere in existence outside the repaired structure. I accepted the gift with pride and satisfaction. I had a brother and a brother-in-law, and the prospects of another brother-in-law in the near future, and I quietly decided at first that eventually I would have the piece sawed lengthwise into four equal parts, and each part should then be put on a turning lathe and fashioned into a walking stick, and each of the four of us would have a souvenir. But later I began looking toward the future and dreaming of things which might be done—things which might come to pass—and I decided to keep the souvenir until I was sure of the very best use that could be made of it.

In process of time I became the pastor of churches in West

Hartford, Connecticut, and Bloomfield. I had entered the Christian ministry without the usual three years of training in a theological seminary. I had been deprived of any such preparation. I had no desire to preach scholarly sermons or so-called doctrinal sermons, but I did believe—was fully convinced—that I had been called to preach—to preach the gospel; to call the attention of my fellow men, especially young people, to certain fundamental teachings in the Bible, regardless of the knotty problems which the Holy Scriptures present. So I was preaching Sunday after Sunday, and studying the Scriptures, and texts were constantly leaping up before me—faster than I could prepare sermons about them or could use them in devotional services. Then one day a happy thought occurred to me—or I thought it was a happy one. I could see what I would like to do with that historic staff—out of the oldest edifice in the country. I had it turned into a walking stick. One or two other walking sticks had been presented by friends. I let the oldest of them all represent the first promise in the Holy Scriptures. Other rods and staffs represented other promises or precepts in like manner. These different sermons or scriptural talks were based on the expression in the Twenty-third Psalm—"Thy rod and thy staff."

Finally I had six of these rods, each representing a text which I was anxious to impress upon as many hearts as possible. Then one Sunday evening I gave an address in the Rainbow Church in the town of Windsor, Connecticut, talking about the six rods and the six promises, and at the close the Sunday School superintendent, W. C. Hodge, of Rainbow, had a happy surprise for me; he had for a long time possessed and valued a crystal cane—beautiful to look at—always glistening by lamplight or under the sun's rays. He presented it to me as the seventh in my series of walking sticks, and I immediately associated it with another text of Scripture.

After I had used this group of rods and staffs symbolizing certain scriptural passages and Good Will had been founded, and the Moody Memorial Chapel had been built, and the north vestry had been converted into the Biblical Library, I had

a case prepared, placed against the wall, and in the case I placed the seven rods and staffs where they are protected by plate glass, each rod proclaiming a promise, or a pledge, or an injunction.

But I had other gifts of rods and staffs coming to me one at a time, and I followed the practice of attaching these rods to expressions of spiritual comfort or protection, and in process of years another group of seven had been used, and finally placed in its own case, and now and then I would be presented with another rod or staff—canes, my friends called them—until another group of seven had been used in that way.

Then one day—and this was after the hurricane of 1939 which wrecked the steeple of the North Church in Guilford, Connecticut, where the "Oldest house in the United States" still stands—the steeple had been wrenched from its foundations and thrown into the street below. A long slender package reached me by mail or express. It had come from Guilford, Connecticut. It was a walking stick—a rod or staff, as I chose—and was a piece of the highest timber in the steeple of the church where I had spent so many Sundays in my early life, and to which I had returned to deliver the sermon upon the one hundredth anniversary of the dedication of the structure.

None of my family—no relative of mine—ever lived in the "Old Stone House," so far as I know, but when I think of homes, there are reasons why that structure comes into my thought, and I find that it has a place in my affections. Just previous to the three hundredth anniversary of the celebration of the founding of the town of Guilford, thoughtful people decided that the old house, which had suffered rather than been improved by some modern changes, should be restored to its original plan and appearance as far as possible. Much thought was devoted to the project, and the old home stands there today and is now known as Connecticut's State Historical Museum.

CHAPTER II

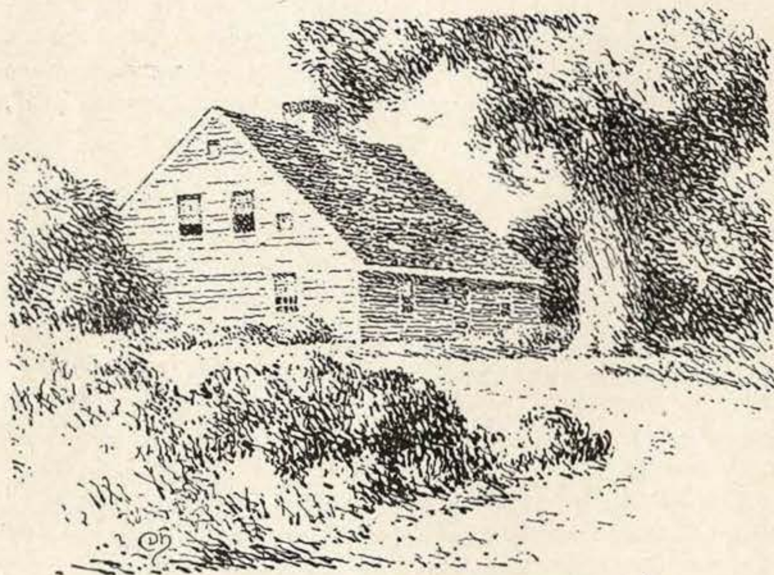
THE HOME ON HINCKLEY HILL

One home in which I had a long-time interest, although I have visited it but twice in a lifetime, is a simple structure in Killingworth, Connecticut. A long time ago, Abel Hinckley, and Eliza Parmelee were married and made their home on a low hill in the town. I think that the hill and a swamp were near neighbors, for the place was called "Cedar Swamp Hill", until Abel and Eliza lived there so long that the name gradually changed. But Father always said he was born at "Cedar Swamp". Abel Hinckley and his wife and five children lived in that house on the hill, and in order they were: Alfred, Walter, Abner, Sidney, and Philetta—the last name often being abbreviated into "Philet" for convenience.

The children grew—the five of them. They were musical, and at one time for a period the five front seats in the choir in the Congregational Church, on a much higher hill than the one at Cedar Swamp were occupied by Abel Hinckley's family —four sons and a daughter. Just what happened, I do not know, but in the process of time the spirit of unrest possessed Abel Hinckley's family. Some twelve miles away—more or less—was the thriving village of Guilford. There was much planning, and many conferences, and then, one day the house on Cedar Swamp Hill was vacant; the family, Abel and Eliza, his wife, the four sons and the daughter, had transferred all their interests and household goods to Guilford, Connecticut.

But the house—the home—remained, and other folk occupied it. Once when I was about fourteen years old, my oldest uncle, tailor Alfred Hinckley, drove back to the hill for a day, and took me with him, his sole companion on the journey, and rather dull company for him, I think. I do not recall that my father ever mentioned any visit to the home of his boyhood in later years.

I spent a Sunday in Killingworth later, but did not visit the hill. It was the Sunday that Dr. Titus Coan, one of the earliest missionaries to the Sandwich Islands—now Hawaii—had returned to his native land, after twenty years of service, and, in the town where he was born and grew up, he gave an account of his experiences. That was the greatest day of my youth, except the Sunday, March 6, 1869, when I became a member of the First Congregational Church in Guil-



A HOME ON CEDAR SWAMP HILL

ford, Connecticut. Since that Titus Coan Sunday in Killingworth, I had heard great preachers, of various types, Rev. Henry Ward Beecher, Rev. T. DeWitt Talmadge, Booker T. Washington, Rev. Joseph Parker, of London Temple; D. L. Moody, Rev. "Billy" Sunday, Rev. J. Wilbur Chapman, and others of power and influence, but at this date, I believe that a greater influence than any one of them in my own life was that account of stewardship rendered on the Sandwich Islands, and related to others and to me, on Killingworth Hill, by Titus Coan, D.D.

