

The following introduction was written by Dr. Eleanor B. Whipple and describes her insights and feelings into her father's life and experiences. It applies, in general, to all of his books, letters and notes on his experiences.

## *Introduction*

You will notice that toward the beginning of his book, "Seven Heavens", my father tries to describe hearing spiritual sounds and suggests that perhaps anyone might be able to go to heaven. This may be because it has been so natural to him over his lifetime. He told me he had no idea why he himself could go except that it may have been because he started early and at a time of complete innocence, only two to three years old. He was convinced there must be other earthly humans who have also experienced such trips to Heaven but he never met anyone. He surmised that possibly, in the most early days after creation, before so much sin had invaded the world, people might often have gone when they wished, as he did. He wanted everyone to know that he was just an ordinary man despite these extraordinary experiences. At no time did he think that he had been chosen for any special purpose.

This is why I need to tell you a few things about him personally, not simply write an introduction to a book. The most important point I wish you to understand is that throughout the many years that I knew him, he was always completely honest. Never did I know him to lie about anything at all. It is not logical, in view of his character, that the experiences he relates could have been some sort of fantasies or even visions. He was a very practical, down-to-earth man.

We always went to church. I remember his patience with me. As a typical teenager I was embarrassed because we had an old fashioned Model T Ford and I did not want it parked close to the church. He and my mother never complained about walking an extra few blocks to indulge me. In fact, they tried their very best to give me an education and protected life during the depression years in which pennies were few. My father was a very considerate husband, father, and grandfather. He loved my mother all of their many years together. He would often call her Dolly.

The summer I was fourteen we were staying in Tacoma, Washington I remember. We were staying across the street from beautiful Lincoln Park where I had been collecting leaves to press for my collection. It was 1931. My father called a family gathering. He had something important to tell us, he said. That was when he told us the Lord had given him permission to share with his family about the trips to heaven that he had experienced all his life. He had kept quiet because he had not been believed and was severely punished in his youth.

I have no memory of my reaction. Somehow, it did not seem unnatural for the trips were a part of his life and he had always been trustworthy. It did not occur to me to question the experiences then, nor during the years since. Whenever I had questions I would discuss his heavenly trips with him. As time went on I continuously discovered how closely the concepts he spoke of corresponded with biblical truth. Also, those insights I had been learning in my own career of counseling and administration were borne out.

There are sides of my father's personality one does not note in reading his books. He was a particularly able person. He fully rebuilt our house by himself after a major fire.

He kept the old car running, doing all of his own repairs. He had a green thumb, often working with the flowers he planted in our yard. They reminded him of the even more beautiful ones he saw in Heaven. He would be accompanied by his small fox terrier he called Pal. He also hunted agates avidly because they, too, reminded him of Heaven's crystal gems. He was steady and loving throughout the depression years, always encouraging my education and never criticizing or pushing, but offering strength.

Again, his enjoyment of nature reflected Heaven. He and my mother especially enjoyed camping and walking through the woods. I well remember camping at the Puget Sound beaches and parks as early as five years old. He would always find himself some small boutonniere in the woods. I remember the walks when he would point out various ferns and tiny flowers hiding in the underbrush. Those early lessons have always stayed with me.

He and my mother were tremendous influences in my life, partly because they always wanted me to experience friends and the adventure of life whenever possible and certainly because of their love and faithfulness to the Lord. My parents always pointed the way to truth. Both were patient and encouraging and demonstrated understanding in their own mutual relationship.

Truly, my father, the one who wrote about these extraordinary heavenly adventures was a well grounded, "ordinary" person who enjoyed earth with its family relationships and God created beauty, a good father. He is in Heaven permanently now. My parents have celebrated forty years there with the Lord, other family members and friends. Undoubtedly they have added many new friends as well. My brother, my son and daughter have always been inspired by the knowledge that one day we shall join them.

I am grateful to my father for the many, many hours of typing out descriptions of his trips and findings. They have been a primary influence in helping me integrate my thinking and spiritual life. The writings include the manuscripts of several books, of which "Seven Heavens" was the first. Each probes further into the mysteries of creation, of God's will for his people, and they explore how relationships, both material and spiritual are linked together in the formation of the family of God. I invite you to join my personal family in learning from the truths he discovered and to be comforted by the knowledge that Heaven is indeed just as real as the Bible promises, and that it will be there for you if you so choose, a place of great satisfaction and celebration.

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