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HOW I FOUND THE URANTIA BOOK

Rube Goldberg, famous cartoonist, used to draw unbelievably complex mechanisms of cogs and springs, levers and fans and wheels, perhaps activated by a cat or squirrel, or feather in a breeze, and the end result would be an astonishing denouement completely foreign to the many elements that brought it about.

The chain of events that led me into the extreme good fortune of membership in the Forum to which the URANTIA papers came, was -- it seems to me -- a somewhat Goldbergish series of coincidents and meticulously dove-tailed time-delayed semi-denouements. (That sentence leaves me breathless).

How can a man or woman be so fortunate as to become intimately associated with an Epochal Revelation? As every reader-believer of this generation is! The sublimity and vast importance of our Great Book was remote indeed from the cogs, levers and wheels of jobs, cities, and persons that managed to so greatly bless me.

I shall begin when I was 23, in 1921. After two or three wonderful years in Texas I returned to Chicago because my mother was scheduled for an exploratory operation. I applied for a job with an advertising agency whose "house-ads" every week in Printer's Ink convinced me its owner was a great exponent of research-based copy that sells by serving the reader. A devotion to such service-rendering copy had already served me remarkably. I applied to Walter Hoops -- that agency head -- and got the job. Six months later he and I learned I had not applied to him in response to an ad he had just run for a star copywriter. I had never seen his ad.

Lister Alwood, a gifted writer and poet, much my senior, was my best friend there. I met there, too, a girl who joined Hoops after I did. I asked that lovely creature for a date, and was told "soon". However, before the "rain check" I gave her was honored, Lou Honig--an agency head from San Francisco stopped in Chicago on an Eastern trip and asked me to join his agency on the coast. That was at the suggestion of one of his key men with whom I had worked in Texas. My beloved mother had departed for the Mansion Worlds, so I took the San Francisco job, leaving the "rain check" unused.

After two years in California, I received a long wire from Alwood urging me to apply for an \$8,000 job he had applied for unsuccessfully. (I was making only \$400 a month, and \$8,000 was a mint of money almost 60 years ago!) I applied for the job and was asked to come to Chicago for a personal interview. I told my boss of my dilemma and that good man said: "Go get it if you can, and God bless you. If you don't get it, come back and go to work and forget about it." I got the job.

The first evening I was back in Chicago I had dinner at Lister Alwood's home. He asked if I would like to attend with him on Sunday next, a meeting at the home of a famous psychiatrist - a Dr. William Sadler--great speaker and teacher. Perhaps some reading, but interesting discussion and conversation for sure. I accepted. Before Sunday came, I had a date with the "Hoops lovely", making the rain check good. We had not corresponded, but I had carefully kept the address.

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The first Sunday I was back in Chicago, I went to my first Sadler Forum meeting. It was the last Sunday in September, 1924. After the meeting I asked the Dr. if I could bring a young woman the next Sunday. (I would occasionally tell this story before Florence and would always say that Dr. Sadler asked a few questions about the "young woman".) When he found she was literate he said "yes". Florence Evans attended the next Sunday, and from that day to this we have been identified with the Forum-that later received the URANTIA papers-or its succeeding organizations. However, Florence departed this sphere for the Mansion Worlds in 1979, a week after our 53rd wedding anniversary. (Yes, our two sons are dedicated "URANTIANS.")

Florence and I knew the FIRST URANTIA BOOKS would issue from the presses while we were on a round-the-world trip for me to do some work in Australia and New Zealand. The Doctor's brilliant son Bill, a fantastic student of the Papers, agreed to air-mail a copy to us as soon as he could lay hands on one. That copy, so fully underlined after much reading and work over it, is now so underlined, that the underlining has no emphasis. It bears in the front this inscription. "First URANTIA BOOK! Glimpsed in Rome, 11:40 A. M., October 1, 1955. Clyde and Florence Bedell." An addition reads: "First reading completed 4/22/'56. San Francisco, 10:48 P.M."

My life (with the enthusiastic approval of both my sons), is dedicated to help--in every way I possibly can--"promote, improve, and expand..the understanding of the peoples of the world of the teachings of Jesus." We should all pray that all people in our Movement, from Chicago outward over all the earth, might discover those quoted words from the Foundation's Declaration of Trust. How many people in a millenium can be early recipients of an Epochal Revelation? It is our duty to bring its message to all the spiritually-deprived people we can reach, in character and keeping with the character of our Book. How many times a day can we, every day, say "Thank you God!" in a meaningful, demonstrating way?