There was another Sunday for me in Killingworth, on the hill, but I did not, even then, visit Cedar Swamp, or the old home of Abel Hinckley's family. James A. Garfield was the beloved president of a great and growing nation. I had been ordained to the Christian ministry and was in a happy pastorate in West Hartford, Connecticut. President Garfield was assassinated. After weeks of suffering, President Garfield died. It was arranged that there should be funeral services for the great man in all churches, with sermons appropriate for the day, and the circumstances. Rev. E. P. Armstrong, pastor of the Killingworth church, and I had arranged to exchange pulpits on the day that it suddenly developed that the Garfield Memorial services were to be held. We did not change our plans on Saturday. I journeyed to Killingworth; Mr. Armstrong journeyed to West Hartford. At the close of the services that day, I had no other plan than to return to the West Hartford parsonage in the morning and continue my work. That I would some day resign from my pastorate was probable, but that I would not continue my work for several more years on that field had not occurred to me. But when I arose the next morning, a new plan had taken possession of me. I had decided that upon my return to West Hartford, I would write my resignation, to take effect in two weeks; I would, on the following Sunday read the resignation. I could not tell my churches why I was taking such a step. But it carried out the plan, which I believed had been forced upon me. Two weeks later I had become the pastor of another church, which proved to be only a stepping stone to my life's work, but at the time I did not see it, or understand.

So it came "to pass" that I had to go to Killingworth and spend a Sunday in the church where Abel Hinckley's family used to occupy prominent seats in the choir, and not so very far from Hinckley Hill—or Cedar Swamp—to make a decision upon which great interests depended.

Yes; I made another journey to Killingworth, and this time to visit a home—the home of an ancester—the birthplace of my father. On the evening of August 31, 1923, I arrived in Guilford, Connecticut. The following morning I dressed before sunrise, and taking a wreath of laurel, provided the day

before, I walked alone—leisurely, prayfully, thoughtfully, joyously—to Alderbrook Cemetery, and arrived there just as the sun was rising. I stood at the grave of my father, who was born in a house on Hinckley Hill in Killingworth. This was the one hundredth anniversary of his birth, for he was born September 1, 1823. I stood in silence, aside from some early songsters — feathered creatures that chirped and trilled and whistled in the shrubbery and nearby fields. Then I returned to the village, breakfasted, and Mr. Charles D. Hubbard, artist, philosopher and sympathetic friend, transferred me, in his automobile, to Hinckley Hill—or is it Cedar Swamp?—for the day.

I found the house in excellent repair; the family occupying it cordial and cheerful. I was told that in the earlier days the second floor was not divided, but that my father was born in the northeast corner of the wide space. I was escorted to the northeast corner. I talked, and mused, and wondered, while Mr. Hubbard was making a sketch of the old building in oil. I say "old" respectfully, almost reverently. A century is time enough for a building to get out of repair, unless someone cares and mends and repairs. And in the President's office, in the Prescott Memorial, which is the administration building of the Good Will Home Association at Hinckley, Maine, there are a number of oil paintings; one of them shows the old house on Hinckley Hill, in Killingworth, Conn., as it appeared on the centennial of my father's birth—a home and the birthplace of a home-builder and a home-lover.

Chapter III

THE ELON LEE HOUSE

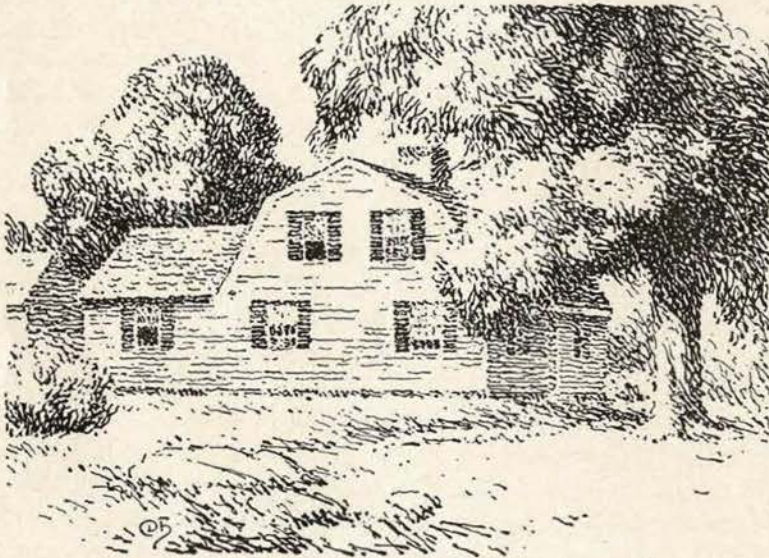
There is another house in the old home town that has a place in my affections, though I am not sure that I ever entered it but once. It is in that section of Guilford, Connecticut which we used to call the "West Side," to distinguish it, I suppose, from the "East Creek" section where I lived, and I think it is called "River Street". It faces the west, and who built it, or when, I do not know, but Elon Lee and Grace Stone Lee, his wife, lived there when their children, Myrta Ann, Eunice, Sally Eliza, and Hubbard were born.

Myrta Ann, by marriage became Mrs. James Field, of Bridgeport, Connecticut. Eunice became, in like manner, Mrs. Henry Benton, of Guilford. Sally Eliza became Mrs. Walter Hinckley, and Hubbard went west, settled where Detroit, Michigan, now thrives, came back east for a visit in the "sixties" of the nineteenth century, returned to "far off Michigan," and was not heard from again.

In my boyhood we had no errands in that part of the town where the home stands, and I saw it only a few times. But early in 1925 my thoughts, and shall I say affections, turned in that direction. As the days grew into weeks, and the weeks into months, I cherished a plan, until on July 24, I arrived in Guilford, Connecticut, and rested for a night. The next morning about daybreak I arose, and taking a wreath of laurel on my arm as I had on the morning of September 1, 1923, on the one hundredth anniversary of the birth of my father, Walter Hinckley, I walked deliberately, with a purpose, from Guilford Green out Boston Street to Alder Brook Cemetery. I went directly to the last resting place of Walter Hinckley, my father, and Sally Eliza Lee, his wife, my mother, and placed the wreath in position just as the sun was rising.

It was a calm, cloudless daybreak, and a period of joy,

gratitude, and spiritual quickening for me. I thanked God that Elon Lee's daughter—born over West Side—my mother, was the kind of woman that she was known to be—a faithful wife, a devoted mother, and devout Christian, cherishing through life a blessed faith. Standing there alone, I sang some of the songs and hymns she used to sing while about her daily tasks in the house that Father built—"Plant Ye A Tree That Shall Wave Over Me," "Jesus Lover Of My Soul,"



THE ELON LEE HOUSE

"Rock Of Ages,' and others of like character; I recalled scenes in the cottage, which was to her the dearest place on earth—home, her home, a Christian home. I recalled, and lived over again, the day in May years before when I sat at the teacher's desk in the Kingston, Rhode Island schoolhouse, and all was moving pleasantly. Suddenly the door opened; a man from the telegraph station strolled through the room to the desk, passed me a telegram, and without speaking a word, wheeled about and left the place. The telegram read:

"Guilford, Connecticut — Mother is dead. Come Home. Father."

I could not speak. I did not attempt to speak. I knew that, while the pupils could not guess the contents of the message, they knew that something unusual—important—pressing—had happened.

I struck the little silver bell they had presented to me the previous winter as a token of friendship, and the pupils closed their books, placed them in the desks, and sat upright, according to the daily custom, ready for dismissal. Another stroke of the bell, and they arose, standing upright, silent; another stroke, and they passed quietly out and went away.

I recalled, too, the scene which followed in the home town, and how after Mother's lifeless form had been laid away in Alder Brook Cemetery, I told Father and the family that I must take the midnight train for Kingston, Rhode Island, because on the next day, students in my school—a good number—were to be baptized and received into the village church.

I recalled other incidents. How memory travels through the years — what lightning trips memory makes into the past at an instant's notice!

Slowly the sun was rising above the summit of Clapboard Hill; a blessed half hour had passed. I made the return trip to the home of my hosts, breakfasted, and was ready for the program of the day.

But as it often happens, the unexpected came to pass. That day a one time Good Will boy, knowing of my plan, surprised me by arriving on the scene at an early hour. A. Newton Plummer had traveled by auto from New York to join me on what was to be a memorable day. We went to the Elon Lee home and were cordially received by the occupants, entire strangers though they were. I explained my errand. They had been notified by Mr. Charles D. Hubbard, mine host, that I would want to go through the house in which my mother was born, and had spent the years of her life from July 25, 1823, until the date of her wedding.

