

GRANDFATHER'S DEDICATION OF THIS BOOK TO GRANDMOTHER

To Daisy Blackwood Parlin:

We have climbed the mountain of life together; its hardships have been lightened by the unfaltering support you have given and its temptations have vanished in the light of your true love.

Today at sixty, as we stand on the mountain-top to view together the setting sun, we have the reward of marriage vows faithfully preserved - a rich reward of mutual love and respect, and four fine children and six lovely grandchildren for whom in love together we have written this book.

Charles Coolidge Parlin

FOREWORD

TO OUR GRANDCHILDREN

When your grandmother read Glenway Wescott's "Grandmothers", she was quite disturbed. It happened that she knew Wescott's grandparents much better than Wescott did and she knew that he entirely misinterpreted their thoughts and viewpoints.

Wescott's "Grandmothers" and Sinclair Lewis' "Main Street" picture life in the small towns of the Central West at the end of the 19th century as drab, uninteresting, poverty-stricken and unwholesome. We know from personal experience that this life was free from a sense of deprivation, was filled with interesting experiences, was brightened by a spirit of neighborliness and helpfulness and, in its human relationships, was sincere and wholesome.

That you may have no such mistaken notions of us as Wescott had of his grandparents, we write this little book. We decided to write it in a light vein. We had observed that when a writer of memoirs takes himself seriously, the book becomes dull. Besides, we had observed that memories play pranks on folks and that memoirs are usually inaccurate. Furthermore, we had noticed that in memoirs, judgments of other people are usually colored by personal likes and dislikes and are frequently unfair.

These defects we have sought to minimize by writing in a playful mood a series of little stories, each true as our memory recalls it; and if, perchance, at any point our memory has played us a prank, at any rate the story will fairly illustrate some phase of life in Wisconsin when we were young.

May we add that whether or not you enjoy the stories, at any rate we had a lot of fun writing them. It was a real pleasure to live over again some of the pleasantries of our early life, and we hope that some day you may give yourselves the treat of writing such a book for your grandchildren. We enjoin it upon each generation of our descendants to add a volume to our humble beginning, so long as there be a descendant living who in the midst of adult responsibilities can muster up a sufficient sense of humor to look back with pleasure upon the jokes of his childhood.