

Hi, Fred Nelson for Community Comment,

Two weeks ago, I talked about my old Eureka neighborhood as it was in the Nineteen Thirties. I have a bit more to add to that today. The happy family who lived next door was a great addition and the woman bootlegger across the street kept the neighborhood lively. Three doors south of us, lived a quiet family. If my memory serves me right, there were the parents and at least two sons and possibly a daughter. The younger son I remember well. Either in his late teens or early twenty's, he appeared to be a quiet sort and I would see him walking around the neighborhood frequently. I had heard that he was having mental problems. One morning he started knocking on doors and was inquiring as to whether or not each occupant was in possession of the Holy Bible. This pretty well upset the neighborhood and each visit was followed by him leaving his hand print on the sidewalk in front of each house visited. He had been dipping his hand in crankcase oil. The last straw was his visit to a lady in the next block over. She had a son about a year older than me and the two of them lived in a very small home. The disturbed person went to her door and accused her of hiding the Holy Bible. He demanded that she turn the Bible over to him or he would burn her house down that night. The poor woman was terrified. It seems to me that this problem lasted for two days before someone called the police. I remember that some time in the afternoon, I heard the familiar whistle of the happy policeman whom I mentioned two weeks ago. I looked out the window and, sure enough, the young man was being taken into custody. He was very subdued and entered the patrol car without incident. I heard later that the subject was placed in a mental institution and the family moved a short time later. Across the alley lived a family of three. Very well known in the community, the father drank quite heavily. One afternoon I heard a lot of noise coming from his direction and there they were, he had a good lead on her and there she was, running full bore behind him, waving a butcher knife over her head. My mother said that there never was any violent contact between them and that it was a common thing for them to fight in their own back yard. From what I have been telling you, the old neighborhood sounded pretty rough but I have not forgotten all the nice folks that lived in our area and there were lots of them, hard working honest people who took pride in what they accomplished. We have come a long way since the depression with so many improvements in our way of living but I can't say that about human character.

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