I went into the rooms; into the kitchen, the bedroom, the parlor. I listened to an explanation of a change in some of

the arrangements which had been made in preceding years in the rooms. I sat down at the piano and played and sang some of the old tunes that Elon Lee's family used to sing in the cozy home a century before. I tried to visualize the changes that had taken place in just one hundred years "to a day," and later in the day I arranged with Mr. Charles D. Hubbard, the Guilford artist, to paint a picture of the Elon Lee House, a companion piece to the other little home on Hinckley Hill in Killingworth, Connecticut.

Somehow that night, after such a day, I felt that I was spiritually stronger than I had ever been. I had been stimulated physically, mentally, and spiritually.

I know nothing about Elon Lee, aside from the fact that he was Eliza Lee's father, and have memories of only just one contact with the man. I must have been young—very young—when he was with Mother and me one day in the home that Father had built on Boston Street. Mother stood at the kitchen table ironing. Grandfather Lee sat in a chair near the kitchen stove, and I was sitting on his knee. I did not know what they were talking about—how could I at that age? But the conversation was very earnest—pitched in low tones—and once there were tears in Grandfather Lee's eyes. They flowed down his cheeks. I did not like to see tears on his face, and the impulse was to put up my hand and brush them away. But I did not dare do it. I feared the man with the sharp, brittled, wizened, wrinkled face might be offended. I have no recollection of his arrival or of his departure, or whether he was making a brief call or spending the day; but I do remember his sharp features and the tears.

In the years that followed—the years of my youth—there was a clumsy, heavy cane somewhere in Father's house. It was always somewhere. Sometimes it was upstairs, sometimes in the kitchen, sometimes in the attic, but always taken care of because it was Grandfather Lee's cane. No one had any use for it, and why it escaped a journey to the woodbox and the fireplace or the kitchen stove, I do not know. But in my first pastorate I prepared an address which I called a "rod and staff sermon," and used certain canes or rods which had been given to me to suggest certain scriptural texts.

I used these, holding each in my hand as long as I was talking about it, as I stood before my audiences and explained the text it suggested. This rod and staff, which had once belonged to Elon Lee, and had been his support in the trembling years of advanced age, I used many times while in Sunday School work. Then, in process of time, I arranged seven of these rods in a group, placed them in a case in the Biblical Library in the Moody Memorial Chapel at Good Will, and Grandfather Lee's cane is one of the seven. It was used to suggest the text:

"And God shall wipe all tears from their eyes"—the sorrowing man's support.

In that Biblical Room in the chapel at Good Will there is another object whose history takes me or any thoughtful visitor who may be with me, back to the Elon Lee home over West Side in my native town.

There is a case which contains three volumes, each on a cushion of orange and black (these are Good Will's colors).

The first of the three volumes is a Bible, which was owned and used until the binding gave out, and it had been rebound and continually used so long as its owner lived. It is the Bible of my great-grandfather, and it was purchased by him in Hartford, Connecticut in the year 1791, and paid for in English money; and rebound in Middletown, Connecticut, and paid for with United States script.

The third Bible in the case was presented to me by the two churches which I served in my first pastorate. Between the two is a smaller volume, a gilt-edged Bible, which has on its flyleaf the only example of my mother's handwriting which I possess. The inscription says:

"George W. Hinckley—Presented to him by his mother on his seventeenth birthday."

"Seek ye first the kingdom of God and his righteousness."

"Godliness with contentment is great gain."

I mention it here, because that little volume, now the property of the Good Will Home Association, came to its present resting place from the Elon Lee house on River Street in Guilford, Connecticut, the home in which my mother was born and where I celebrated the one hundredth

anniversary of her birth, with a full heart. That house on River Street means much to me, because it was the home of Elon Lee and Grace Stone Lee, his wife, the mother of his children. The Elon Lee house was a Christian home, and the children carried the teachings of Elon Lee and Grace Stone into their own homes, and fashioned their lives according to them, and one of these homes was the house that Father built —the home which Father provided for his children—and I was one in the group that grew up in Father's house—our home.

CHAPTER IV

A BIRTHPLACE ON STATE STREET

It is predicted that after the war we will be living in a changed world. It is said that everything will be different. I am neither a prophet nor the son of a prophet, but I predict that there will be a sameness.

The Polar Star will hold its position in the north. Daily the sun will rise and set on schedule. The Pleiades will span the heavens as usual. Summer and winter and day and night will not cease.

The earth will continue to produce vegetables, fruits, and grains. The very ancient law requiring the subduing of the worthless in vegetation will continue. Farming will be recognized as the fundamental occupation.

Foxes will continue to have holes. Birds of the air will persist in building nests and rearing their young. Mankind will continue to need homes.

A man can build a house, but he cannot create the home spirit in it after the structure is completed. He belongs in the forest, on the farm, in the factory, in a thousand places requiring physical strength and responsibility, but not as a home maker.

A woman can create a home atmosphere in any kind of a house, and when she does it the place becomes the center of the universe for a family. She does not belong on the battlefield or in the lumberman's camp, or among the builders of bridges and highways.

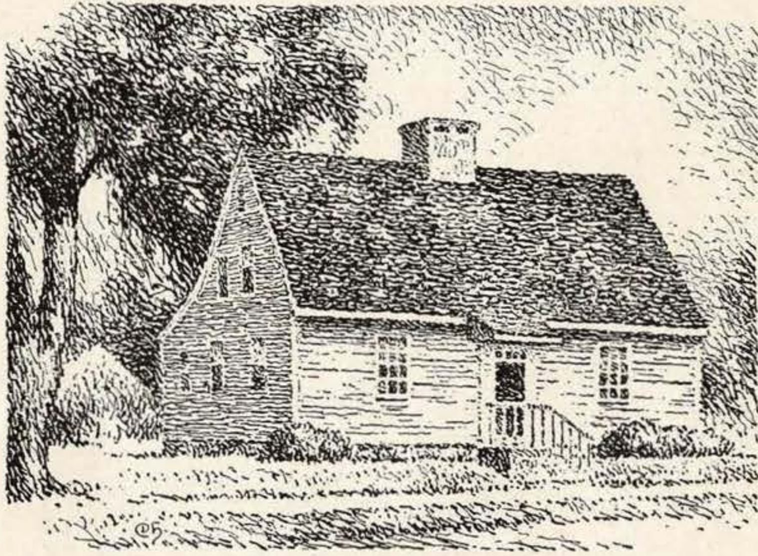
The future of our nation does not depend upon the length of our battleships or the massiveness of our so-called fortresses.

"The homes of the people are the forts of the nation."

I am nearing the end of a happy life. I have thought at times that I was not facing my share of disillusion, sickness, sorrow and hardship. Thinking it over, I am convinced that I owe the length of my life, any moments of happiness, joy, or

triumph, to home and home influence. But I discover that I cannot trace it to any one home; the least I can do is to make grateful mention of six. Without the existence, at some time in my life, of each of them, I could not be living as I am or doing what I do today. Among the six there is no palace, no mansion, neither hut nor hovel, but just six homes.

There is a house in Guilford, Connecticut, which has an



A BIRTHPLACE

interest for me personally. It is an interest, however, which did not develop until I was well on in years. It is a one-story house on State Street. It is painted white. On one corner, against a white background, are these figures, "1730". It is the home in which I was born, but the figures are not intended to state the year of my birth; they mean to me that the house was probably built a hundred and twenty years before I was born.

The first three months of my life were spent under the hospitable roof of that structure, and then we—meaning Father, Mother, my brother Ed, and I moved to the home which Father had built on Boston Street.

The fact that I was born in that house on State Street had no interest for me in early life. In the days when I was attending Guilford Institute and cherishing ambitions, I passed the home each morning on my way to the school, passed it again on my way home at noon to dinner, and back again, returning to do chores at the close of the school hours.

But I never entered the house until I had reached the three score and ten period of life's existence. There was no one in the house then who knew me, and no one that I knew. But when the seventieth anniversary came, I knocked at the door, made myself and my errand known to the gracious people who were living there, and was shown to all parts of the structure. That is about all I know about the house in which I was born and lived for twelve fleeting weeks, but I have recollections of our neighbors—an aged man, an aged woman, who was his wife — and their — I don't mind saying it—aged daughter. This trio was made up of Mr. Hezekiah Partridge, Mrs. Hezekiah Partridge, and their daughter, Harriet Partridge, who had a way of saying things that were often witty, sometimes amusing, and sometimes sarcastic, and on one occasion unpardonable.

