

CHAPTER LVII

COURTING DOROTHY

By George

George says that most of what happened when he was courting Dorothy is nobody's business but their own and as Grandfather looks back upon his own courting days, he is compelled to admit that maybe that is right. It seems a little too bad, however, in view of the amount of time he spent at it between the fall of 1915, when he first heard Dorothy play the piano at the Germantown High School where they both went as soon as the present school building was completed, and the 29th of June, 1926, when they were married at the home of Dorothy's parents in Oak Lane, not to record a few incidents. In fact, one of the things George has let drop was that when he asked Mr. Elcome for permission to marry Dorothy, Mr. Elcome said, "Well, as the Lord said of the Devil, I admire your persistence!"

One of the high spots, as Grandfather understands it, was the night when George took Dorothy to a dance and she lost her key to the Elcome's house in Oak Lane. It seems that Dorothy was being rushed by one of the leading women's fraternities at the University, but that she had already made up her mind that she preferred Kappa Alpha Theta which she later joined. Now George was very friendly with the Thetas (in fact he claimed to be an honorary member) but he did not rate as high with the Kappas, so Dorothy to indicate that she was not interested in a bid from Kappa, asked George to take her to the big formal party which was the climax of the rushing season. And what is more, she wore a large bouquet of pansies which had been given to her by the Thetas.

Well, it was a fine party and everybody had a grand time, but when

George and Dorothy arrived in Oak Lane, it was very much later than it should have been. George had taken Grandfather's automobile and he stopped it half way down the block so as not to make any noise which would wake up Dorothy's parents. They sneaked up to the house on tip-toe trying not to make any noise, but when they got up to the front door, Dorothy couldn't find her key. She looked through her bag and her coat pockets and then they went back and looked on the floor of the car, but it was apparently gone.

George and Dorothy then had a counsel of war on strategy as to what could be done and finally decided, first, that the key must have dropped out of Dorothy's bag while at the dance and, second, that they might as well 'fess up and ring the door bell. So they rang the bell and rang the bell until they were afraid they would run the battery down and then they called under the bedroom windows as loudly as they dared, but they couldn't arouse anyone in the house. So then they went all around the house trying all of the first story windows to see if by any chance one of them was unfastened. Every one was locked tight. So they rang the bell some more and worked the knocker but still they could not wake anyone.

George finally noticed that the window in Dorothy's room, which was right over the front porch on the second floor, was open a little from the bottom, and he took off his overcoat and the coat of his dress suit and climbed up a water pipe until he could get onto the roof of the front. Then he carefully opened the window, put one foot over the window sill, and in pulling the other one through, kicked over a chair. It made an awful racket and George was afraid that Mr. Elcome would think he was a burglar and shoot him before he could explain the situation, so he ran downstairs as fast as he could go and let Dorothy in so that she could explain to her father that everything was all right. They stood shivering in the hall waiting for Mr.

Elcome to come down with a gun and they waited, and waited, and waited - and nothing happened.

So finally George said good night and drove off as quietly as he could and Dorothy went just as quietly up to her room, and if they hadn't thought it was such a good joke on Dorothy's parents and told them about it the next day, no one would ever have known what happened because - and here's the funny part of this long story - in the morning Dorothy found her key in her hand bag right where she had looked for it! But there was one thing they didn't tell and that's what time it was when they got home, but I'm sure that it was later than it should have been. Anyway, George says that so far as he knows, it's the best night's sleep the Elcome household ever had.