

A Familiar Face

Chapter Four - by Kay Hively

On Saturday morning, Scotty hurried downtown. Walking all around the courthouse, he found the spot where Mr. Truman had stood in 1939.

Checking to be sure no one was watching, Scotty stood straight and tall just as Mr. Truman had done more than 60 years before. As he stood there, Scotty wondered if he might grow up to be President of the United States. Then he took a mental photograph of himself standing in front of the courthouse door.

When Scotty got back home, he was surprised to find Grandfather Edwards sitting in the porch swing. Grandfather was one of Scotty's best friends. He was full of stories, and he liked to go out to the park to watch the boys play.

Scotty plopped down beside Grandfather and they began pushing the swing as hard as they could. Grandfather was as much of a kid as Scotty, and the two often got into trouble together. Riding too high in the porch swing usually got them in trouble.

Scotty and his grandfather talked about important things when they sat in the swing. On this day, Scotty asked Grandfather if he remembered when Harry Truman was president.

Grandfather smiled and said he did, indeed, remember him. In fact, Grandfather said, he once spent part of a day with President Truman.

Scotty could hardly believe his ears. His own grandfather had spent time with the President of the United States!

Pushing gently on the swing, Grandfather told Scotty about the day he spent guarding Mr. Truman when the President was on Wake Island talking with a famous general. Grandfather said he was a young soldier in the United States Army at the time.

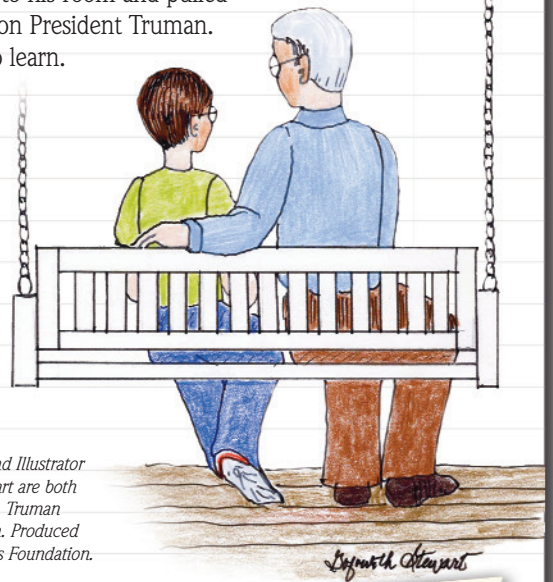
It was a big surprise to get such duty, Grandfather said. It was something he would never forget. And, as the years passed, Grandfather read the newspapers every day to see what President Truman was doing.

Grandfather said that one of the greatest things Mr. Truman did was to establish the Berlin Airlift. And one of the hardest things Mr. Truman did, Grandfather said, was to order the explosion of the first atomic bomb.

Grandfather said the bomb was a powerful weapon. It was so powerful that it ended a long and bloody war. Grandfather stopped for a moment and then told Scotty that if the war had continued millions of people around the world would have died in the fighting and famine.

Scotty had never heard of the Berlin Airlift, and he wasn't sure what the atomic bomb was. But he didn't ask any more questions. He knew he could learn about them in the books.

That afternoon, after Grandfather Edwards left, Scotty hurried to his room and pulled out the books on President Truman. He had a lot to learn.



Author Kay Hively and Illustrator Billie Gofourth-Stewart are both of Neosho, Missouri. Truman photo by Harry Barth. Produced by the Missouri Press Foundation. Copyright 2007.

Things to Think About and Do

- Using a map, find Wake Island. Find the name of the famous general who had a meeting with President Truman on Wake Island. All Presidents have a military title. What is that title?
- Scotty's grandfather said he read newspapers every day to see what President Truman was doing. Every day for a week, look at a newspaper and circle every article that talks about the President of the United States. Make a list of five different things the President is doing in the articles.
- Research the Berlin Airlift and learn more about the reason for this military action ordered by President Truman.

Next Week: Chapter Five - Jimmy and the wooden bat

Visit the Truman Presidential Museum & Library at www.trumanlibrary.org