That word "sarcastic" is made from the word "sarcasm," and "sarcasm" is English made by combining two Greek words, one meaning to "tear," and the other "flesh," and a sarcastic remark is a remark that wounds feelings like teeth cutting and tearing flesh.

Well, Miss Harriet Partridge made that kind of remark. She made it about me, but not after I was old enough to defend myself or answer back, or say something "sarcastic" —no indeed. And my mother never told me about it for years and years. And when she did tell it to me—I mean the sarcastic remark of Miss Harriet Partridge, the spinster—she told it with a smile, as though she thought it a matter to smile over or feel amused and happy about, and eventually to forgive and forget. And Harriet Patridge, the spinster, never apologized—never mentioned the matter to me—never even expressed a regret. And I will tell what was said and where it was said, and how it was said, and leave it to my readers.

First, the utterance was not made in the house just across the street from where I was born, but it exploded like a bomb in the house which Father built on Boston Street. It was not uttered after I had reached a period of life when youth is expected to protect itself and do its own sparring. And the remark was not made to me but to a gentle, gracious woman, probably as she rocked me in the little red cradle when I was two years old, and the heartless, critical spinster was calling on us. By "us", I mean *me* and mother.

The spinster had probably made some remark about me—the babe in the cradle—and Mother said that she was a bit worried; and she explained to the visiting spinster that my brother began to talk when quite young, and remarked that I was almost two years old and had not yet uttered a word. She wondered sometimes if I would ever talk, or would her second child be dumb? It was Miss Harriet Partridge's opportunity to comfort a young mother—to say something of an inspiring nature, or at least suggest that possibly the babe would develop and even overtake her firstborn in the use of the tongue. She might have said:

"Now, my friend, I wouldn't lie awake nights worrying about it, and I would not get nervous daytimes thinking about it; probably some day he will be able to use monosyllables intelligently, and even words of two syllables, if you are kind to him and patient with him."

She did nothing of the kind. She up and spoke. She said something that she need not have said. She said it promptly, emphatically and probably sarcastically—now I'm going to tell you just what she said—her exact words.

She said: "Don't you worry; he will find his tongue soon enough, and when he does, he will say a thousand things that you will be ashamed of!"

That is what she said. What do you say about it? When I think about a spinster making that remark to my mother while I was still in the cradle and able to offer no defense, it makes me feel as if I would like to just—well, I'm not going to finish this article; I am afraid I will say something I ought not to say. But just think of it—"a thousand things" for a mother to be ashamed of—just think of it!

CHAPTER V

THE HOME THAT FATHER BUILT

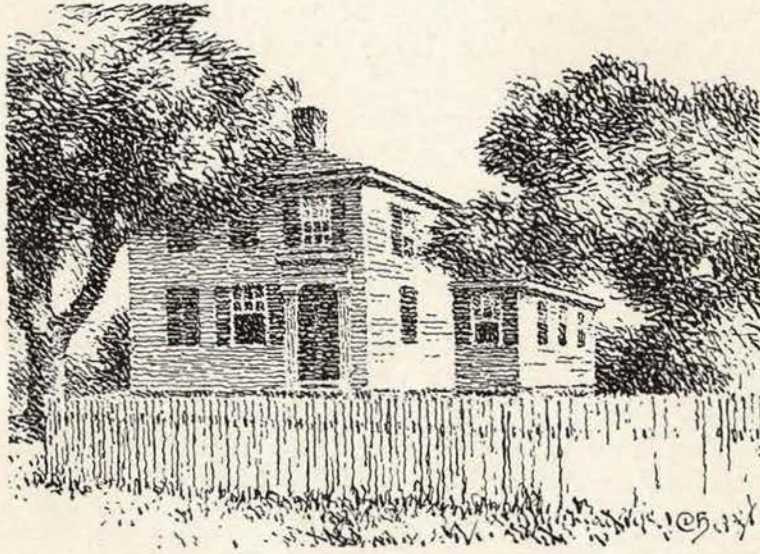
There were seven pictures in the December 1942 issue of the Good Will *Record*. They were drawn by Charles D. Hubbard. One of them was a copy of a photograph taken many years ago, published as a half-tone engraving in the *Record*, and then in a small volume. We reproduce it on this page. The house is located in Guilford, Connecticut, on Boston Street, east of the village, at the corner of the main thoroughfare and a lane. Whether the lane has any other name, I do not know, but in my day it was just "the lane" that led to the old swimming hole at Sawpit, a mile to the south.

Father built the house in 1853, and by this I mean that though he was not a carpenter and never learned a trade, he did most of the work himself. But I never heard him speak of the building as a cottage or a house—he always called it "Home", and so did Mother.

We moved into it from the one story house on State Street in which I was born. I was three months old when we moved, and that means that I took up my residence in the little house on the corner of Boston Street—the great highway between New York and Boston—in October, 1853.

I suppose the first floor was divided into rooms, and lathed and plastered before we occupied it, though I am not sure about it. But the second story was one open space, and I was fourteen years old when Father worked evenings laying the laths, and we children slept in the homes of neighbors three or four nights while the plaster was drying. To the public at large, it was not much of a building—just a little square building at the corner of Boston Street and the lane— but for seven of us, Father, Mother, and us children—two sons and three daughters—it was the center of the universe. The sun shone on it by day—the moon and the stars looked down

on it at night; the rains drenched it in spring and summer; the snows blanketed it in winter. My flower garden was a border on the west side of the path that led from the front gate to the street, and along the fence from the gate to the corner. Twice in my youth I painted every picket in that fence, but it is gone now, and the house itself is changed beyond recognition by a recent owner. But it was in that house that I got my idea of the value of home and family



THE HOME THAT FATHER BUILT ON BOSTON STREET

life. I shudder when I think what I might have become and what life might have meant to me in later years, without the experiences in that small structure—the little home that Father built, for himself and family.

Father was not scholarly. One of his jokes through life was the dog-eared leaves of his spelling book as he wrestled with English in the Southwest District in Killingworth in his youthful days. He was not until later in life a member of a church. But each Sunday, after the morning meal, he would take either Volume One or Volume Two of the "Cottage Bible" and read a chapter—sometimes from the Old

Testament, sometimes from the New—and offer a prayer. And strange to relate, though for some years I was a student in the Institute and critical of other people's speech at times, I never heard Father mispronounce a word while reading from the Bible or offering a prayer.

Of course I did not in boyhood days give any thought to the value of family worship, but all my life since, I have had a growing sense of its worth.

I assume that at the wedding of my parents, the usual formula was used and that they pledged themselves, each to the other, to love and to cherish "as long as both shall live." It may be that at times Father spoke an unkind or complaining word to Mother, but all through the years, I have often recalled the fact that I never heard one expression of the kind from his lips; perhaps Mother would sometimes speak unkindly or complainingly to Father, in a quarrelsome moment, but I never heard it nor could I imagine it.

The religious atmosphere did not lessen our enjoyment or our good times, but seemed to add something that we did not attempt to define. There was always work for us, play for us, fun for us, obedience on our part, and life moved smoothly. Sometimes a boy or girl would come to spend an evening, and occasionally some of us would spend an evening elsewhere in a neighboring house, but not often—why should we? We were a family. We had home life. Father and Mother were always at home. Some evenings Father was upstairs cobbling our shoes. Some evenings and wet days he was in the house making baskets out of ash splints I had hammered out for him. There was a melodeon in the house, and such sings as we used to have at home "in the home that Father built," on the corner of Boston Street and the lane!

Once in a while Uncle Abner or Aunt Philletta Hale would drop in for an hour and sparring, good natured and friendly, would start. Laughter would be followed by another peal of laughter at some fresh outbreak of humor—a "Hinckley gale" we used to call such performances in Father's house.

No, it was not all sunshine. There were killjoys in those days. Sometimes the hens would refuse to lay, no matter

what we fed them or how much, and there would be a shortage of eggs to exchange at the village store for sugar, molassess, and saleratus. Sometimes one of the two cows would "dry up" at the most inconvenient season, and there would be a shortage of milk. The big golden russet tree in the orchard bore fruit that kept later in the winter than the Rhode Island greenings, the bellflowers, or the pippins, and thus we had fruit until about Christmas time, but once in a while — about every third year — there would be a short crop of russets. Sometimes the beet seed would fail to germinate, or a frost would blast the popcorn. Sometimes a tomato vine would yield its fruit, but tomatoes were not held in esteem in those days. The carrot crop was always good but carrots were raised only for horses—no one ate carrots. They were raised exclusively for live stock, and horses liked them. The buckwheat crop never failed, and through the winter there were always buckwheat cakes for breakfast. The rye crop was always sure, and rye bread was always in the cupboard. There were no "cereals" in those days. As often as every other year we had an orange at Christmas time. If there was a shortage of anything, we knew it, but kept it to ourselves. There was a government at Washington, but Congress never cared a rap whether our pancakes were buttered on both sides, one side, or had just straight molasses. There were predictions that the time would come when, due to the increasing cost of running this glorious republic, we would have a million dollar congress—a time to look forward to with fear and trembling—"yes sir, a-million dollar congress!"

But we did get a deal of enjoyment out of just living. If our neighbors dressed better than we or had more and better food to eat, or more money to spend on travelling shows, circuses, and the like, why they just did, and it was not our business. But the house that Father built was home.

I have an ever deepening conviction of the value of the family life of those days—the kind of family life upon which our republic was founded—the homes in which physical, social, intellectual and spiritual needs were recognized and met, as far as possible. I still have my dream of a community

—not of a dozen or fifteen homes, as at present at Good Will, but additional homes, where divinely ordained family life shall continue, and the young grow to manhood and womanhood and go out into the world to build homes for themselves.

Dr. Edward Everett Hale once made a remark to a group of workers with boys who had assembled for a conference near Boston. He said, "There is no good substitute for the old-fashioned institution of chore-doing on New England farms." Dr. Hale knew what he was talking about, and he spoke with conviction and authority. Probably with equal truth it may be said: "There is no good substitute for the old-fashioned custom of building houses and creating a home life within them."

Chapter VI

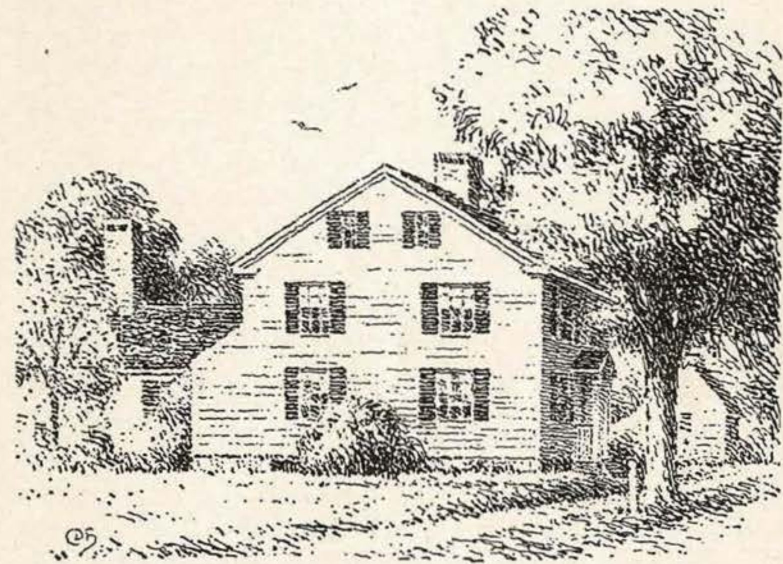
GRANDMOTHER'S HOME

Directly across State Street from the home in which I was born is a structure which has a place in my memory and my affections. It is the house in which Abel K. Hinckley lived with his family, and so far as I know, he died where he had lived. No one ever told me anything about him. But his wife—she that was Eliza Parmalee, of Killingworth before her marriage—the good woman who journeyed with her husband and her five children from Hinckley Hill to Guilford, continued to occupy the rather stately residence.

Her second son, who was named Walter at his birth, married and established his own home. Her youngest son, Sidney, died in his early tewenties; but Alfred remained a bachelor and lived in the home until well into his eighties. Abner lived in the same house until late in life he chose a bride and built his own home. Philetta, "Philet" for short, became Mrs. Henry Hale, but the house continued to be "Grandmother's home."

One of my earliest recollections is of a stay in Grandmother's home—a scene in which I was the star performer—the rest of the cast in the little drama consisting of Grandmother, my own mother, Uncle Alfred, and an aged spinster in the family known as "Aunt Rachel". Mother had spent the afternoon at Grandmother's, and I, her youngest child at the time, was with her. As the next arrival in the family was my sister, I reason that I was not yet three years old. A very heavy thunderstorm broke over the village. The thunder rolled and the lightning flashed, and the rain came down in torrents, and it was finally decided as Father could not come after us in such conditions, Mother and I would remain at Grandmother's home until morning. But in reaching this conclusion, I was not consulted. When Mother started

to take me upstairs to spend the night, I objected. I had noth-to say—I do not think I had begun to talk, anyway—but I could kick and scream and thrash, and I took my part bravely. Mother could not get me above the second or third tread of the stairway. Grandmother joined Mother in an effort to boost me further on my way, but the two were not successful. And ancient Aunt Rachel and Uncle Alfred crowded the staircase, some ahead of me trying to pull me up, and others on the lower steps pushing for all they were



GRANDMOTHER'S HOME ON STATE STREET

worth, all talking, but my screams were high pitched and rebellious. My kicking was determined and vicious; I have always remembered that I realized that my elders were gradually succeeding, and that I was near the top of the staircase, likely to lose out in the melee, and beyond that, memory refuses to serve. I have never had any recollection of reaching the top of the stairway or of ceasing to scream and kick. And I have no recollection of being taken home the following day. But that was the only unhappy recollection of Grandmother's home; the other recollections are "just lovely".

Mother made cookies—I liked Mother's cookies, and I do not recall that I ever had enough of them; but Grandmother Hinckley's cookies were better — very much better. The faithfulness of the dear old lady in her outlook for chances to pass me a cookie seemed to me beautiful, even to this day. And Grandmother's cookies always created an appetite for more. But her little gift of a cookie was never duplicated the same day. One day I asked Mother if she would get Grandmother's recipe for her cookies. Mother told me that she had asked Grandmother two or three times for it, and each time she had replied that she had none. She could not tell just how she did it. She took flour and milk and salt and sugar and a bit of spice and mixed them all up, but she could not tell how much she took of each, because she had no idea —she never measured them.

Full eighty years have passed since Grandmother made that confession, and I have eaten cookies—all kinds of them —molasses cookies, sugar cookies, plain cookies, old fashioned cookies, and the like—but not in all the eighty years have I tasted the kind of cookies that Grandma used to make in her home on State Street.

Once, in my boyhood I was an unwilling caller at Grandmother's home. I was about thirteen years old. Father was working at Hubbard's mill—probably two miles from the home that Father built, and he must needs make the trip to work in the morning and return at night. Father owned a white horse, as faithful a steed as a boy ever drove. She was called "Old Kate," though the adjective was not a term of disrespect or disregard. She was just one of us, and could be depended upon to take us safely wherever we wanted to go. But she must needs have time for her journeys. She was not built for the track. But she was a safe steed for my brother to drive to Hubbard's mill for Father, or to take him in the morning, and Old Kate was easily safe for me, though I was four years younger than my brother.

One afternoon the time for me to start on my trip after Father was near at hand. I harnessed Old Kate. This means I put the collar over her head and pushed it backward to her shoulders. I buckled the saddle girth and attended to each

detail, then led her to the wagon, hitched her between the thills, and fastened the traces. All was in readiness; I took the lines and threw the ends of them over the dashboard, climbed in, picked up the reins, chirruped to Old Kate, and she was off, crossing Boston Street and heading up Union to emerge on State Street, and onward to the mill.

On an average of once a week, but not on any particular day, I was likely to have an errand at Aunt Eunice Benton's, and sometimes at Grandmother Hinckley's, but never both the same day, and these calls were rare, anyway. But that day as we got a few rods from Aunt Eunice Benton's, Old Kate headed for the hitching post—a post which disappeared about eighty years ago, as I remember it. In other words, Old Kate veered to the right. I did not want to stop at Aunt Eunice's, and I had no errand there. But when in spite of my pulling steadily on the left rein to guide her over to State Street, she arrived at the hitching post and stopped, I was mystified, but I did not want to appear to be acting strangely by stopping at a hitching post and then starting off again as though I did not know what I wanted. So in a business-like sort of a way I jumped out, entered Aunt Eunice's home, told her I was passing and thought I'd just stop in and see how she was; I thought Mother would like to know.

Yes, Aunt Eunice was well and happy, and so I climbed into the wagon and took the reins. Old Kate and I were off again, on our trip to Hubbard's shop. But as we journeyed up State Street and came near Grandmother's home, Old Kate deliberately, and apparently with malice aforethought, gradually left the right hand side of the road, and still traveling at a fair rate, headed toward the hitching post in front of Grandmother Hinckley's house. When we reached the post Old Kate stopped. I had no errand at Grandmother's but I still wanted to be regarded as sound of mind, so I opened the gate, passed through the entrance around to the back door, and called on Grandmother in her home. I told her I had no special errand—I thought I'd like to see how she was so I could tell Mother.

Grandmother said she was well as usual, offered me a cookie—I never refused one of her cookies—and saying

good-bye, I started for the wagon, wondering where Old Kate would decide to make her next call. As I neared the wagon—near the hitching post—I noticed that, when I had harnessed Old Kate and hitched her up for the trip, I had left the reins attached to the collar but had not connected them with the bit or the bridle. So Old Kate, not having received any hint by rein as to my plans or wishes, had done her best to attempt to lead me where I ought to go, and thus I had made the two unwilling calls along the way.

For some reason never explained to me, brother Sidney seems to have been the idol of the family in Grandmother's home. He was the youngest, the most beloved, and after his untimely death, always mourned. At one time when the Fox sisters and their novel experiences were creating extraordinary interest in thousands of homes, and people were alert for evidences that the spirits of departed loved ones were eager to communicate with mortals, there were extraordinary experiences in many homes.

One day when the interest was at its height in the community where Grandmother's house was located, the doorbell of the home rang—it was a timid, confidential kind of ring—and Uncle Alfred went to the front door and opened it to greet the caller. There was no one on the porch—no one in sight, and there was no place where anyone could have concealed himself after pulling the bell knob. It was a mystifying situation. Later the bell rang again—this time louder, rather impatiently; the ring was answered, but there was no one in sight, and, as in the first case, it was broad daylight. The only possible explanation of the phenomena was the probability that brother Sidney was trying to get in touch with the folk in Grandmother's home. But no plan could be devised for actual communication. It occurred so often that it was coming to be an accepted theory that a one-sided communication of a spiritual character was in progress. One day I had called; Grandmother, Uncle Alfred, and Aunt Philet were in the kitchen. The doorbell rang vigorously. There was a sudden silence—a solemn hush—a memorable suspense.

"It's brother Sidney," said one. "Oh, if we only knew how to reply—how to answer him!"

And the doorbell rang again. The awe continued in the kitchen, but Grandmother said: "It may be that someone is at the door after all. I'm going to see."

Grandmother passed through the sitting room and opened the door into the parlor, passed through it, and raising the shade, looked through the window to the porch, where one must stand in order to reach the bell knob. There was no one at the door—no one on the premises—no one on State Street. Grandmother and I returned to the kitchen; there was nothing that could be done, but if a way could be devised for answering Sidney's attempt to communicate, what a happy circumstance it would be!

But Grandmother was skeptical; Father and Mother, who never happened to be in the house when the bell rang, would not listen to the arguments. Weeks passed, and the bell was rung occasionally—usually in a bold but always in a mystifying manner.

One day Father and Uncle Abner had some work to do in the cellar of Grandmother's home. At first the two men talked continuously as they worked, but as the hours passed, they had less to say, and finally they sat at their task sprouting rutabegas to be shipped to the market—sat in silence. A rat ran along a timber over them; the doorbell rang vigorously. Then they became interested; they investigated and they discovered that the wire attached to the knob at the front door descended into the cellar, extended along a heavy beam that helped support the floor; then returned to the hallway to a position near the ceiling in the hall. Then it connected with the doorbell. Whenever a rat, running along the beam, happened to hit the wire, the bell rang. I have remembered that Father came home that night, entered the kitchen of the home he had built, strode through the sitting room to his favorite place, sat down, and described the incident of the day; a mystery had been solved.

There were many pleasant occasions in Grandmother's home as the years slipped by, including the festive occasion on the last Thursday of November each year, when upon the

dear grandmother's invitation, her son, Walter, and his wife, Sally Eliza, were invited to spend the day and evening at family headquarters. And never in all the years, so far as I know, was there a Thanksgiving dinner in Grandmother's home without the proverbial "roast turkey" as the object of special interest. These Thanksgiving days continued until the oldest grandson had gone to New Haven to work, and his brother and sister were growing up, and Father and Mother announced that they wanted Thanksgiving Day in their home, around their own table, at their own fireside, and for a few years these gatherings were held in the house that Father built, until one day in May, the light of the household went out, and Father called us home, and we placed Mother's favorite flower — the lily-of-the-valley — on the mantle, on the window sill, on her pillow, on her casket — and after the prayer had been said, we carried her to Alder Brook Cemetery.

And there was one occasion that claims a notice here, though it does not take us into Grandmother's house. But it occurred on Grandmother's home premises on Elm Street, at the corner of Elm and State. The boy, Ben Mason, whose portrait greets the visitor as he enters the Administration Building—the Prescott Memorial—at Good Will, and I had attended the Thursday evening prayer meeting in the lecture room—it was so-called in those days—in the North Church. We had walked up and down the street and had stopped at the corner to say good-night. The incident is simple—just this and nothing more—and I quote now from the Story of Good Will, as it was first published more than half a century ago.

"But one evening, Ben and I had been walking together after a week-night meeting, and he had talked again of trouble and unhappiness. We came to the place of parting, and he suddenly said:

" 'If I had a place in the world to lay my head it seems to me I couldn't stay there another night.'

"My sympathies were stirred to the depth. How I would like to help the boy, to extend a helping hand; to begin, then and there, my life work, though I was only a student—a boy myself—dependent upon father while I studied.

"It still comes back to me now as it has a thousand times since it happened; I have lived over, again and again, the thrill of that moment, at the corner of York Street and State Street, in Guilford that Thursday evening.

"I straightened up and said: 'Ben, don't ever say that to me again. Father's house is small, but I think there's room enough for both of us, but, if there isn't I'm older than you and will take care of myself and you can have my place.'

"We said 'Good Night' and parted.

"The next afternoon I was working alone in father's potato field, when I heard a familiar voice. Looking in the direction from whence it came, I saw Ben.

" 'George,' he said, 'I've come to stay.' "

CHAPTER VII

THE MURRAY HOMESTEAD

On the brow of a hill at Good Will there is a simple memorial. It is built of stones gathered in the fields; there is not a stone in the structure that I did not handle, as I stood by Mr. M. L. Wagner and assisted him in the work of building. There are three slate tablets on this memorial. The largest reads thus:

> TO "ADIRONDACK" MURRAY
>
> Rev. W. H. H. Murray is buried on the Murray Homestead in Guilford, Connecticut, where he was born April 26, 1840. He died March 3, 1904.
>
> A splendid type of physical manhood, magnetic personality, preacher, writer, unique character; he was the father of the modern out-door movement, and by his writings inspired multitudes with love of mountains and lakes, camps and bivouac, woods and trails.
>
> This is erected by G. W. Hinckley, in recognition of a great service to humanity.
>
> 1920.

Another carries a quotation from one of Mr. Murray's books, as follows:

> "To all that camp on shores of lakes, on breezy points, on banks of rivers, by sandy beaches, on slopes of mountains, and under green trees anywhere, I, an old camper, a wood lover, an aboriginal veneered with civilization, send greeting. I thank God for the multitude of you, for the strength and beauty of you, for the healthiness of your tastes and the naturalness of your natures."

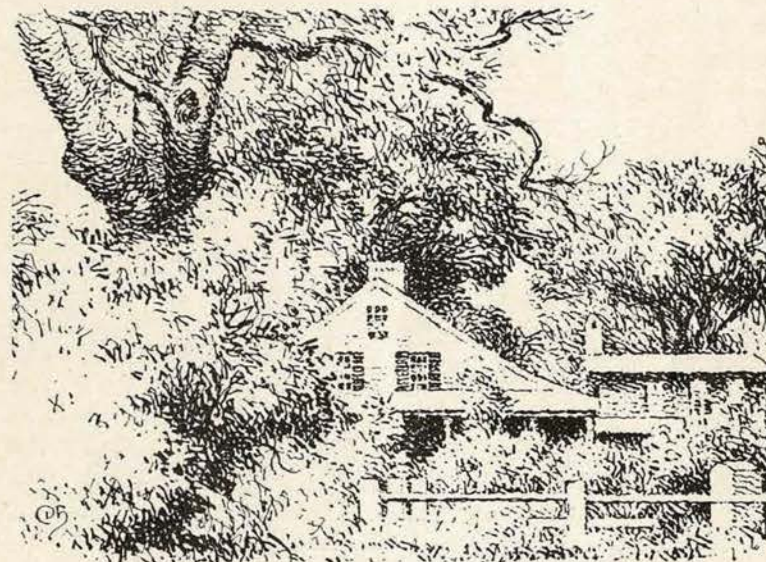
The house in which W. H. H. Murray was born in 1840 has weathered the storms and stood silent in the sunshine of a full century, and perhaps a half century more. I do not know when it was built.

People have wondered why I placed the Murray Memorial on the hill at Good Will; why I first marveled at the man, then loved him, though I met him but once; then I ignored

him, and tried to forget, and then suddenly placed the solid mass of masonry where it stands.

There are a number of reasons for the memorial, but they can all be expressed in the one word, "Home," for from his childhood until the end of his eventful life, he loved the "Murray Homestead"—the house that used to be known as "Dick" Murray's home, because "Dickinson" was too long a word to couple with the name "Murray," in ordinary confab.

Dickinson Murray's son, "Bill," mastered the three R's—



THE MURRAY HOMESTEAD

reading, 'riting, and 'rithmetic—and entered Guilford Institute. This structure, then just dedicated, was four miles from the Murray home. There were horses on the Murray farm, but none to be used hauling "Bill" back and forth—eight miles for the round trip twice a day. So "Bill" walked, but this was no hardship for the youth. Four miles after school hours was not too far to tramp—the word "hike" had not been invented—if "home" was at the end of the route. Before "Bill" had finished his institute days, he had predicted that if he succeeded in life, as he expected, he would make

his Father's farm a famous place—Father's farm, and the home of his own boyhood and youth.

When the time came for young Murray to enter Yale, there was "quite a trip" to be made from his home to New Haven —four miles to Guilford village as usual, then past the Institute, sixteen miles to the college campus. William Murray—"Dick" Murray's son, started on foot, with grip in his hand, left home behind him, and tramped the entire distance. He spent four years at Yale, but he never lived in New Haven—home was still that little section of the earth's surface where he was born, where his father and mother still lived.

Then he entered the seminary at Windsor, Connecticut, but finished his theological course at Yale; Windsor was never home, nor was his home in New Haven.

He received a call to the pastorate of the church at Washington, Connecticut, and he accepted it. Strange things happened in that pastorate—incidents that seemed commonplace, reasonable, and right to the young pastor, but to the public they were reprehensible. He played baseball with school boys— there was a famous school in Washington, Connecticut—and then preached Sunday morning in the village church. How could he? It got into the papers that this young pastor was "cutting up" in an extraordinary fashion, but it did not disturb the young parson. One Wednesday afternoon, in hunter's garb, he shouldered his shotgun and started for a hunt in the nearby forest. The time for the midweek prayer meeting arrived; the people assembled in the church—all except the pastor. But this very important personage did not appear. When twenty minutes of silent waiting had passed and the deacons were considering what was best to do, the pastor arrived in his hunting garb, entered the vestry quietly, placed the firearm in the corner, and his hunter's cap with it, moved forward to the leader's desk, and announced a hymn. There was no reference to his tardy arrival until he was announcing the closing hymn, and he then apologized and explained that in the woods he had traveled farther than he realized; he had joined them without having seen food since dinner time; he hoped they would pardon him. And people talked, and it got into the papers, and it appeared that something unusual was in progress in Washington, Connecticut. As a preacher he was attracting attention. But his home was not in Washington, Connecticut; it was on the ancestral acres in Guilford, and often he swung back to "Home, sweet home."

Mr. Murray received a call to the pastorate of a church in Greenwich, Connecticut, and accepted it. He received a call later to a church in Meriden, and became its pastor and superintendent of the Sunday School. And later he was called to the pastorate of the leading Congregational Church in New England, the Park Street Church in Boston.

While in Meriden he began the publishing of stories and articles dealing with outdoor life. In Boston he founded a religious weekly and named it the "Golden Rule," which carried his sermons, sporting articles, and his stories of outdoor life. Later the "Golden Rule" became the "Christian Endeavor World". At one time the publishing of his "Adirondack Tales," which had a phenomenal sale, resulted in a rush of invalids and semi-invalids to the great wilderness, where there were not comfortable accommodations for them, and there were sorrows and deaths, for all of which, or for most of which, the public seemed to think the exuberant young preacher and writer was responsible.

The fact is that his writings and lectures were overdue. New England was physically on the down grade. The air after sundown was, in thousands of homes, regarded as dangerous, if not deadly. "Keep out of the night air," was a kind of slogan.

But Murray never owned a home in Greenwich, nor in Washington, Connecticut, nor in Meriden, nor in Boston, but his trips back to this "dearest place on earth" to him, were frequent.

In the meantime, the Murray home in Guilford was becoming famous—"Dick" Murray's son, once known as "Bill," then as Rev. W. H. H. Murray, and then as "Adirondack" Murray, was making it what he had decreed—a famous place. On the farm there was an enclosure in which the deer that had been presented to the Park Street preacher by the city government of Boston were kept. The place had become

a horse farm and was the home, not only of "Adirondack" Murray, but the home of a Morgan stallion, "Star of the South," and of another, known as "Abdellah," and there were a hundred other horses on the premises. Mr. Murray owned them.

On one occasion Mr. Murray had secured Dr. George B. Loring, Commissioner of Agriculture, to lecture in a hall in Guilford, for the benefit of the farmers, admission free, and the hall was packed to the doors. In his lecture Dr. Loring referred to the new barn on the Murray Homestead, in which was a room where Mr. Murray had his library, and where he prepared some of the sermons "whose burning sentences charmed the cultured ears of Bostonians." And I knew that in that room Mr. Murray slept nights. I was perplexed and troubled. Later when it was announced that Mrs. Murray had petitioned for a divorce from her famous husband, there was a crash in my soul. The public had only one verdict. Mr. Murray had not appeared in court in self defense, or employed any counsel. The Murray Homestead was still "Adirondack" Murray's home, but the public attitude seemed to me that anything imaginable about the man was probably true.

It was the golden age for men of wisdom, wit and reputation, and such men gathered fortunes by the way of the lecture platform. Henry Ward Beecher lectured on "Education"; Robert G. Ingersoll lectured on the "Mistakes of Moses"; Rev. Russell H. Conwell lectured on "Acres of Diamonds"; Rev. T. DeWit Talmage lectured on "Big Blunders"; Horace Greeley lectured on "What I Know About Farming", and W. H. H. Murray lectured on "Deacons".

Years passed. Mr. Murray, after leading a congregation from Park Street to Music Hall in Boston, and preaching for a time to great audiences, retired from the ministry. He returned to his home in Guilford, for he loved it. He had lived for a time in Canada, but he had no home there. He married again. He lived a short time in Texas, but he had no home there—only one home in all the world and that was the home of his childhood.

In March, 1904, I had spent a night in Guilford. I took

an early train for New Haven, on my way home to Maine, via Hartford. On the train was Mr. Edward Griswold, whom I had known in my boyhood days. He joined me and sat by my side as we journeyed. The train stopped at every station along the way; Mr. Griswold and I talked. The only topic of our conversation was the declining years of his schoolmate, W. H. H. Murray. Mr. Griswold told me that with one exception he was the closest, the most confidential friend that Mr. Murray had; that all through the years of progress and success and fame and criticism, and disaster, there had been no change in Murray's attitude. The friendship between them continued.

No man could listen to what Mr. Griswold told me that morning and not be profoundly moved. As we reached the New Haven station, I thanked Mr. Griswold for his revelation; I told him I was beginning to understand. He urged me to call at the Murray home the next time I was in Guilford. I told him that I would call the next time I was in Connecticut, but if no errand took me there soon, I would make the journey for the express purpose of an interview with Mr. Murray. We reached the New Haven station; as we hurried along the platform, we grasped hands, and Mr. Griswold said: "Please don't fail to make that call. Good-bye!"

A few minutes after our parting, I boarded the train for Hartford. As the train pulled out of New Haven, the news agent entered the car and announced the morning papers. I passed him a coin, and with only mild interest in the day's news, I glanced at the first page. It announced that Rev. William H. H. Murray died the night before, "at his home" in Guilford, Connecticut. I bowed my head in sorrow and regret; the call, with a purpose, which I had just promised Mr. Griswold I would make, could never be made.

In process of time, as I reviewed Mr. Murray's life in service for humanity and recalled the great influence he had exerted in my own life, though all unconsciously on his part, I reasoned in my heart:

"What should it matter to me if the public, in the last analysis, had not approved of some things which Mr. Murray had done, and in some cases had failed to do—was that any

reason why I should hide the gratitude that was in my heart?"

I decided that I had a right. But first I would make inquiry in Mr. Murray's home town, which was also my own home town. I went back to the place on a pilgrimage of inquiry and called on some of Mr. Murray's townsmen and asked what the attitude would be in Guilford if I should, in another state, place a tablet on an enduring basis in Mr. Murray's honor. One of the most prominent citizens replied:

"If you had asked the question, say seven years ago, the universal reply would have been, 'The less that is said about such a plan, the better'; but if people were to decide now, they would say, 'If you are going to build in his memory, you can't build too high!' "

Well, it was not my purpose to build a great memorial—high or long or broad—but it was in my heart to erect a slab or an inscription of some kind that would show my gratitude.

Some months later I returned to the historic town to attend a funeral service. Prof. S. Ward Loper, of Wesleyan University, had journeyed to his native town on the same errand. After the service I remarked to Prof. Loper that I had planned to visit the Murray Homestead before leaving the town. He told me he wanted to make such a trip, and so we made it together. I was surprised when he told me that, through the Institute days, Mr. Murray and he had been intimate friends; that sometimes when there was a severe storm in progress, Murray, instead of tramping home, would stop with him in the Loper home near the Institute; that through all the eventful, changing years that had followed the Intsitute days, the two had remained intimate, confidential friends, and as we neared the end of the journey, Prof. Loper said:

"I am going to tell you something I do not think any other man knows. Murray told me what I am about to tell you. It may be that the time will come when you can make a statement that will help clear the situation."

As Prof. Loper finished his statement, I was profoundly moved. There were tears in my eyes, and sorrow in my heart. A few sentences had revealed that Mr. Murray's

troubles began on his wedding day. Mr. Murray could not in any way be blamed for the situation, and it was equally true that no blame rested upon Mrs. Murray. If either party had, a week after the wedding, asked for a divorce, it would have been granted; but such a proceeding would have ruined Mr. Murray's career upon the threshold of what he hoped would be a life of great achievement. A policy of absolute silence was agreed upon. Years later, Mrs. Murray asked the court for a divorce, and it was granted. Later Mr. Murray married. Three gifted daughters were born and he knew something of the joy of New England home life again, but due to New England attitude, the wreckage had been very great.

The house in which Mr. Murray was born was his home through life; whatever happened, he turned back to the beginning of the trail, at Dickinson Murray's doorway, in Guilford. When the first success of life came, he went back "home". When amazing experiences of progress and prosperity and publicity met him, or he met them, he was ever and always appearing again "back home" on the ancestral acres. When an amazing wrong was done him, which one person in all the world might have corrected, and she remained silent, Mr. Murray refused to speak.

Once, before a great assemblage in Boston, he had exclaimed:

"When did Jesus utter sadder words then when he said: 'Foxes have holes; birds of the air have nests, but the Son of Man hath not where to lay His head.' "

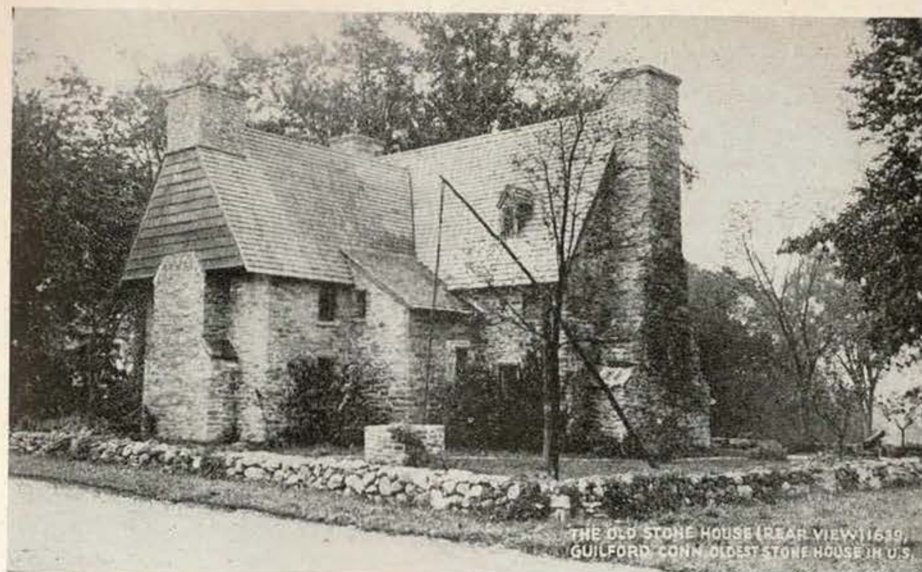
When Mr. Murray was delighted with the applause of his fellow men, or if he tired of it—and he did at times—the old home waited for him. When confronted by disaster, there was that house in the eastern section of an ancient town to which he could go. When the unheard of farmhouse once belonging to Dickinson Murray became the summer home of the prosperous, popular pastor of Park Street Church, the farm was, for a number of years, the most talked of in all New England.

He appeared before the public with his appeal for outdoor life at a time when all New England was becoming enfeebled,

and actually going into physical decline, due to the doctrine of "indoorness" which had been adopted. We think of the almost countless camps and summer residences in the Adirondacks, and other sections of our country, as though they had always existed; but if we take them as they are and then trace their history backward, we travel until we arrive at at the side door of Dickinson Murray's farmhouse, later the home of his famous son, Rev. W. H. H. Murray, the "Apostle of Outdoor Life."

Yes; William H. H. Murray was father of the modern outdoor movement. He called multitudes from the blight of indoorness to the fields and forests and to life in the open. He was an enthusiastic sportsman from his youth. He was a devoutly religious man. He was an eloquent preacher, a brilliant writer, a persuasive lecturer on subjects of public interest. From the beginning of his early 'teens, through all the eventful years of triumph and through periods of apparent defeat, he was the prince of home lovers. He lived in houses in different parts of the United States and Canada, but to him there was only one home, and that was the house in which he was born in 1840—the home to which he was always returning; the home in which his three daughters were born and grew to womanhood; the home in which he died, drawing his last breath in the room in which he first saw the light. I do not know how the epitaph only a few rods from the room in which he was born reads, but if I had been asked to prepare it, I think it would have read thus:

"Rev. W. H. H. Murray, Prince of home lovers, now at home."



The "Old Stone House" built in 1639 in Guilford, Connecticut, remodelled and now the Connecticut State Historical Museum.

The Adirondack Murray Memorial at Good Will. Erected in 1920.

Some Homes, by G. W. Hinckley.
Illustrations by Charles D. Hubbard.
1945. Good Will Publishing Company,
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